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From World Literature to Postcolonial Literary Studies: Comparative Journeys

THE COVER ART for this year's issue of *Recherche littéraire/Literary Research*, a pastiche of John Singer Sargent's "Autumn on the River, Miss Violette Sargent," tantalizingly invites us on comparative journeys across diverse literary landscapes. More specifically, this issue's meanders enable us to discover recently published books about world literature, comparative poetics in a more traditional sense, and postcolonial literary studies. These itineraries will undoubtedly prompt us to rethink the boundaries of our complex discipline, while also leading us to a renewed appreciation of the wealth of comparatist approaches. This process would not be possible without the help of the unjustly neglected art of reviewing, a form of writing of which this issue abundantly illustrates the flexibility. The review essays, book reviews, and conference reports assembled here will hopefully give readers an opportunity to explore the new territories charted by current comparative literature scholarship.

The three review essays opening this issue demonstrate the deeply dialogical nature of our discipline. In "Worlding World Literature," Theo D'haen surveys contemporary scholarly debates in the often contentious field of world literature. By contrast, Mireille Naturel reflects on the current state of the art in Proust studies. ZHANG Longxi sheds light on another important facet of the discipline in his review essay of an ICLA research book about literature and other arts.

The first cluster of the numerous book reviews collected here echoes Theo D'haen's considerations on world literature. Reviews by César Dominguez, Gerald Gillespie, Hans Bertens, and Randolph Pope discuss books dealing with specific issues related to globalization and world literature in different cultural contexts. A long central section, devoted to time-honored issues in the field of comparative literature, is ushered in

by Massimo Fusillo's discussion of *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications*, co-authored by César Domínguez, Haun Saussy, and Dario Villanueva, a book that offers fresh perspectives on the discipline. Further titles reviewed in this part of the journal deal with topics as diverse as literary theory, media aesthetics, literary inscription of portraits, narration of the self, trauma and testimonies, literary plurilingualism, symbolist dramaturgies, religion and literature, as well as literature and neuroscience. This section concludes with Assumpta Camps's review of an important volume published in the ICLA's ongoing series on the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages, Marcel Cornis-Pope's edited *New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression*. A final cluster of book reviews focuses on postcolonial literary studies. Arguably, the latter are related to comparative literature through their engagement with oppressed and marginalized individuals, as well as through their emphasis on a multiplicity of cultural contexts, diasporic predicaments, and multi-ethnic and transnational issues. The link between postcolonial texts and translation is tackled in Simona Bertaccio's book, *Language and Translation in Postcolonial Literatures*, reviewed by Jean-Marc Moura. This section of the journal is the most radically non-Eurocentric, as it includes reviews of three volumes authored by Indian scholars and published in India. Further, three reviews do justice to a somewhat neglected field in comparative literary studies, i.e., theatre and drama. Indeed, this cluster features titles on postcolonial theatre in India, as well as Indigenous drama from Oceania and North America. Chantal Zabus's review of Joel Kuortti's *Transculturation and Aesthetics* provides an apt conclusion to this section. In contrast to some world literature scholars, she asserts the ongoing vitality of postcolonial literary studies. In this, she echoes Robert Young, for whom the current disaffection with postcolonial theory does not imply the eradication of all forms of oppression. According to him, this merely shows "that some people in the U.S. and French academies have decided they do not want to have to think about such things any longer and do not want to be reminded of those distant invisible contexts which continue to prompt the transformative energies of the postcolonial" (19–20). The reviews collected here clearly confirm that there is still a bright future for postcolonial literary studies.

The journal is complemented by a review of several issues of the Argentinian comparative literature journal, an essay in honor of John Neubauer's remarkable contribution to the Comparative History of Literatures

in European Languages, as well as four reports about conferences that recently took place in Europe and America. The “bulletin” part of the journal also includes updates about the recent activities of the various research committees of the ICLA, once again foregrounding the Association’s leading role in promoting cutting-edge research in comparative literature. All in all, I hope this issue will bear testimony to the multiple and ever-evolving (re)configurations of our vibrant discipline.

As the new editor of *Recherche littéraire/Literary Research*, I naturally owe a debt of gratitude to a number of friends and colleagues. First and foremost, I wish to thank Professor Dorothy Figueira, the immediate past editor, without whose excellent advice this issue would never have become a reality. I also thank John Burt Foster, who revived this journal under the leadership of former ICLA President Dorothy Figueira. Jenny Webb competently steered the journal through the production process and proved a very supportive collaborator. John Schweppe kindly volunteered his painterly talent for this year’s cover art. I thank the members of my advisory board for their useful suggestions, as well as my daughter Jessica, for her technical assistance. Last but not least, I extend my gratitude to the ICLA for its financial support.

MARC MAUFORT
Brussels, May 2016

WORK CITED

Young, Robert JC. “Postcolonial Remains.” *New Literary History* 43, no.1 (Winter 2012): 19–42.



Entre littérature mondiale et études littéraires postcoloniales: voyages comparatistes

LA COUVERTURE de ce numéro de *Recherche littéraire/Literary Research*, un pastiche de l’œuvre de John Singer Sargent, “Automne sur la rivière, Miss Violette Sargent,” nous invite de façon très engageante à entreprendre un

voyage comparatiste à travers différents paysages littéraires. Plus précisément, les méandres de ce numéro nous permettent de découvrir des ouvrages récemment publiés dans le domaine de la littérature mondiale, de la poétique comparatiste dans un sens plus traditionnel, ainsi que des études littéraires postcoloniales. Ces itinéraires nous inciteront sans aucun doute à repenser les frontières de notre discipline complexe, tout en nous conduisant à une nouvelle évaluation de la richesse des approches comparatistes. Ce processus ne serait pas possible sans l'aide de l'art injustement négligé du compte rendu, une forme d'écriture dont la flexibilité est largement illustrée dans ce numéro. L'objectif escompté est que les essais, comptes rendus et rapports de colloques rassemblés ici permettent aux lecteurs d'explorer les nouveaux territoires de la recherche en littérature comparée actuelle.

Les trois essais qui ouvrent ce numéro mettent en évidence la nature profondément dialogique de notre discipline. Dans "Worlding World Literature," Theo D'haen brosse un tableau des débats actuels dans le domaine parfois controversé de la littérature mondiale. Dans un registre tout à fait différent, Mireille Naturel se penche sur l'état de l'art des études proustiennes. Dans son essai traitant d'un livre nourri par les travaux de recherche de l'AILC, Zhang Longxi met en lumière une autre facette importante de la discipline, le rapport entre la littérature et les autres arts.

Le premier groupe des nombreux comptes rendus réunis ici fait écho aux considérations de Théo D'haen sur la littérature mondiale. Les comptes rendus de César Dominguez, Gerald Gillespie, Hans Bertens, et Randolph Pope se concentrent sur des livres traitant de points spécifiques relatifs aux phénomènes de la globalisation et de la littérature mondiale dans différents contextes culturels. Une longue section centrale, consacrée à des thèmes récurrents en littérature comparée, est ouverte par la discussion que nous offre Massimo Fusillo de l'ouvrage, *Introducing Comparative Literature. New Trends and Applications*, écrit collectivement par César Dominguez, Haun Saussy et Dario Villanueva, un livre qui développe de nouvelles perspectives sur la discipline. Les autres volumes dont il est question dans cette partie de la revue ont trait à des sujets aussi divers que la théorie de la littérature, l'esthétique des médias, les transpositions littéraires de portraits, la narration du « je », le traumatisme et le témoignage, le plurilinguisme littéraire, les dramaturgies symbolistes, la religion et la littérature, ainsi que la neuroscience. Cette section se conclut par la recension d'Assumpta Camps d'un ouvrage important dans la collection de l'AILC

sur l'Histoire comparée des littératures de langues européennes, le collectif dirigé par Marcel Cornis-Pope, *New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression*. Un dernier groupe de comptes rendus se concentre sur les études littéraires postcoloniales. Il est en effet possible d'argumenter que ce domaine de recherche est apparenté à la littérature comparée du fait de son intérêt pour les individus opprimés et marginalisés, ainsi que l'attention qu'il porte aux problèmes liés à la multiplicité des contextes culturels, aux conditions diasporiques, multi-ethniques et transnationales. Le lien entre les textes postcoloniaux et la traduction est exploré dans l'ouvrage de Simona Bertaccio, *Language and Translation in Postcolonial Literatures*, dont le compte rendu est écrit par Jean-Marc Moura. Cette section de la revue est sans doute la plus radicalement non-eurocentrique, car elle contient trois comptes rendus de livres écrits par des chercheurs indiens et publiés en Inde. De plus, trois comptes rendus se concentrent sur un aspect souvent négligé par la littérature comparée, les études théâtrales. Les ouvrages ainsi examinés traitent du théâtre postcolonial en Inde et du théâtre indigène en Océanie et en Amérique du Nord. Le compte rendu rédigé par Chantal Zabus de l'ouvrage de Joel Kuortti, *Transculturation and Aesthetics*, fournit une conclusion adéquate à cette section sur les études littéraires postcoloniales. Au contraire de certains spécialistes de la littérature mondiale, elle affirme la vitalité de ce domaine de recherche. En ce sens, elle fait écho à Robert Young, selon lequel la désaffection actuelle pour la théorie postcoloniale ne signifie nullement la disparition de toutes les formes d'oppression. D'après Young, cela indique simplement que « certaines personnes dans les milieux académiques états-uniens et français ont décidé qu'ils ne voulaient plus être obligés de penser à de telles choses ni qu'on leur rappelle l'existence de ces contextes culturels éloignés et invisibles qui continuent à nourrir les énergies transformatives du phénomène postcolonial » (19–20; traduction libre du rédacteur). Les comptes rendus rassemblés dans cette section confirment clairement que les études littéraires postcoloniales ont encore un bel avenir.

La revue est complétée par un compte rendu de plusieurs numéros de la revue argentine de littérature comparée, un essai en l'honneur de la contribution remarquable de John Neubauer à l'Histoire comparée des littératures de langues européennes, ainsi que quatre rapports de colloques récemment organisés en Europe et en Amérique. La dernière partie de la revue fait office de lettre d'information aux membres. Elle inclut des nouvelles des activités des divers comités de recherché de l'AILC, soulignant

ainsi une fois de plus le rôle de pionnier joué par l'Association pour la promotion de la recherche de pointe en littérature comparée. En conclusion, j'espère que ce numéro témoignera des multiples (re)configurations d'une discipline vibrante, en évolution constante.

En tant que nouveau rédacteur de *Recherche littéraire/Literary Research*, je suis reconnaissant envers de nombreux collègues et amis. Tout d'abord, je tiens à remercier le Professeur Dorothy Figueira, la rédactrice sortante. Sans ses excellents conseils, ce numéro n'aurait jamais pu voir le jour. Je remercie également le Professeur John Burt Foster qui a redonné vie à cette revue sous l'impulsion de Dorothy Figueira, alors Présidente de l'AILC. Jenny Webb a mis en oeuvre son immense compétence dans le processus de production de la revue. De plus, elle s'est révélée être une collaboratrice très encourageante. John Schweppe a aimablement proposé ses talents picturaux pour la réalisation de la couverture de ce numéro. Je remercie les membres du Comité consultatif pour leurs précieuses suggestions ainsi que ma fille Jessica, pour son aide logistique. Enfin et surtout, je suis très reconnaissant à l'AILC pour son soutien financier.

MARC MAUFORT
Bruxelles, mai 2016

RÉFÉRENCE

Young, Robert JC. "Postcolonial Remains." *New Literary History* 43, no.1 (Winter 2012): 19–42.

Essais / Review Articles

Worlding World Literature

THE TERM “WORLDING” has three birthfathers, or rather two fathers and one mother. Chronologically the first is Martin Heidegger, who in “The Origin of the Work of Art” (1935), following the German phenomenological tradition, argued that a work of art never “is” but only “becomes,” or “comes into being,” in its actualization by a spectator, a listener, or a reader. In its actualization a work of art creates a world contingent upon the circumstances of actualization. The concrete circumstances of actualization—the “world”—thus determine what “world” emerges from such actualization. In fact, this “world” has no concrete shape before its emergence in actualization. As Heidegger himself puts it in what at first sounds like a rather cryptic statement, but which I hope will now make sense: “world worlds.” The “world” a literary work of art “makes,” then, changes with the latter’s being read or interpreted, each reading being at the same time an act of interpretation. This is true whether on the level of the individual or, more importantly for what interests us here, on the level of the collective, as expressed in criticism and literary historiography. Edward Said, without mentioning Heidegger, and in much more straightforward language, actually says much the same thing as Heidegger when in “The World, The Text, and the Critic” (1983) he insists that “texts have ways of existing that even in their most rarefied form are always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society—in short, they are in the world, and hence wordly” (35). Hence, he argues, even at their very emergence texts are “objects whose interpretation—by virtue of the exactness of their situation in the world—*has already commenced*” (39). Every time a text is actualized, by its being read or performed, another interpretation arises attuned to its new circumstantiality. Critics, as professional readers, “embody in writing those processes and actual conditions in the *present* by means of which art and writing bear significance” (53). Gayatri

Spivak, finally, and specifically referencing Heidegger as her source, in “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism” (1985), so to speak actualizes Said’s insight in showing up “the ‘worlding’ of what is today ‘the Third World’ by what has become a cult text of feminism: *Jane Eyre*” (244). Said and Spivak, of course, put “worlding” specifically in the service of what came to be known as postcolonialism. Doing so, they created a “world” made different and marked by de-colonization, the decline of the former European colonial powers, and the rise of neo-colonialism. Another way of putting this is to say that postcolonialism is a reading of the world occasioned by particular geopolitical circumstances while at the same time bringing into being the “world” of postcolonialism. What I want to argue in what follows is that the same thing holds for the “world” of world literature. In other words, I will argue that discussions on world literature have always already been exercises in “worlding,” and that the recent contributions to the discussion are no exception.

Goethe’s “invention” of *Weltliteratur* in the late 1820s both arises from and helps shaping a post-Napoleonic world marked by the acceleration of international communication among European intellectuals, but also by the continuing division of the German “nation” in numerous small kingdoms, principalities, duchies, and counties. It is precisely the latter that leads Goethe to search for the higher aggregate of a “world literature” in which Germans, and the German language, should play a decisive role. Ironically, Goethe’s *Weltliteratur* was used as a foil by the early proponents of a German national literature, while at the same time serving as part of the emerging discipline of comparative literature, itself only made possible by the rise of national literatures as objects for comparison. Yet, for the longest time, world literature remained at best a minor interest among comparatists. This started to change in the 1990s, largely due, I would argue, to two related events of geopolitical reach. One was the end of the Cold War, with as iconic date the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, but actually covering the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s. The other was the spread of what we have commonly come to call “globalization.” The latter term has been mostly used in the realm of economics and trade, but in its most general definition, as for instance offered by Roland Robertson in 1992, for whom globalization signals “the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole,” it also applies to culture (8). A strengthening factor for, and to my mind in fact an agent in the latter undoubtedly has been the emergence and spread of the internet, to a large

extent achieving that ultimate time/space compression David Harvey in 1989 saw as the distinguishing characteristic of what he called the condition of postmodernity. An early sign of renewed interest in world literature on a par with the “globalized” world of the 1990s is to be found in a 1994 collective volume edited by Sarah Lawall, *Reading World Literature: Theory, History, Practice*. Towards the end of the millennium, there followed more systemic attempts to encompass the “global world” of literature: Pascal Casanova’s *La Littérature mondiale des lettres* (1999), translated as *The World Republic of Letters* in 2004, and Franco Moretti’s “Conjectures on World Literature” in 2000, and now collected, together with Moretti’s subsequent writings on world literature in *Distant Reading* (2013). However different in method, both were attempts to read at least the literature of modernity, in Casanova’s case as of the sixteenth and in Moretti’s as of the late eighteenth century, as “ripple-out” effects from European literature, and particularly from what they see as the two great centres of literary culture in modernity, viz. Paris and London. However revolutionary or even upsetting their works might otherwise be methodologically, in this particular sense Casanova and Moretti were continuing in the hallowed tradition of world literature studies throughout the late nineteenth and the whole twentieth century. This tradition saw world literature as largely synonymous with European or more generally Western literature, as is also evident from the anthologies used for teaching world literature courses in United States undergraduate curricula until the mid-1990s. This view, of course, ran parallel to the importance generally conceded to Europe and the West also in terms of politics and economics until the very last decades of the twentieth century.

At first it seemed as if with the end of the Cold War the world had become united under the aegis of late capitalism, which laid the ground for the economic globalization I mentioned earlier. It also led Francis Fukuyama to posit, in retrospect quite erroneously, “The End of History.” And it encouraged the theories of Casanova and Moretti as exponents of such a “technical” take on world literature emanating, as did economic globalization, at least in the then view of things, from Europe or by extension the Western world. Soon, however, such certainties were shattered by the dramatic events of 9/11 and what in general we could call the return of history in some extreme version of what Samuel P. Huntington in a notorious 1993 article in *Foreign Affairs* had labelled “The Clash of Civilizations.” Interestingly, this dramatic shift in how the world looked in

the very early stage of the third millennium occasioned practitioners of comparative and world literature in the United States to return to some works that issued directly from another troubled time, viz. the 1930s and World War II, but expanded to take in the world. One of the first, if not the very first, to reflect on what it meant to be “doing” world literature in the twenty-first century and after 9/11, was Edward Said. To do so, Said turned to Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, written in Istanbul while WWII was raging, and published in 1947 in German and in 1953 in English. In fact, Said’s career had started with Auerbach, as in 1969, Said, together with his wife, Maire, had translated Auerbach’s 1952 essay “Philologie der Weltliteratur” as “Philology and World Literature.” It is in this essay that Auerbach, in words that recall Goethe’s most famous statement on world literature, proclaims that “our philological home is the earth: it can no longer be the nation” (Auerbach 2013: 73). Said shared a history of exile with Auerbach who as a Jew had to seek refuge from Nazi Germany in Turkey in 1935, the very year of Said’s birth in Palestine. In Istanbul, Auerbach became Professor of Romance Philology as successor to Leo Spitzer, who had moved to Istanbul for the same reason already in 1933. In 2003, the year of his death, Said provided an “Introduction” to a new edition of *Mimesis*. That introduction was republished in 2004 as part of what in effect would be Said’s posthumous *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*. *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* contains the revised versions of three lectures Said gave in January 2000 at Columbia University in an annual series of lectures on aspects of American culture. In his “Preface” to the book Said stipulates that in 2003 he expanded and revised his original lectures, adding a fourth lecture on Auerbach’s “humanist masterpiece” *Mimesis* (Said, 2003: xv) and that later on he added yet another lecture on “The Public Role of Writers and Intellectuals.” All changes, he insists, were made because of the “terrible events of 9/11” (Said 2003: xvii). The destruction of the twin towers in New York led to a “changed political atmosphere” in the US and beyond, he argues, which sets “America” against the world, and the “West” versus “Islam.” Yet, and with what I can only see as a submerged reference to Goethe’s ideas on world literature, he contends that “far more than they fight, cultures coexist and interact fruitfully with each other” (Said 2003: xvi). “It is to this idea of humanistic culture as coexistence and sharing that these pages are meant to contribute” Said continues (Said 2003: xvi).

Like Said's *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, Emily Apter's 2006 *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* "was shaped by the traumatic experience of September 11, 2001" (Apter 2006: vii). The cause for these terrible events she finds in a lack of understanding, particularly in the United States, of foreign cultures, brought about by a lack of knowledge of foreign languages, and particularly those of the Islamic world. For antecedents to her "new comparative literature," she turns to Auerbach's contemporary Leo Spitzer, best known among comparatists for his 1948 *Linguistics and Literary History: Essays in Stylistics*. Spitzer spent only three years in Istanbul, from when he fled Cologne in 1933. In 1936 he moved to the United States, as would Auerbach after WWII. There, their works served as laying out a specific methodology underpinning the proper Comparative Literature way of studying literature, that is to say in the original language, and backed by knowledge of the classical languages, but likewise as encompassing the domain of Goethean world literature as coinciding with European literature. From interviews with Spitzer's students in Istanbul, however, Apter argues that Spitzer's Istanbul "seminar also acted as a laboratory for working through what a philological curriculum in literary studies should look like when applied to non-European languages and literatures" (Apter 2006: 55). Therefore, Apter credits Spitzer with "inventing" comparative literature in its modern guise during his stay in Istanbul. "In retrospect," she concludes, "Spitzer's invention of comparative literature in Istanbul transformed philology into something recognizable today as the psychic life of transnational humanism" (Apter 2006: 64). Such transnational humanism is what Said recognizes in how Auerbach, at the end of *Mimesis*, stresses that each form of understanding is also a form of self-understanding at a particular time and in a particular place. This, for Said, is to world oneself as a humanist critic: "it means situating critique at the very heart of humanism, critique as a form of democratic freedom and as a continuous practice of questioning and of accumulating knowledge that is open to, rather than in denial of, the constituent historical realities of the post-Cold War world, its early colonial formation, and the frighteningly global reach of the last remaining superpower of today" (Said 2003: 47). To use Dipesh Chakrabarty's term, this comes down to a Europe, or by extension a Western "world," "provincializing" itself by universalizing its critical method. This, by the way, is an idea that not only applies to literature—it is also what Rodolphe Gasché's argues has been the case

with European philosophy. In his *Europe, or the Infinite Task: A Study of a Philosophical Concept* (2009), discussing Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jan Patočka, and Jacques Derrida, Gasché argues that the philosophical task of Europe is to dis-solve itself by turning its own bedrock principle of universalism into the world's property, with "Europe" thus de-exceptionalizing itself. The same idea, albeit put less polemically and categorically than with Said or Apter, but rather elaborated pragmatically, lies at the root of David Damrosch's *What is World Literature?* (2003), and of the *Longman Anthology of World Literature* (2004) for which he served as the main editor.

It is the universalizing drive behind the concept of world literature as implemented in ventures such as the Longman and other anthologies, such as the Norton, or at least the way it is being perceived, though, that has called forth some very strong resistance. In his 1952 "Philology and World Literature" Auerbach warned that the rapid process of concentration after WWII of power in only a few superpowers risked reducing man to "existence in a standardized world, to a single literary culture, only a few literary languages, and perhaps even a single literary language. And herewith the notion of *Weltliteratur* would be at once realized and destroyed" (Auerbach 2013: 66). The single culture and the single language Auerbach has in mind are clearly Anglo-American. Gayatri Spivak in *Death of a Discipline* (2003) sounded a similar alarm with respect to the practice of world literature as presently promoted from the US, teaching the world's literatures via exclusively English-language anthologies aimed at American undergraduates. Instead of making such undergraduates more receptive to the world outside of the US, Spivak implied, they turned all of the world into an extension of the US. In other words, and to fall back on the terminology I have been emphasizing throughout, such anthologies, and such a conception of world literature again "worlds" the world outside of the US in the image of what suits the US, just as European literature "worlded" the world of colonialism and imperialism when Europe ruled the world. The foregoing developments, along with most others involving the renewed prominence of world literature in literary studies, have been addressed in three volumes that appeared in 2012: the collective volumes *World Literature: A Reader*, edited by Theo D'haen, César Domínguez, and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen and *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, edited by Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir, and my monograph *Routledge Concise History of World*

Literature. Since then, however, there have appeared a number of significant new interventions.

Emily Apter, like Spivak, objects to a world literature that presents the entire world as transparently accessible in translation, an assumption she sees underlying the endeavours of Damrosch and the like. In *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (2013) she focuses on those terms and concepts that resist translation and that therefore preclude that one should talk of one “world literature.” Most often such terms and concepts have to do with what Apter calls philosophical, or perhaps by extension cultural, “lodestones”: concepts central or essential to a specific culture but for which there exists no real equivalent, or at best only a remotely or relatively approximate one, or even only a paraphrase, in another culture. As Apter herself hints on pages 8–9 of *Against World Literature*, the term “world” in world literature itself already poses the question of un/translatability, its definition varying considerably from one culture to another, to the point of complete lack of coverage of the source by the target term at the furthest extremes. If, as the title of her book suggests, Apter is “against world literature” it is because the inevitable mistranslations she sees as resulting from present attempts to catch the world’s literatures under the umbrella of one world literature in practice means bending the non-Western to the Western. Let me add immediately that Apter’s stance on the untranslatability of certain terms and concepts is heavily contested, a.o. by ZHANG Longxi in his “Crossroads, Distant Killing, and Translation: On the Ethics and Politics of Comparison” (2013). Even apart from such critiques, though, I am much more optimistic than Apter about the possibilities of “doing” world literature more equitably than she seems to think possible.

For this, I turn to what the Spanish comparatist César Domínguez in his *Literatura europea comparada* (2013) calls a “eurocentrismo metodológico,” where the “centrismo” runs along the lines of the Slovak comparatist and literary theoretician Dionyz Durišin’s concept of a supranational space united by a set of in this case literary phenomena, yet without attributing to these phenomena more than a purely heuristic value. On the level of the centrismo itself this might actually come close to Spivak’s call in *Death of a Discipline* for a renewed investment in area studies, with attention being paid to the detailed study of an area’s languages, cultures and literatures. Apter’s concept of the untranslatable might serve as a useful instrument when it comes to establishing the

faultline between a “European” literature and other centrismos, whether geographically near or far, and both synchronically and diachronically. A comparative world literature, then, would consist of juxtaposing and relating to one another this and other centrismos without hierarchically prejudicing one or the other. “European” literature thus comes to stand not as the focus from which to study the world’s literatures, and hence the central perspective on world literature, but as an object for how it relates to the literatures of the “world.” In other words, a world literature as here advocated would “world” European literature from a non-Eurocentric (in the classical definition) perspective. But studying the literature of any other centrismo from a world literature point of view requires the same openness, the same non-centric approach. That, by the way, is what an international team of scholars is now trying to do with a new world history of literature to be published in, it is hoped, two years’ time (Petersson and D’haen 2011).

A centrismo that at first may not appear as such, but that in fact goes back on the earliest moves to counter Eurocentrism is the postcolonial. Homi Bhabha already in 1994, in the “Introduction” to his *The Location of Culture* (1994), proposed that “where, once, the transmission of national traditions was the major theme of a world literature, perhaps we can now suggest that transnational histories of migrants, the colonized, or political refugees—these border and frontier conditions – may be the terrains of world literature” (Bhabha 1994: 12). Such a statement rings truer than ever, also for us here in Europe, I think, in today’s world of massive migrations due to conditions of war, famine, and demographic and economic disruptions and inequalities. Most recently, Pheng Cheah has picked up on this suggestion with his *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (2016), a title that to me suggests a deliberate take on David Damrosch’s *What is World Literature?* Using Michelle Cliff’s Clare Savage novels, set in Jamaica, Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide*, set in Bangladesh, and Nuruddin Farah’s *Gifts*, set in Somalia, as examples, Cheah argues that postcolonial literature resists the West’s worlding of the rest of the world by refusing to go along with the uni-temporality of globalization as Western imposition. Specifically, Cheah argues, “these novels are examples of literature that seeks to have a worldly causality in contemporary globalization ... the source of literature’s worldly force is the heterotemporality of precolonial oral traditions that have survived the violence of slavery, folk practices, subaltern

rituals and practices of survival, religious ethics, and even the geological time of the landscape” (13). The postcolonial novels he discusses, Cheah maintains, “employ formal means to revive non-Western temporalities in the present that can aid in worlding the world otherwise.” Put differently, “they generate alternative cartographies that enable a postcolonial people or a collective group to foster relations of solidarity and build a shared world in which self-determination is achieved” (17). I see Cheah here as basically updating Said’s thesis, in *Culture and Imperialism*, of postcolonial literature as a literature of resistance.

The idea of different temporalities applying in different locales around the globe has been invoked repeatedly with regard to Latin America. Suffice it to think of the works of a.o. Enrique Dussel, Walter D’Mignolo, and Aníbal Quijano, especially with respect to issues of Modernity and Post-Modernity. In the field of literature this has led to reflections on the relationship of Latin American literatures to “Western” genres such as Realism, Modernism and Postmodernism. Magical realism as “invented” by Alejo Carpentier in the 1949 preface to *El reino de este mundo* in essence hinges upon differences in temporality between Europe and Latin America. Of course, the idea of heterotemporality also looms large in the emerging field of “chronopolitics” as part of geopolitics. For Mariano Siskind in *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and World Literature in Latin America* (2014) this translates into “the tension between the desire to join the global order of modernism [what Latin American writers think of as the “cosmopolitan” world literature practiced in metropolitan Europe or North America] and the anxiety provoked by the experience of exclusion and the anticipation of the exclusion to come” (18) which he sees as constitutive of Latin American literature since 1870. Héctor Hoyos in *Beyond Bolaño: The Global Latin American Novel* (2015) unabashedly “worlds” Latin American literature as what Auerbach would have called (1952) an *Ansatz* or “entry” into world literature. Hoyos uses Jorge Luis Borges’s “Aleph” as an example of a “global” story, in the sense that it is part of world literature, and a story about “globalization,” in the sense that the object the Aleph is “one of the points in space that contain all points,” the equivalent in physics, we might say, of Borges’s equally “global” and globally famous “Library of Babel.” “Fiction can conjure globality, as the Aleph demonstrates,” Hoyos argues. He continues: “This occurs in other Latin American works, many of which benefit from a strong tradition of negotiating particularity and universality, specificity

and generality, all within complex transactions among national, regional, and global realms. In this way, world literature has much to learn from contemporary Latin American fiction” (31). And Hoyos turns the tables on what Siskind called cosmopolitan and metropolitan literatures when he argues that “some might regard Bolaño as something that, in Spanish, happened years ago, with English and other langues catching up later.... So, in some sense, Bolaño is an instance (of which we are bound to have more of as the world becomes more integrated) of metropolitan centers experiencing the kind of belatedness that used to be reserved to, and a hallmark of, the periphery” (30).

Cheah’s take on a postcolonial and Siskind’s and Hoyos’s on a Latin American world literature are firmly situated in what I will call “the extended present” of a globalizing world, and basically employ what Rey Chow has called a “Europe and ...” construction, whereby the European or Western serves as the initial term of comparison. Hence, they can be said to still adopt a hierarchizing principle, even if with a vengeance in some cases. Over the past few years however there have been an increasing number of comparative world literature studies on literary systems that pre-date the beginnings of globalization and Modernity as of roughly the turn of the sixteenth century, and that are not only geographically but also culturally almost as far apart as possible. Again the geopolitical angle here shows. On a par with the steadily rising importance of the area economically, politically and militarily, the literatures of East Asia, and especially China, have been gaining ever more attention over the last two decades or so. On the one hand this has translated into studies such as Karen Thornber’s *Empire of Texts in Motion: Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese Transculturations of Japanese Literature* (2009), that look at the area as an integrated cultural unit, the literatures of which relate to one another at least as intimately, and as Thornber argues, more so, than to Western literatures. Concretely, Thornber shows that Japanese literature, which after the Meiji restoration quickly retooled itself along European lines, came to serve as the center of what in Domínguez’s terminology we may call an East Asian centrismo. On the other hand, this increased interest in the literatures of East Asia has also yielded such boldly comparative studies as Alexander Beecroft’s *Authorship and Cultural Identity in Early Greece and China* (2010) or Wiebke Denecke’s *Classical World Literatures: Sino-Japanese and Greco-Roman Comparisons* (2014). Denecke compares the relationship of the literatures of Japan and Rome

in their formative stages to that of what she calls, after ZHANG Longxi (2013), their respective “reference cultures,” the Chinese and the Greek or Hellenic. In her introduction she stresses that rather than privileging the chronologically earlier European case over the later East-Asian one, and discussing the latter from the ontological perspective of what it lacks in comparison with the former, she has “framed her comparison as a quadruple constellation, which, although it still consists of two binaries, avoids essentializing dichotomy and the creation of false ellipses” (12–13). Instead, she considers China and Japan, and Greece and Rome, “as long-standing constellations of cultural reception processes, of cultural translatio,” and “when we come to compare the four literary cultures of the Ancient Mediterranean and East Asia, we are not in fact comparing cultures, but reception processes” (12). Likewise, Beecroft in *Authorship and Cultural Identity in early Greece and China* is not comparing cultures but how authorship functions in the two cultures concerned. Denecke argues for her book that it “tries to make a seductive case for dialogue” (15). The same can be said to apply to Beecroft’s book. Both Beecroft and Denecke, however, are only two of a recent wave of (relatively) younger scholars that approach world literature from a refreshingly open perspective, deliberately avoiding Eurocentrism. Instead they comply with what ZHANG Longxi has argued that “a comparative literature for our time should be—comparison not just within but beyond and across philologically linked language groups, across Romance and East Asian languages” (ZHANG 2013: 59).

In an even later volume, *An Ecology of World Literature: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (2015), Beecroft explains how when he was working on *Authorship and Cultural Identity in early Greece and China* he was struck by the fact that “in both cases, the historical record shows that literary texts (oral or otherwise), and other cultural artifacts, circulated across political boundaries so that the world of a common Greek (Pan-hellenic) or Chinese culture was larger by far than that of any polity then in existence, providing some measure of cultural solidarity to a politically fragmented world” (1). At the same time he noticed a similar phenomenon with Sanskrit literature as explained by Sheldon Pollock in the latter’s *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (2006). In any case, these observations led Beecroft already in 2008 to propose a six-mode model of literature across time: the epichoric (within the confines of a local community, the

panchoric (operating across a range of epichoric communities, united to some degree in language and culture, but generally fragmented politically), the cosmopolitan (circulating in a cosmopolitan literary language used by groups speaking a variety of mother tongues), the vernacular (but not yet in a national context; i.e., Germany at the time of Goethe), the national, and the global (transcending national, even continental, borders, but continuing to represent itself as a national literatures) (Beecroft 2008: 92–98). In his most recent volume, Beecroft elaborates these modes into a full-blown theory of world literature comparing literatures across the world.

And then there are scholars that look at how contemporary literature adapts to the tautology of a “global world.” Rebecca Walkowitz, in *Born Translated: The Contemporary Novel in an Age of World Literature* (2015), remarks that if works of literature have of course always been translated - some, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, even with remarkable speed—“the translation and circulation of literature today is historically unprecedented once we consider how quickly books enter various national markets, small and large, across several continents” (2). Moreover, she argues, “many novels do not simply appear in translation ... they have been written for translation from the start.” These novels she calls “born translated” and “like born-digital literature, which is made on or for the computer, born-translated literature approaches translation as medium and origin rather than as afterthought. Translation is not secondary or incidental to these works. It is a condition of their production.” (3–4). Moreover, many of these novels themselves reflect on translation, or present themselves as already-translated. A historical example would, again, be Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*. As well-known contemporary examples Walkowitz mentions a.o. the later works of J.M. Coetzee, Haruki Murakami, and Orhan Pamuk. I myself might be inclined to add the French-Caribbean (Guadeloupan) Maryse Condé—specifically her *La migration des coeurs* (1995), which is a rewriting in French of Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights* and which was duly translated into English, by Condé’s husband Richard Philcox, as *Windward Heights* in 2003. But here we might also think of popular literature such as crime fiction or popular romance—what the Germans call *Lektur* rather than *Literatur*. It is not difficult to see that such practice plays into the hand of the kinds of globalization I raised at the very beginning of my talk: to speak with Apter, born-translated works sharply

reduce or altogether eliminate untranslatables, thus ensuring themselves easy access to the “global” market for fiction: “world” literature indeed! Not surprisingly given today’s linguistic world map, most of these works are written with an eye to translation into English, because most profitable. In a sense we could say that the authors of such born-translated works are “worlding” their products in the sense of the widest possible dissemination while the student of such literature—in this case Walkowitz—is “worlding” the study of world literature in today’s geopolitics once more.

I have insisted on the relation between world literature and geopolitics because I truly believe they are two sides of the same coin. Interest in the study of world history has risen on a par with that in the study of world literature—suffice it to think of recent books such as *Grand Strategies: Literature, Statecraft, and World Order*, a 2010 volume by Charles Hill, a former US career diplomat, *The Revenge of Geography* (2012) and *Asia’s Cauldron* (2014) by Robert D. Kaplan, with whom we see a return to older theoreticians of geopolitics such as the turn-of-the-twentieth century British Halford Mackinder and his “geographical pivot of history” theory, or Jürgen Osterhammel, with his *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*. Edward Said, by the way, when discussing Joseph Conrad in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) refers to Mackinder. Or we might cite the revival of the work of the early and mid-twentieth-century German Carl Schmitt, whose work, although much contested because of his Nazi-sympathies, is making a remarkable comeback also in literary studies, a.o. via Bertrand Westphal’s *géocritique*. But we might also think of other ways of linking world history and world literature, “worlding” the world differently according to for instance routes of communication, commerce, and disease. Here we might think of recent works such as Lincoln Paine’s *The Sea and Civilization: A Maritime History of the World* (2014) or Peter Frankopan’s *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (2015). To suggest only one instance of what Walter Benjamin, and after him Mads Rosendahl Thomsen in his *Mapping World Literature* (2008), call a “constellation” in literature fitting the “world” of the works just cited consider Marco Polo, the sixteenth-century Portuguese poet Luís Vaz de Camões, Joseph Conrad, the Dutch early twentieth-century poet J.J. Slauerhoff, the Italian twentieth-century novelist Italo Calvino, and the Portuguese contemporary novelist Gonçalo M. Tavares, all of whom write about “the Indies,” in the widest sense:

going there, getting there, trading there, failing there and getting lost there, and do so in a densely woven web of intertextuality. All these ways of “writing” world literature, then, are as many ways of “worlding” our world for “our” age, as Goethe did for his. We could be in lesser company!

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Ce que nous disent les commémorations à propos de la recherche proustienne ...

Philippe Chardin et Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, dir. *Proust écrivain de la Première Guerre mondiale*. Dijon : Editions universitaires de Dijon, 2014. Pp. 200. ISBN : 9782364410992.

Erika Fülöp et Philippe Chardin, dir. *Cent ans de jalousie proustienne*. Paris : Classique Garnier, 2015. Pp. 308. ISBN : 9782812436949.

MARCEL PROUST JOUIT d'un rayonnement international, côté lecteurs et côté chercheurs, les deux se rejoignant parfois. C'est ce qui fut fait à Illiers-Combray quand le Centre de Recherches Proustiennes de la Sorbonne nouvelle commémora en novembre 2013 le centenaire de *Du côté de chez Swann*, en collaboration avec la Société des Amis de Marcel Proust et des Amis de Combray. Le centenaire de la publication de *Du côté de chez Swann* provoqua en effet un véritable feu d'artifice de commémorations en tous genres, à commencer par les colloques universitaires. Il fut suivi, en 2014, par celui du déclenchement de la première guerre mondiale. La proximité chronologique et spatiale nous permit d'associer Proust et Alain-Fournier pour les deux centennaires, sans oublier Jacques Rivière, responsable éditorial du premier et beau-frère du second. De ces commémorations, sont nés, entre autres, deux volumes critiques, l'un concernant la guerre, *Proust écrivain de la Première Guerre mondiale*, l'autre la jalousie, *Cent ans de jalousie proustienne*. Outre leur origine mémorielle, ils ont pour dénominateur commun Philippe Chardin, qui a publié le premier en 2014, en collaboration avec Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, aux Éditions Universitaires de Dijon, le second en 2015, aux Classiques Garnier, en collaboration avec Erika Fülöp. Les deux titres provoquent le même effet de surprise, le premier par l'image qu'il donne de l'auteur de la *Recherche* que l'on ne relie pas spontanément à la guerre, le second par le fait de définir un volume entier par son héros éponyme et par la thématique qu'il incarne, la jalousie, communément associée à la seule partie centrale, « Un amour de Swann ». Ils suscitent aussi une interrogation :

derrière le rapprochement justifié par les circonstances, y aurait-il un lien plus profond entre les deux thématiques : la jalousie et la guerre ?

La question de la guerre permet toutes les approches : historique, discursive, sociologique, psychanalytique. Commencer par dresser un tableau, à la fois historique et littéraire, tel que le fait Pierre-Edmond Robert, était indispensable. Cela permet de mettre en relief la singularité de la position de Proust. Alors que la plupart des romanciers qui ont écrit sur la guerre sont d'anciens combattants, *Le Temps retrouvé* est un roman de l'arrière. Proust se nourrit de la lecture des journaux, en particulier des articles d'Henri Bidou dans *Le Journal des Débats*, de Joseph Reinach dans *Le Figaro*, du colonel Feyler dans le *Journal de Genève* qui viennent compléter les connaissances militaires acquises lors de ses études et les témoignages des soldats recueillis à l'hôtel de l'Arcade, modèle de l'hôtel de Jupien. Et il en nourrit les propos de ses personnages. En effet, la guerre envahit le discours, suscite différents types de discours, « technique, stratégique, diplomatique, voire esthétique », que Proust se fait un devoir de rapporter dans leur pluralité. Charlus, figure singulière dans ce tableau de la guerre, est à contretemps du discours de l'époque ; il est rejoint en cela par la naissante revue *Europe* (1923) qui, sous l'égide de Romain Rolland, préfère aux valeurs du patriotisme une rencontre franco-allemande entre les intellectuels et les artistes. Plus radicale est la position de Carine Trévisan qui n'hésite pas à parler d'« euphémisation » de la guerre et de « roman du *home front* » à propos du *Temps retrouvé*, soulignant l'esthétisation de la guerre et l'érotisation de la ville pour les homosexuels. Erotisation aussi du front, qui trouverait un prolongement dans la pratique sadomasochiste, spécialité des militaires, dans l'hôtel de Jupien. Une étude d'inspiration psychanalytique ne peut se passer, face au sujet traité, de réfléchir au deuil : Proust y est sensible mais il voit dans l'écriture une façon de dépasser l'angoisse de la mort. Anna Magdalena Elsner s'intéresse elle-aussi au deuil, en comparant les positions du sociologue contemporain et lecteur de Proust, Maurice Halbwachs, auteur de *La Mémoire collective*, de Freud dans « Deuil et Mélancolie » paru en 1917 mais écrit avant la guerre, de Barthes dans *Journal de deuil*. La guerre a modifié la conception du deuil. Il faut distinguer le deuil en tant que processus, ce que Proust appelle « chagrin », et le deuil social, celui suscité par la guerre. Le deuil, en temps de guerre, n'est pas autorisé officiellement. Il a alors un statut paradoxal : la mode féminine cultivée, exhibée est là pour montrer qu'esthétique et éthique riment doublement en ces

temps. Comme l'écrit Pyra Wise, le langage est au cœur de la « culture de guerre » et de la question du patriotisme. Les journaux véhiculent les néologismes argotiques, comme « boche » et « poilus », qui auraient un impact psychologique, et traduiraient un esprit nationaliste dénoncé par Proust. Pyra Wise analyse cette « langue poilue », son usage social ainsi que sa présence dans l'œuvre et la correspondance de Proust, celle-ci jouant le rôle de laboratoire pour cette partie du roman.

La question de la guerre débouche forcément sur celle du nationalisme et un rapprochement entre Proust et Julien Benda ouvre de nouveaux horizons (Edward J. Hughes). *La Trahison des clercs* paraît la même année que *Le Temps retrouvé* (1927) qui dénonce le nationalisme bar-résien. Si Julien Benda est peu connu des proustiens, Pauline Benda, sa cousine, dite Simone, l'est davantage en tant que dernier amour d'Alain-Fournier, avant son départ à la guerre. Proust est un des rares écrivains à trouver grâce auprès de Benda, de par sa position face à la question du nationalisme. Le nom de Daniel Halévy s'impose dans ce débat, en tant que signataire du « Parti de l'intelligence » dont le manifeste est publié dans *Le Figaro* du 19 juillet 1919, se prononçant pour une renonciation à la dimension internationale de la littérature. Proust et Benda partagent la même conception de la nation-individu : la nation, comme l'individu, agit par subjectivité et passion. Néanmoins, la position de Proust est plus ambiguë que celle de Benda, foncièrement antinationaliste : une position idéologique éclatée, comme le montrent les esquisses de l'œuvre non publiées, et une conception de l'histoire ramenée à celle du comportement humain. Intéressant est le rapprochement final établi par Hughes avec le père de l'écrivain, le professeur Adrien Proust, via la médecine, et encore plus surprenant, via le discours tenu le 27 juillet 1903 à l'École supérieure de garçons d'Illiers. Discours qui porte l'empreinte incontestable du fils, notamment par l'entremêlement de considérations esthétiques et médicales. Les principes hygiénistes d'Adrien Proust se révèlent avoir un caractère nationaliste : l'hygiène est nécessaire à l'épanouissement de la nation. Père et fils partagent la même vision stratégique de la guerre, comme le montrent, pour le premier, les principes énoncés dans *Le Choléra* (1883) pour « assurer la défense des intérêts sanitaires de l'Europe », la lecture des articles d'Henry Bidou dans le *Journal des débats* pour le second. Le Professeur Adrien Proust reprendra les mêmes principes dans son discours aux écoliers d'Illiers : importance de l'hygiène en même temps qu'éloge de la patrie. Yuji Murukami,

s'intéresse à la figure de l'analogie : analogie entre la guerre et l'Affaire Dreyfus, analogie entre l'idée esthétique de la révélation, celle du Septuor, et les révélations relatives à l'Affaire — interprétation particulièrement originale — analogie entre les Juifs et les soldats des troupes coloniales. L'Affaire et la guerre ont un autre point commun : l'inversion, qui dans le premier cas renvoie au scandale Eulenburg, dans le second au front et autres lieux de rencontres entre militaires. La question du judaïsme et de l'antisémitisme est revue à travers le prisme de la guerre, comme en témoigne l'ajout de notations à ce sujet alors que le volume de 1913 a subi un gommage du judaïsme. La dernière analogie établie est encore plus originale puisqu'elle fait correspondre Affaire Dreyfus et guerre avec le roman d'Albertine, à travers la thématique de l'échec d'assimilation. La démonstration particulièrement fouillée est faite à travers le prisme de la critique génétique. De la génétique également dans l'approche de Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, directrice de recherche au CNRS, mais cette fois-ci à grande ouverture de compas, c'est-à-dire au niveau de la composition de l'œuvre entière. Nathalie Mauriac Dyer a l'audace de voir en la guerre « l'épilogue du cycle de *Sodome et Gomorrhe* ». Elle le dit très clairement dès l'introduction : « il n'a jamais été l'intention de Proust de publier cet épisode au sein du *dernier* volume d'*À la recherche du temps perdu* ». J'avais proposé une autre interprétation dans « Le temps de l'Histoire », article publié dans le *Bulletin Marcel Proust* 62, signalé dans la Bibliographie du volume : la dénonciation du temps historique avant les révélations de « L'Adoration perpétuelle » sur le temps à l'état pur. « Apothéose ou apocalypse sadomasochiste » ? Farce ou tragédie ? Autant de questions novatrices, voire provocatrices, posées par Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, à propos de la représentation qui est donnée de la guerre par Proust.

Comment résumer *Cent ans de jalousie proustienne* après avoir lu l'excellente introduction d'Erika Fülöp qui non seulement cerne la problématique mais résume aussi chacune des contributions ? Rappelons d'abord que ce volume rassemble les Actes d'un colloque intitulé « *One Hundred Years of Jalousy: Homage to Swann* » qui s'est tenu à l'université d'Oxford, à Trinity College, en 2013. Il était organisé par New College, où Erika Fülöp a enseigné la littérature française, avant de faire de la recherche à l'université de Hambourg. Le volume rassemble les textes d'un si grand nombre de chercheurs internationaux qu'il est impossible de tous les citer ; ils vont de Rainer Warning, professeur émérite à l'université de Munich, à Mina Darabi Amin, maître-assistante à l'université de Tabriz,

en passant par les proustiens plus « habituels », comme Philippe Chardin, Isabelle Serça, Jean-Marc Quaranta, Stéphane Chaudier, Thanh-Vân Ton-That, auxquels s'ajoutent les nouveaux venus, autrement dit de jeunes docteurs ou de jeunes universitaires, comme Daniele Garritano, de Naples, Donatien Grau, Christina Kkona, en poste à Athènes. Les contributeurs sont présentés en fin de volume, avec un résumé de leur communication. La diversité des intervenants s'est traduite par la même diversité dans les modes d'approche du phénomène étudié ; Erika Fülöp le qualifie à juste titre de « phénomène-carrefour ». On peut être surpris par l'attention portée à la vie de Proust dans un tel contexte universitaire mais selon Jean-Marc Quaranta, des détails de la relation de Proust avec Alfred Agostinelli, notamment le voyage à Cabourg en 1913 marqué du sceau de la jalousie, sont à l'origine de certaines transformations dans le manuscrit du roman et sur les épreuves de *Du côté de chez Swann*. Rien n'échappe à Jean-Marc Quaranta de ce qui touche, de près ou de loin, à la personnalité du chauffeur de l'écrivain.

Comme pour la guerre, tout est affaire de discours quand on parle de jalousie. Le volume s'ouvre sur une étude d'Isabelle Serça, stylisticienne, qui se propose d'étudier la « loquèle » du narrateur, expression empruntée à Barthes qui désigne ainsi la « forme emphatique du discours amoureux » ; elle distingue le discours *de* la jalousie du discours *sur* la jalousie. Elle tire grand parti des définitions lexicales proposées par les dictionnaires — n'appelle-t-on pas jalousie le volet qui permet de voir sans être vu, position que Proust affectionne particulièrement ? —, précise la position narratologique de la jalousie proustienne, et conclut que « la scène proustienne de la jalousie est en effet celle d'un huis clos amoureux : c'est une partition à deux voix, voire une partition pour une seule voix ». Se référant à Freud, qui range dans la paranoïa le délire de jalousie, à Barthes qui met en relief l'intervention du voyeurisme dans les épisodes de la jalousie : « besoin de voir/besoin de savoir », elle dit tout ce que Proust a apporté aux cliniciens, à Freud, à Lacan, à Daniel Lagache. L'étude de Daniele Garrinato intitulée « L'instrument «optique» de la jalousie » rejoint celle d'Isabelle Serça par la place qu'elle accorde au « voir » dans la jalousie : pour savoir, le jaloux veut voir. Daniele Garritano, considérant que la première manifestation de la jalousie se situe dans l'épisode du baiser du soir, fait de celle-ci la « scène originnaire » de la *Recherche*. L'étymologie des mots l'intéresse ; en particulier celle de « scène » qu'il met en rapport avec le

mot « ombre ». Subtile également est sa façon de présenter la jalousie comme une maladie de la connaissance, le plus souvent une pathologie visuelle : un obstacle empêche l'amoureux de connaître la vérité sur l'être aimé. Le seul remède à cette souffrance est la lecture qui permet d'accéder à la connaissance désirée. Garritano va jusqu'à parler du couple « jalousie-lecture » ; il en donne trois exemples, dont celui de la lettre volée par Swann pour en déchiffrer le texte à travers l'enveloppe. C'est ce qu'il appelle l'« instrument optique » de la jalousie, autrement dit « un dispositif de connaissance destiné non pas à la vision, mais à la lecture ». Quant à Philippe Chardin, c'est un mot-valise créé par Jacques Lacan, « hainamoration », qui est le fondement de sa réflexion. Il a raison de rappeler que *Du côté de chez Swann* est une trilogie : la jalousie qui s'inscrit, comme cela a déjà été dit mais d'une autre façon, dans la scène du baiser du soir, devient centrale dans « Un amour de Swann », et réapparaît dans « Noms de pays : le nom » où l'amour-haine (concept que Philippe Chardin avait traité dans un ouvrage précédent, *L'Amour dans la haine ou la jalousie dans la littérature moderne*, Droz, 1990) — que d'autres désigneraient par le dépit amoureux — explose dans la scène du raidillon des aubépines. La méprise sur la couleur des yeux de Gilberte derrière laquelle se cache une allusion à *L'Éducation sentimentale* de Flaubert en est la parfaite synecdoque. Mais Philippe Chardin ne se résume pas, il se lit. Il fait preuve dans cet article d'une virtuosité d'écriture qui nous rappelle qu'il est aussi écrivain. On croirait lire ici un pastiche de Proust...

La quatrième partie du volume s'intéresse aux sources littéraires de la jalousie proustienne et à celle-ci en tant que source d'inspiration d'œuvres littéraires ou cinématographiques. Ainsi Audrey Giboux analyse la modernisation de la représentation de la jalousie dans *Le Diable au corps* de Raymond Radiguet, en s'interrogeant sur ce qu'elle doit aux moralistes du Grand Siècle. *La Jalousie* de Robbe-Grillet, *La Bataille de Pharsale* de Claude Simon doivent beaucoup à la jalousie proustienne, aussi bien en tant que thématique que pour le rôle qu'elle joue dans la structuration du roman. Candida Yates et Erika Fülöp étudient le film de Volker Schlöndorff, *Un amour de Swann*, et celui de Chantal Akerman, *La Captive*, en tant qu'adaptations de l'œuvre de Proust. Le sujet n'est pas nouveau — il suffit pour s'en convaincre de consulter sur internet le dossier « Proust et le cinéma » de l'Institut Marcel Proust international — mais il est toujours intéressant d'y revenir avec un angle d'approche spécifique.

Les thèmes abordés dans ces deux volumes, la jalousie et la guerre, n'ont rien d'original. Mais, outre la qualité indiscutable de la plupart des articles, quelques effets de surprise nous ont été réservés : Donatien Grau a la perspicacité de citer et d'étudier un cas d'amour heureux, sans un soupçon de jalousie, celui de Mme de Villeparisis et de M. de Norpois ; Philippe Chardin montre que la jalousie est là où on ne l'attend pas. Certaines approches sont le reflet de préoccupations contemporaines en critique littéraire et en sciences humaines, telles que la place du corps (étudiée par Adam Watt), la sexualisation de la guerre, traitée dans plusieurs articles et développée par Brigitte Mahuzier, dans *Proust et la guerre* (Champion, 2014), le rôle des objets et des noms qui les désignent (je retiendrai la si symbolique jalousie). Les deux méthodes les plus abondamment citées sont celle de la critique génétique et celle de la critique psychanalytique : si la première permet de replacer la guerre du côté de Sodome et Gomorrhe, dans la perspective de l'inachèvement de l'œuvre, la seconde nous amène à reformuler la question du deuil ainsi que celle de la pulsion scopique. Freud est la référence commune aux deux volumes, par ses écrits sur le deuil et la mélancolie dans le premier cas, par ceux sur la jalousie, la paranoïa et l'homosexualité, dans le second.

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Comparison and Interconnectedness

Gerald Gillespie and Haun Saussy, eds. *Intersections, Interferences, Interdisciplines: Literature with Other Arts*. Bruxelles: P. I. E. Peter Lang, 2014. Pp. 266. ISBN: 9782875741561.

THIS RICH COLLECTION of essays on the various ways in which literature connects and interacts with other arts can be said to offer vintage ICLA scholarship, for the collection originates from a colloquium held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the executive council of the International Comparative Literature Association at the University of Chicago in early September 2012, with contributions from eminent comparatists,

including several ICLA presidents, vice-presidents, executive council members, and chairs of research committees. The coverage of topics in this volume is extremely wide temporally, geographically, and generically, from ancient to modern, from Europe and Africa to Asia and America, from sacred epic poetry to comic books, from neuroscience to aesthetics, from literature to music, painting, and sculpture, and diverse other themes and topics so that here really is, to quote the quaint proverb John Dryden used to praise the works of Chaucer, "God's plenty." And indeed Chaucer is featured in this volume in a delightful essay by Lucia Boldrini, not the well-known *Canterbury Tales*, but a relatively obscure or "rarely read" text, his *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, written to teach his son astronomy and geometry, but linking these to "the mystery of (virgin) birth and of origins," a link that "we may also discern in *Finnegans Wake*" (41). Putting Chaucer, James Joyce, Dante and some other medieval and early modern authors together in a rich intertextual dialogue on teaching children the basic knowledge about the stars, the earth, and the origin of the universe, Boldrini shows how in all these texts "the geometrical, the astronomical, and the sexual are combined" (43), and how they still hold a fascination for us in their "sexualization of education and knowledge about origins and in particular the linking of one's origins from the mother's body with our place in the cosmos" (45). The intersections and interferences among these texts are rich and intriguing, which make a compelling case that the interconnection of literature and scientific knowledge is not just a modern or contemporary phenomenon, but has always been part and parcel of the process of learning and education.

Suzanne Nalbantian's essay on neuroscience and literature deals most directly with the interdisciplinary exploration of literature and science, and she begins with a remarkably confident declaration that "the alliance of literature, art and neuroscience is at the heart of interdisciplinarity in our age" (183). Much of the effort to relate literature to science, however, seems to her deeply unsatisfying, because "cognitive literary criticism," says Nalbantian, is largely "based on impressionistic responses," which are "very different from the responsible testing that scientists conduct" (184). Such cognitive criticism, she continues, often leads to "the bland predictability of say, a New Critic describing ambiguity, a Bakhtinian critic discussing dialogism or a linguist pointing out polyvocality" (184–85). What is known as "neuro" criticism is not much better, either, for it is "in fact a rather confused spectrum of views and a morass of

patchwork of scientism, not science” (186). These are strong words coming out of a strong conviction in the validity of neuroscience, which is perhaps characteristic of a scientific attitude based on responsible testing and verifiable truth. As Nalbantian quotes with approval the categorical statement made by the neuroscientist Stanislas Dehaene: “Each cultural feature should ultimately be linked to well-defined neuronal circuits” and a “series of bridging networks must ultimately anchor cultural constructions to their relevant brain networks” (187–88). Such a robust attitude and unshakable confidence are admirable, even inspiring, but as a matter of principle I do not believe in exclusive claims in the study of literature, let alone all cultural constructions, that there is one correct scientific path to truth on which all criticisms must converge. Fredric Jameson once claimed that political interpretation is not just one interpretation among many, but is “the absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation” (17). I hope neuroscientific criticism does not become the new totalizing “absolute horizon” today. Neuroscience is certainly new, exciting, and promising in the study of brain mechanism and how it relates to the creative process of arts and literature, but not everyone is convinced of its explanatory power, and, however useful it may prove to be, it is not and should not be the only anchor for all literary studies.

There are of course different understandings of what neuroscience and truth mean. For Hitoshi Ōshima, the Japanese critic Kobayashi Hideo’s (1902–1983) contrast between a beautiful object and beauty as an abstract concept is “similar to that later espoused by the American neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, who considers the body-emotion connection to be the basis of human cognition” (237). Here neuroscience with its emphasis on perception is considered to be on the side of the concrete, the bodily, the beautiful vis-à-vis the abstract, the conceptual, the true. In Ōshima’s understanding, the opposition is part of a larger dichotomy between the beautiful as related to the metaphorical and the aesthetic, and the true as related to the conceptual and the scientific. Even further, it is related to the cultural divide between the aesthetic Eastern tradition and the logical Western modernity. Ōshima praises Kobayashi for a consistent theme in his critical works, which he calls “an *apologie de la pensée sauvage*, for he never ceased defending a non-conceptual, metaphorical mind against the flood of conceptualization modernity brought about” (236). Japanese haiku, particularly as composed by the famous poet Bashō (1644–94), represents the Eastern concrete perception of

the beautiful, while modern Western poetry, represented by Baudelaire, remains trapped in the conceptual and the abstract. The East-West dichotomy is not so simple, however, because Lévi-Strauss's anthropological theory, the very concept of *la pensée sauvage*, provide the background for Kobayashi's criticism. "His defense of mythical and metaphorical mentality has much in common with Lévi-Strauss," as Ōshima remarks. "Like the French anthropologist, he was a passionate lover of Art; like him, he put emphasis on 'the science of the concrete'" (236). At the same time, Ōshima finds in the West that "Bashō's line was adopted by poets such as Ezra Pound (1885–1972). This American leader of Imagism got inspiration from haiku to create a poetry quite new to the Westerners" (231). If that is the case, then, there has been so much interaction and inter-borrowing in both the East and the West that it becomes difficult to speak of the two as forming a neat opposition between the concrete and the abstract, the perceptual and the conceptual, or the beautiful and the true. In fact, one would question the very dichotomy between *la pensée sauvage* as representative of the Eastern aesthetic and metaphorical thinking on the one hand, and the logical and abstract thinking as uniquely European on the other. In my view, the whole set of dichotomous concepts and vocabulary originated from Western, and especially French, ethnography and anthropology based on the notion of *mentalité* of different peoples is highly problematic.

A number of essays in this collection discuss interconnection of literature with painting, and it is impossible to sum up the rich contents of these in a general way as they deal with authors of very different periods, styles, and themes. Lois Parkinson Zamora discusses the rather unusual friendship between Jorge Luis Borges and the Argentine painter Xul Solar. It is unusual because despite his erudition and wide-ranging interests in numerous subjects, Borges "never mentioned Rembrandt or Rubens or Goya or Cézanne or Picasso" in his writings, and thus "Xul Solar is *the* important exception—virtually the *only* exception—to Borges's indifference to art" (23). This may be taken to be an instance of Borges's own remark that "Friendship is the one redeeming Argentine passion" (22), but Zamora argues that what connects the two is their shared fascination with the "vast array of belief systems that have been imagined over centuries in all cultures to explain the universe and our place in it," which Borges considers to be "a tribute to the power of the human imagination" (22). Xul Solar's paintings and Borges's *ficciones* can all be seen as representing

the philosophical explorations of the intricate order or classification of the universe, explorations that are inevitably limited and eventually futile, but they evince a kind of heroic effort on the part of humanity to probe God's secret and to understand the organization of the universe.

In an essay on landscape and poetry in Afrikaans literature, Hein Viljoen argues that landscape is not just "out there" as objective presence, but is always humanized in painting and literature; that we are part of the landscape: "we dwell in it, cultivate it and think it and are perpetually changing with it" (85). Looking at the history of art and literature, it becomes evident that the very idea of "landscape" was born when urban culture had developed to such an extent that it became possible for the human subject to observe and appreciate the beauty of nature from a physical as well as an aesthetic distance, and therefore what is represented as landscape in painting and literature is always humanized, i.e., from a particular human point of view, imbued with feelings, moods, and ideas. In both East and West, landscape as an independent theme rather than providing a background for divine or human figures started to develop with thriving urban culture, and that is true of the European tradition in the seventeenth century with Dutch landscape painters leading the way, and also true of a very different tradition like the Chinese, in which landscape painting developed much earlier in comparison with the European, starting in the Tang dynasty during the ninth century and becoming the predominant form of painting during the Song in the eleventh century, when cities and urban culture in China reached a remarkable height of growth. As artistic manifestations of cultural and social development, both literature and painting are invariably humanized, and can often be seen as signs of the times of a certain human condition.

When Michel Foucault announced the effacement of the human figure at the end of *Les Mots et les choses*, was that also a significant sign of the times? Jean Bessière speaks of Foucault's declaration and a related "strange coincidence" of the appearance of several works in the late 1960s and the 1970s in France, works on the "disfiguration" of man and its "paradoxical reconstitution," including Roland Barthes's essays on Giuseppe Arcimboldo and Bernard Réquichot, Gilles Deleuze on Francis Bacon, and Michel Butor's *Illustrations* (91). *La fin de l'homme* was indeed a powerful wave at the time not only in France, but also in America, and Bessière finds a necessary contradiction in the argument of the effacement of man, because "all consideration of the effacement of man

remains inseparable from a failure of the reflexivity granted to the human subject," which would then necessarily call for a "new figuration" of the body (92). He comments on Foucault and the other authors and puts the obsession with the "disfiguration" of man in the context of post-war Western arts, literature, and thoughts. The case of Arcimboldo (1526–1593), however, and the whole tradition of grotesque distortion of the human figure from Hieronymus Bosch (1450–1516) and Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) to Pieter Bruegel (1525–1569), just to mention a few, clearly indicate that the disfiguration of man long predated the modern time, thus debunking Foucault's claim that "man did not exist" until the nineteenth century, when the modern *episteme* made an abrupt turn to man as the privileged object, with psychology, economics, and philology as the three basic models or paradigms (344). The twentieth century was particularly bloody with two World Wars and the Holocaust, which may account for the disfiguration of man in much of post-war Western arts and literature, but we have to admit sadly that suffering and pain in the modern time, horrible as they are, are by no means unique.

In this context, Gerald Gillespie's remarks sound especially sobering when he says in his learned essay on the arts and literary fiction: "In my ideal world of comparative studies, even *ultramodernistas* would be more aware of processes of *longue durée* and of the siftings and metamorphoses of materials in various interacting cultural streams of today, inheritor streams which several millennia ago, in regional terms, were fairly well concretized as partial world systems" (178). Gillespie gives a historical survey of the interconnectedness of art and fiction in the West, not just from the romantic age to modernism, from Goethe and Novalis to Proust, Thomas Mann, and James Joyce, but much more before and after, displaying the expansive horizon of an exemplary comparatist and an inclusive desire. "Culture on a larger scale," he says, "is cumulative as well as discarding and supercessional, renovatory as well as innovatory—for example, we still find a good deal of the most archaic past in today's cinematic *Star Wars* saga" (178). Historical continuity plays as significant a role as eruption and discontinuity in the rise of new genres, styles, and movements in the human saga of innovation and creativity.

Steven Sondrup makes a similar point about a long-term view of historical development when he says at the beginning of his essay: "Artistic interdisciplinarity has almost as long or perhaps an even longer history than any of the individual arts as we understand and categorize them today"

(241). His essay, however, discusses the collaboration of contemporary arts by three Swedish friends, the musician Sven-Erik Bäck, the sculptor Björn Erling Evensen, and the poet Östen Sjöstrand. In combining poetry, music, and sculpture together, this innovative trio created some special works intended to form, according to Evensen, “a foundation for deeply-probing meditation, for non-confessional spirituality, and ultimately as the basis of a way of living.” Sondrup further describes this as offering us “an aesthetic experience and robust hermeneutic challenge that opens the gateway—be it one of Evensen’s or one of a different sort—to rare possibilities for imaginative and artistic experience and pleasure” (250). The best way to acquire such experience and pleasure is of course to have direct access to such works, which emphasizes the perceptual aspect of the aesthetic experience Ōshima also advocates in his essay.

Drawing on H. G. Gadamer’s hermeneutic theory and empirical studies done by Swedish and American sociologists and psychologists, Anders Pettersson also argues for “application” as an integral component of aesthetic experience in reading literature or listening to music. Application, he says, is the mechanism that relates the experience of a work of art or literature to the real world, “the focusing, comparing, and evaluating and their further consequences for the experiencing of the work of art” (199). By analyzing some real examples of people’s reaction to a literary work like *To Kill a Mockingbird* or to music like Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No. 3, Pettersson tries to incorporate readers’ and audience’s reactions into the very understanding of a work and its experience. “Even in the study of aesthetic and artistic phenomena,” he says, “theory and empirical substantiation should go hand in hand” (210). This is certainly in full agreement with the development of critical theories in recent time, from reception theory to reader-response criticism, which all incorporate the reader or the audience in the consideration of the artistic.

Another discussion of the interconnection of literature with music is Kenichi Kamigaito’s interesting essay on the Japanese novel *IQ84* by Haruki Murakami, and Kamigaito brings his personal experience to bear on his reading of the novel, which makes references to real places and real works of music, while weaving a narrative of the fantastic, a detective story and a love story around Aomame, a female assassin, with elements of magic and mysteries. Murakami was quite knowledgeable of Western music and published a book, *A Dialogue on Music with Seiji Ozawa*. In his novel *IQ84*, there are frequent references to different pieces of Western

music, but “Janáček’s *Sinfonietta* is without doubt the most important” (151). The title *1Q84*, as Kamigaito notes, is a parody of George Orwell’s *1984*, for the letter Q being pronounced in Japanese sounds the same as number 9, but the novel’s social critique is much less serious and less obvious than Orwell’s classic dystopian fiction. “If George Orwell’s *1984* can be regarded as a social-allegorical novel,” Kamigaito argues, then, “Haruki Murakami’s *1Q84* can be considered as a pseudo-social-allegorical novel, because the reader never knows whether or not Murakami intends the novel to be a work of serious social criticism” (152). Likewise, Murakami’s use of Janáček’s *Sinfonietta* in different situations is also hard to pin down to one particular meaning, as “its mood varies according to the mental conditions of the hero and heroine, Tengo and Aomame, like leitmotifs in Wagner’s operas” (166). If Murakami’s novel refuses to make a clear indication of its intended social critique, while parodying Orwell’s politically strongly committed dystopian novel, it is befitting that a complex piece of music should be woven into its narrative, open to different readings and interpretations.

Several essays in this collection seem to engage, as Victor Shklovsky argued long ago, in the effort to embrace what traditionally is considered low-brow or even non-literary, and to argue for the literary and aesthetic values of comic books. Hans-Joachim Backe starts his essay by questioning the value-judgment of popular culture as “inferior to an ideal of ‘high culture’ in the vein of Matthew Arnold” (111). And yet, in Michael Chabon’s novel *Kavalier & Clay* that “deals with the history of comic books” and the art of its making, it is “the premiere of *Citizen Kane*” that makes Joe, the protagonist in the novel and a comic book author, to realize “the essence of his own art,” that is, “the total blending of narration and image ... the fundamental principle of comic-book storytelling” (116). In Brian Vaughan’s comic book *Y: The Last Man*, there are interesting and sophisticated references to Yorick, the dead court jester in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, and therefore it is again by referring to higher forms of cultural products that comic books establish their legitimacy and respectability. The association of comic books with literary and cultural canons, however, does not necessarily consolidate the hierarchy of genres or aesthetic values. As Backe argues, though “there can be no doubt that there is an enormous difference between Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and Vaughan’s Yorick,” eventually that difference is “not one of quality but one of kind, thus

subtly calling into question the distinction of high and low art raised with such prominence in *Kavalier & Clay*" (120–21).

In her essay on "moveable books," Margaret Higonnet questions other kinds of distinctions. "A study of moveable books," she argues, "invites us to reshape our premises distinguishing high from low literature, as we trace strands that link the oral to the written, the visual to the gestural, and the child to the adult reader" (136–37). In her historical survey of moveable books with turn-up flaps, pull-out stabs, hidden diagrams and illustrations, we are led back to an earlier time to witness the fascinating "multi-media and 'pluri-sensorial' technologies" used in making books that appeal to adults and children alike (127). We learn, for example, *Orbis sensualium pictus* by Jan Amos Comenius (1658) was the first "to adopt an astronomical volvelle or moveable disk specifically for the instruction of school children, on the page that shows the movement of the sun and moon according to the Ptolemaic system" (127). This unexpectedly but nicely dovetails with Boldrini's discussion of the "Night Lesson" in *Finnegans Wake* and Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*; we find rich materials in Higonnet's essay of other such books and even furniture from the 16th to the 19th centuries that display different forms of movement with paper-engineering technologies. "Machinery that could set objects and images into motion," Higonnet remarks, "became a token of novelty and modernity, foreshadowing the development of cinema" (130). The distinction between the high and the low further disintegrates when she finally turns to Heinrich von Kleist's essay "On the Marionette Theatre," because the marionette theatre may appear to the untutored eye as a "vulgar species of an art form," but for Kleist's dancer, true grace of movement comes from "that human form which either has no consciousness or an infinite consciousness," which "can be achieved only when one is innocent of vanity or *Eitelkeit*, when the mechanisms of lifeless wooden limbs paradoxically evoke divine life" (136).

In a way continuing the questioning of dividing lines or boundaries, Micéala Symington shows how Michel Butor's collaborative work with artists "inhabits the frontier between art and literature, making this border a vibrating membrane ("membrane vibratoire"), one which is in constant movement and which produces a particular kind of music" (139). As Butor describes himself in a poem, he is always in between, crossing over borders and boundaries: "Je suis entre l'ici et le maintenant, entre l'ailleurs et le dorénavant, entre le centre / Et l'encore, entre la marge

et le feu, / Je suis à proximité d'un aéroport" (140) [I am between here and now, between elsewhere and henceforth, between the center /And the still, between the margin and the fire, / I am near an airport]. In a way these lines perfectly describe comparatists and the work we do as comparatists, for the position in between different languages, literatures, and cultures is precisely the comparatist position, open, flexible, responsive, and inquisitive. There should be affinities between comparatists and poets like Butor and the kind of artist's book he produces.

In an essay on Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and its adaptations in different media, Marina Grishakova first establishes the concept of adaptation as "something more than a simple transfer of stories from one medium to another," but "a new way of perception and conceptualization—a new perspective on the world rather than merely a new technological or aesthetic configuration" (216). Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*, however, presents an unusual challenge to adaptation because its protagonist, Gregor Samsa, is both human and an insect, with both identities affirmed in the narrative itself, and thus cannot be easily manipulated from one particular perspective, either "subjective" or "objective." *The Metamorphosis*, says Grishakova, is one example of what she calls "unruly fictions," i.e., "verbal fictions that are resistant to visualization, adaptation and cross-medial transfer" (217). Nevertheless, the British actor Steven Berkof puts Kafka's story on the stage "as a radical challenge to the realistic character-theatre and the naturalized conception of theatricality" (219); Peter Kuper makes a graphic novel in which "Gregor Samsa is naturalized as a bug, though a bug with a grotesque human face" (221); and there are also film adaptations. Grishakova speaks with approval of film theorist Rudolph Arnheim's idea of "visual thinking," that "visual perception is a special kind of thinking: rather than being a privilege of higher mental processes, cognition is integrated into perception itself" (214). Having said that, somewhat surprisingly, she finally seems to endorse the "higher mental processes" embedded in Kafka's "unruly fiction" when she praises it for revealing "the unsurpassed ability of verbal fiction to represent complex, mixed forms of subjectivity, to avoid closure as the final totalizing determination of meaning and to bring forth the universes of alternative but interlocking voices, perspectives, perceptions, discourses and styles" (225). Literature as verbal art, then, may still be the ocean of possibilities and alternatives yet to be explored in various forms and diverse media.

Now I turn to the last two essays, though in the collection they come in the first part. I put them together as they discuss literary works and their interconnection with other arts that have more of a direct relationship with political reality. Monica Spiridon discusses two Russian novels, Andrei Bely's *Petersburg* and Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, as responding to the socio-political condition of Soviet Russia after the October Revolution, representing the cities of Petersburg and Moscow as "potential thresholds between the European civilization and a terrifying barbarity, against the background of the political turmoil of the early twentieth century." These two novels, she goes on to say, "take on the same task: to create dystopic worlds whose inhabitants have lost the certainties of art, religion or science and where history is a nightmare from which the individual is not even trying to awake" (47). Dystopia or anti-utopia is definitely a modern genre that responds to the repressive political reality in the early twentieth century. Utopia as literary fiction has an especially close relationship with politics. "On the one hand, utopia is an imaginary projection onto a fictitious space created by the text of the narrative," as Roland Schaer argues, "on the other hand, the project it sets forth assumes implementation and as such it veers toward the side of history while simultaneously drawing its sustenance from fiction" (5). When utopian imaginary crossed over into history and when Soviet socialism announced that it had realized what the utopian socialists had only dreamed of, utopian fiction tended to move towards its opposite. "The anti-utopia," as Krishan Kumar observes, "can indeed be thought of as an invention to combat socialism, in so far as socialism was seen to be the fullest and most sophisticated expression of the modern worship of science, technology and organization. In that sense, both utopia and anti-utopia in the past hundred years have come to express and reflect the most significant political phenomenon of modern times, the rise of socialism as an ideology and as a movement" (49). In this context, then, it becomes understandable why in Bely's and Bulgakov's novels "Moscow and Petersburg are used as vast urban theaters where fine arts, music and architecture are integrated into magnificent, sometime extravagant shows of obvious apocalyptic dimensions," a dystopian description of cities as urban apocalypses that "mark important historical turning points: before and after Europe, before and after civilization, before and through communism" (54). The use of music and other arts in these novels certainly serves a satirical and political purpose.

We find a different ideological and political interconnection in Dorothy Figueira's excellent essay on the Western translation and reception of a Hindu sacred text, the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The *Gītā* is the first Sanskrit Vedic text translated and circulated in the West, translated, discussed, or commented on by A. W. Schlegel, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Hegel. Humboldt, who knew Sanskrit, "recognized that the *Gītā* taught the performance of actions without any regard for their fruit," and that in the pursuit of truth, "one can proceed in accordance with reason or through action. Both methods aim at the transformation of human nature into godly nature and, as Humboldt noted, this goal cannot be obtained merely through intellectual exercise" (58). Hegel emphasized the impossibility of translating Sanskrit concepts and terms into German, but ironically, as Figueira notes, the theory of untranslatability "established a justification for free and creative translations," which make the foreign text serve whatever agenda one has. "The hermeneutical process breaks down," says Figueira in describing the consequences, "the reader's prejudices are never called into question and the text functions as a mold into which these prejudices are poured" (59). Untranslatability thus becomes a cover for deliberate misreading and willful misappropriations.

The *Gītā* became a text that could be manipulated in translation and interpretation to generate the myth of the Aryan race, "to support Germany's imperial designs" and German patriotism when it was translated by Theodor Springmann during World War I (59); and even more bizarrely it was interpreted to justify Hitler and Nazism during World War II by a French woman Maximiani Portas, an ardent anti-Semitic writer and a devotee to Hitler, who assumed an Indian persona, called herself Savitri Devi, and associated Hinduism with Nazism. "Savitri Devi explained the war in terms of the *Gītā*'s vision of periodic cosmic creation and destruction and its teaching regarding the insignificance of human life. She claimed that Hitler had learned his racial theory from the *Gītā* and was a *yogi* in spirit. According to Savitri Devi, Hitler was the one who had spoken in the *Gītā* and had come back.... In short, Savitri Devi claimed that God was reborn as Hitler, an incarnation of Vishnu and savior of the world" (60). Figueira warns readers about this "Hindu Nazi's" pernicious influence even after her death in 1982, because "she is still published and has been cited in recent years by neo-pagans, skinheads, Nazi metal music fans and neo-fascists. In fact, she has become a leading

light in the international neo-Nazi underground of Holocaust deniers, Hollow-earth theorists and Nazi UFO enthusiasts” (60).

If Savitri Devi imposes a Nazi political and ideological reading on the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Philip Glass’s opera *Satyagraha*, premiered in 1979, makes no less “gross misappropriations” of the *Gītā* for a commercialized art production. Glass claims to pay tribute to Gandhi’s legacy of non-violent civil disobedience, and his librettist Constance DeJong chose twenty excerpted verses from the poem, sung in Sanskrit with inadequate and incomprehensible pronunciation, and made Gandhi an incarnation of God Krishna. In remarkable disregard of historical facts and the internal coherence of the *Gītā*, Glass “frames his opera on a central myth of Gandhi hagiography” (62). An even more ridiculous scene is Achim Freyer’s 1983 Stuttgart production of *Satyagraha*, in which “the battlefield of the *Gītā* becomes a circus filled with absurd props, trapeze artists and a Gandhi who holds a huge barbell that bends to the floor while he sings tripping about under its weight” (66). In all of these misinterpretations and misappropriations, the *Gītā* is used for its exotic appeal, not for its meaning. Since Hegel denied the possibility of translation and understanding, the idea of incommensurability “results in nothing more than an appropriation and colonization of the Other, since the hermeneutical project has been aborted” (67). Indeed, when the East and the West are denied the possibility of cross-cultural understanding, the inevitable consequences must be distortion and misappropriation. “Beginning in the nineteenth century,” says Figueira, “India supplied Westerners with an alibi in the true sense of the term, an elsewhere onto which they could project their longings” (67–68). That is true not only of India, but also of the East as a whole, and the battle against incommensurability and untranslatability is serious work cut out for comparatists to do and rectify.

In his introduction to this volume, Haun Saussy self-consciously asked the following questions: “is inter-arts comparison a worthy and urgent topic for literary scholarship today? ... Were we indulging in an outdated Symboliste fantasy? Were we turning our backs on the wider world?” (11). Having read all the essays gathered here in the volume, I believe we can support his answer “No” with even greater assurance. The aesthetic is not just for the elite or the purely cerebral; it is in our lived experience and has implications for the social and political reality of our time. The diversity of topics and the ways in which different authors approach their subject and make their argument are so important for us

not just as the matter of literary or humanistic studies, but also for the relationships they maintain with the real world beyond the texts. We can and should engage in comparative literary studies with genuine pleasure, and owing no one an apology.

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Comptes Rendus / Book Reviews

Jean Bessière and Gerald Gillespie, eds. *Contextualizing World Literature*. Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2015. Pp. 163. ISBN: 9782875742834.

Contextualizing World Literature is a collective volume which has its roots in the presidential panel “World Literature,” held during the twentieth triennial congress of the International Comparative Literature Association in Paris in July 2013. It gathers twelve contributions by scholars affiliated with four universities in Europe, three universities in the US, two in Canada, one in Africa, one in India, and one in Latin America, in addition to the editors, who are affiliated with universities in Europe and the US respectively. The issue of affiliation is relevant, as is shown below. The twelve contributions are preceded by an introduction by the editors and followed by two afterwords, one by each editor.

In the editors’ words, there is a double reason for raising world literature as a currently pertinent subject—“firstly, [...] to understand the unequal usage of this reference [*i.e.* world literature]; and secondly, [...] not to dissociate it from the world-related state of many literatures, and the relative isolation of some” (10). As for the first reason, the reader soon discovers that such “unequal usage” should even include the rejection of the scientific relevance of the concept of world literature, as advocated by some contributors. One, for instance, claims that “World Literature’s messianic mission of welcoming the Other is not a reflection of humanism, but an attempt at cultural appropriation” (Figueira [42]), whereas one of the editors argues that “[t]his neologism [world literature] obfuscated the distinction between the study in depth of literatures in variously differing cultural systems and the study of cultural materials which entered and circulated in translation in any particular local culture” (Gillespie [155]). From such a rejection, a divide emerges between “imitators”—located everywhere in the world, except for the US—and those who, *a contrario sensu*, one is driven to call “originals”—located in

the US. Fortunately, the volume voices other perspectives and proves the need of not accepting such a divide at face value.

Two interrelated premises stand at the root of the opposition between “originals” and “imitators.” The first is that “world literature” is a US creation. The second is the sibylline issue of whether or not world literature is a discipline different from comparative literature. Though the central role of scholars based in the US in recent discussions on world literature is undeniable, two points must be considered. First, most of these discussions are pedagogy-oriented and, hence, should be considered within the specific framework of the US education system and the exposure of its students, from primary school to university, to both national and foreign literature. And, second, a wider picture of world literature scholarship, even if restricted to the Anglophone world, shows there is a richer history to take into account. Consider, for instance, the seminal discussion on world literature from a double English-speaking periphery, namely, the Irish scholar and pioneer of comparative literature Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, who in a textbook primarily devised for his chair of Classics and English at the University of Auckland claimed that “[t]he leading mark of world-literature [...] is the severance of literature from defined social groups” and devoted a whole section to its discussion (236). This leads to the second premise insofar as world literature—either with this name or others—has always been the *final frontier* of comparative literature in terms of a research defined across languages, cultures, space, and time, or any kind of border. The fact that world literature is seen to constitute comparative literature has largely been discussed by scholars based in Central-Eastern Europe during the second half of the twentieth century, to the point that some have advocated the need to erase the dividing line between national philologies and comparative literature, for the interliterary process neither starts nor stops at one side of this disciplinary divide. Statements such as “People who teach World Literature may do so because they are not sufficiently skilled to teach national or comparative literature” (Figueira [45]) or “the caricature of the level of international work which, whether knowingly or unknowingly, some recent proponents of a supposedly superior WL [world literature] assert is the norm envisaged by ICLA” (Gillespie [156]) should be, therefore, carefully qualified.

Of the several ways in which the twelve contributions can be cross-referenced, Jean Bessière and Gerald Gillespie propose the following ternary organization: 1) contributions which show a “tendency to problematize

the lingering mental habit of some Comparative Literature scholars who cannot break loose from their quite natural orientation to Europe as the standard measure"; 2) contributions with a "distinct emphasis on presenting the macro- and microcosmic dimensions of regional and world connectedness and its processes"; and 3) contributions which show "how the world dimension can pervade even single works of fiction set in a distinct culture" (10–11). Though the editors do not identify which contributions belong to these three categories (the volume is organized alphabetically), the reader may agree that the following distribution is acceptable: problematization of Eurocentrism (Chanda, Figueira), macro- and micro-connectedness (Saussy, Spiridon, Symington), and world pervasiveness (Block de Behar, Seixo, Viljoen). But there are four contributions which, however, do not easily fit within the above three categories. For them, I would propose two further categories: translation and world literature (Kushner, Valdés) and new readings of *Weltliteratur* (Schmeling, Sondrup).

Due to the length of both the volume and of each contribution, on the one hand, and the constructive dialogue between the diverging views on the other, *Contextualizing World Literature* is an extremely useful tool for introducing students to the discussion of world literature during one semester. Under the guidance of the teacher, students will become aware of the rich and different ways of understanding world literature across the world, different understandings for which categories such as schools, "originals" and "imitators," aspiring and consecrated, and university affiliations show, as in previous stages in the history of comparative literature, reductive and, knowingly or unknowingly, simplistic. A not wholly independent matter is the one related to secondary literature. Of the around 210 references cited in the volume, 62 percent are in English. The linguistic diversity cherished by comparative literature should be an issue not only for primary literature, as is traditionally claimed, but also for secondary literature, which provides different understandings of world literature across the globe.

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ZHANG Longxi. *From Comparison to World Literature.*
Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015. Pp. v + 195. ISBN: 9781438454719.

Zhang Longxi belongs to the small contingent of scholars who straddle more than one larger cultural system and can look out from one complex system at others in interesting ways. To name just a few representatives of this important class since the restart of Comparative Literature (CL) in the aftermath of World War II, I refer to colleagues of various “national” provenance such as Albert Gérard (Africanist), Earl Miner (Japanologist), Douwe Fokkema (Sinologist), Mihály Szegedy-Maszák (Central Asianist), Haun Saussy (Sinologist), Ken’ichi Kamigaito (Far Eastern triad), Dorothy Figueira (Indologist), et al., who have combined their interests in European and/or New World subjects with exploration of other regional areas and/or of general topics in one or more of the areas of the arts and sciences, such as these were delineated as early as 1961 by Henry Remak as contingent for exploration by literary comparatists. By the millennial year 2000 this difficult high level of international CL was well defined, although in many institutions practicing comparatists with demanding aspirations were isolated and colleagues with less diversified “portfolios” often were resentful of their breadth.

There were several longer-term counter-trends that complicated the world picture for CL going into the first decade of our new millennium, when the global activities of the many diverse research committees of ICLA had already anticipated the Association’s movement of its triennial congresses to continents other than Europe and North America. As the titles of organizations, journals, programs, departments, and institutes indicate, a split in usage of terms took hold after World War II. “Comparative” and “general” were preponderant in Western Europe and the Americas, while the blanket term “world” characterized mainly the old Soviet block but appeared in a few places in the West. “World” covered the field of “general” literary studies (GL) and also provided shelter for those in certain totalitarian states who actually practiced “comparative” literature and interacted with their natural counterparts in the older homelands of CL. Over the same decades English was becoming ever more deeply entrenched as the primary global lingua franca. This had consequences for CL because powerful academic lobbies promoting “national” literatures usually attempted to control the newer field of CL in

their home territories, just as they always dominated GL. Anglicists and Americanists in Anglophone nations were not slow to see extraordinary opportunities in coopting CL, without needing to do much of the heavy lifting. Regrettably, this tendency has played into the promotion of newer fangled “world” literature (WL, actually just a re-baptized GL), starting in North America, but spreading overseas after 2000, especially via departments of English or American studies. Some of the earliest citadels of CL have meanwhile experienced dips in their fortunes or actual collapse. In an article in *The Comparatist*, Eugene Eoyang, chief organizer of the ICLA congress of 2004 in Hong Kong, has explained the unfortunate slippage of that pioneer territory of CL in institutional terms, even though dedicated individual comparatists were carrying on bravely in isolation. This is a familiar story almost everywhere. New places find CL too costly to start in a serious way, while when CL pioneers vacate their posts their institutions often decide CL is too expensive to maintain. All too many schools harken to those who suggest WL as a cheaper alternative and socially more palatable way and who concoct glamour campaigns to enhance the reputation of WL (i.e., older GL).

Being honest about the above phenomena will help us to disentangle the ambiguities in Zhang’s book title involving “from” and “to.” Historically, the title is blatantly false, since the field of CL was already developing in the twentieth century in symbiosis with GL, and the older label is now simply redubbed WL in many territories. Not only did older pioneering CL/GL clusters already understand the importance of translation; CL proper was already expanding qualitatively around the globe in the late twentieth century. Because radically elitist, CL can readily suffer from local cultural biases, but the CL agenda as championed by ICLA remains future-oriented; and the actual historical vector is “from WL to CL.” But Zhang’s title makes sense if we read it as corroborating the widespread subsidence of teaching into a kind of universalized GL that is enabled internationally by English. His title may well also reflect a pragmatic acceptance of the dead weight of the educational economics in our present world. Many of our finest colleagues like Zhang are individually engaged in serious efforts as CL scholars, and like him they often accommodate their rhetoric and stance to accommodate a wider audience and the societal bosses in academe.

Thus it is very positive that in the course of his presentations Zhang does not sacrifice the diachronic dimensions of cultures to the narrower

focus which all too often rules in the work of current professed exponents of WL, since these all too frequently lack qualifications for CL. Zhang may occasionally cloak his work in WL rhetoric, but he himself is a serious comparatist and one of the charms of his book resides in how confidently and skillfully it reaches back over centuries and millennia in order to illuminate characteristics of older literatures in several regions. Here the long story of Chinese writings comes to the fore, as Zhang highlights points of analogy with non-Chinese works in specific thematic realms (e.g., utopias, visionary societies) and general propositions (e.g., fiction versus history or reality), or explores the far-ranging thought of Quian Zhongshu, one of China's pioneer twentieth-century comparatists. The entire long chapter which Zhang devotes to Quian is so thorough, dense, and sensitively written that it amounts to a monographic treatment which renders the book at large extremely valuable. Clearly, Zhang is devoted to the example of Quian whose writings rich in allusions to European authors make him "marvel at the affinities in the poetic mind Chinese and Western" (147) – and it is in the light of this admiration that readers should understand Zhang's emphasis on affinities.

From Comparison to World Literature supplements other of Zhang's books such as *Allegoresis: Reading Canonical Literature East and West* (2005) and *Unexpected Affinities: Reading Across Cultures* (2007) in taking a formalistic look at the appearance of shared archetypes and similar themes or patterns, refreshingly traced over sometimes very large swaths of time, and not fixated on general cultural relationships or direct influences. Because he focusses on resemblances of poetic insights and motifs, he almost entirely by-passes the kinds or degrees of differences among major cultural systems prior to the accelerating convergences in recent centuries, nor does he delve into the extraordinary variety within the longer-range development of major systems (e.g., the evolutionary story of European literatures from antiquity onward; the complexity of the Indic region over several thousand years, including what general systems theory would deem key "interferences" such as the role of invaders such as Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and the like; etc.). In this regard, Zhang veers somewhat from the valuable suggestion by Earl Miner in *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature* (1990) that comparatists should cope thoroughly with the details of pre-modern differences on a global level, not just with resemblances. Zhang did offer solid elements of a methodology closer to Miner's view for this kind of

well-informed, deeply diachronic study in *The Tao and the Logos: Literary Hermeneutics East and West* (1992) and again in *Allegories: Reading Canonical Literature East and West* (2005).

Underneath the superficial advocacy of WL, Zhang acts so frequently like an “old-fashioned” international comparatist that we may rightly wonder whether he is not deliberately subverting the shallower versions of WL in a very clever series of demonstrations, including those in *From Comparison to World Literature*. His earlier book, *The Concept of Humanity in the Age of Globalization* (2011), justifies that suspicion, because there he expressly pleads for an expansion of the older range of Western topics to encompass extra-European literatures. This more overt acknowledgment of the historical vector in the global spread of comparative studies prepares for formalistic balancing statements in *From Comparison to World Literature*, such as: “Affinity does not mean sameness without diversity, and difference does not mean incommensurability that denies the very possibility of comparison” (56). It is regrettable that the thrust of this truism is undercut by Zhang’s closing chapter on “The Changing Concept of World Literature” which reaches back to outmoded shibboleths based on the state of practice achieved in Western dominated CL about five decades ago, instead of starting from the newer standards and approaches already promoted by the ICLA by the end of the twentieth century. This all too convenient avoidance probably reflects the deliberate use of cultural camouflage by Zhang. As his statements elsewhere indicate, he must be aware of the almost epic retardation so widely fostered by several generations of Anglo-American scholars domestic and foreign who, first, many decades ago, resisted the intrusion of broader-gauged comparatists into their prized domain of GL, and in the past two decades have promoted WL as another means of remaining “more equal” in a world dependent on English as its lingua franca. But even if readers discount the unconvincing advocacy of a supposedly new WL, they cannot but benefit from the accomplished, valuable surveys of points of affinity among disparate literatures that Zhang offers.

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Alexander Beecroft. *An Ecology of World Literature: From Antiquity to the Present Day*. London and New York: Verso, 2015. Pp. 312. ISBN: 9781781685723.

Building upon his own earlier work and that of Sheldon Pollock and other scholars who have made wide-ranging and (sometimes impressively) longitudinal attempts to chart the emergence and/or subsequent development of the phenomenon that we call literature, Alexander Beecroft takes us from pre-history to the present day in an ambitious, persuasive, and brilliantly erudite history-cum-classification of the various so-called “literary ecologies” that according to his scheme of things have over time replaced each other, sometimes after a period of not necessarily peaceful coexistence. Focusing on the factors that facilitate the emergence and growth of those literatures and on the challenges and constraints that they face, he adopts a perspective borrowed from environmental biology that offers sometimes surprising and always convincing insights. Most important is the metaphor of the biome, “a shared set of challenges and constraints to life in a given region” (23), which allows him to distinguish six literary “biomes” or ecologies whose boundaries or limits are determined by specific linguistic, political, economic, religious, and generally cultural constraints. Each of these ecologies gives way to the next one when the “ecological” configuration changes and new constraints fatally undermine its viability.

Anyone who tries to map several millennia of worldwide textual production will run into problems, not the least of which is how to define “literature.” Seeking to avoid both the narrow limitations of “imaginative literature” and the overly generous inclusiveness of “the sum of all texts an educated person should know” (10), Beecroft opts for a plausible enough solution: “all self-consciously aesthetic use of language” (14). He is of course aware that such a definition has its interpretive moment. Moreover, he openly acknowledges the role of interpretation in the choices he makes. His six literary biomes or “ecologies” are the result of empirical observation rather than theoretical reflection and are, moreover, in varying degrees the product of modes of reading. As a matter of fact, the first ecology he discusses, the epichoric, or local literary ecology, in which (usually oral) literature may be passed down from generation to generation, but never leaves the community in which it originated—the archaic Greek polis, the Chinese city-state, or, up to more recent times, isolated

tribal communities—is by definition the product of a mode of reading. Epichoric readings of texts emphasize the way in which they offer to the community in question a sense of place and a communal identity. Such readings bring to those texts an awareness of a wider world that their creators never had. For those living under a truly epichoric dispensation the local *is* the world, so that the need for self-definition never arises. The epichoric ecology, then, “represents the hypothetical possibility of such a culture existing in a vacuum” (60), but it is the cornerstone upon which Beecroft’s whole edifice rests.

Let me immediately say that Beecroft’s other ecologies are to a (far) lesser extent than the epichoric the products of modes of reading, even if the decision to categorize a given text in a specific ecology may always be the result of interpretive preference. Beecroft’s next ecology is the panchoric, a term he derives from the panhellenic culture of archaic and classical Greece, which also happens to function as the “paradigmatic example” (34) of the panchoric ecology. The panchoric emerges in “regions with small-scale polities but where literary and other cultural artifacts circulate more broadly through a space that is self-aware of itself as some kind of cultural unity and that define themselves by the exclusion of other polities that do not share that culture” (33–34). The desire for self-definition, prompted by an acute awareness of a wider world, leads to catalogues such as the Catalogue of Ships in Book II of the *Iliad*, to anthologies such as the *Airs of the States* in the Chinese *Canon of Songs*, and to numerous genealogies—in short, to everything that suggests a new and wider cultural unity and a self-understanding that ultimately derives from local, epichoric elements, but has transcended the local. Beecroft sees such panchoric ecologies in archaic Greece, in Eastern Zhou China, in early South Asia, in Babylonia, and in pre-Islamic Arabia, to mention only those panchoric ecologies that transformed themselves and moved up to the next ecological level, the cosmopolitan, where we also find new cosmopolitan ecologies such as the one created by the Roman empire.

These cosmopolitan ecologies are characterized by their territorial reach and their longevity. One single literary language has a virtually uncontested monopoly in a vast territory and during a period that long outlasts the reign of the empire that almost invariably had given it its prominence and status in the first place. Examples would be the ecologies that emerged out of the conquests of Alexander the Great, the Guptas in what is now India, of the Han Chinese, and of the Islamic Caliphate. They

see themselves as universal and because of that supposed universality can be joined by everyone able and willing to master the ecology's language, irrespective of native language or even background. These ecologies may be polycentric, as the Arabic cosmopolis, or they may be monocentric, in which case the peripheries tend to be marginalized by an all-important center. But the cosmopolitan ecology always elevates what originally was a local culture to universal status and imposes itself on what used to be a mosaic of cultural, religious, and political differences, with its powerful status seriously threatening the original languages of many of its citizens—if it does not actually displace them.

The next stage is that of the vernacular ecology, which gradually emerges out of a cosmopolitan ecology, lives for a while in tense equilibrium with it, and then supersedes it. For example, all over Europe the Latin cosmopolitan ecology gave way to an ever increasing number of vernacular literatures long after the demise of the Roman empire. This process usually had its starting point in places where the spoken language least resembled that of the cosmopolis—as was the case with Old Irish in the Latin cosmopolitan ecology, or with Javanese or Kmer in the Sanskrit one. An interesting exception is the Chinese cosmopolitan ecology that, again because of ecological factors, never splintered into vernacular literatures, even though under other circumstances vernacularization would have been a serious probability.

Not surprisingly, Beecroft's next ecology is the national literary ecology, which at first is a specifically European ecology that developed out of the vernacular ecology with the emergence of the European nation-state and gradually spread all over the world. The paradigms of this type of ecology are the national literatures of France and England. The national literary ecology promotes what are supposed to be national characteristics. It furnishes historical depth, in the process assimilating previously unclassifiable material (so that *Beowulf*, wholly unintelligible to a modern English audience, becomes a sort of founding text for a national English literature). By contrast, it also consciously marginalizes those texts that do not serve its purposes, including those written in minority languages and those produced by the cosmopolitan ecology. In this respect, one should note the "Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns," which definitively cut loose the cosmopolitan literature that under the vernacular dispensation had still played an important, even if diminishing, role. This national model has been eagerly adopted by such European late comers

(in terms of nationhood) as Germany and Italy and by new nations all over the world (beginning with the United States in the early nineteenth century), but it has obvious disadvantages wherever national and linguistic boundaries do not coincide, as is the case in large parts of the world. The national ecology, although at first sight easily definable, is nonetheless more than some other ecologies the product of a mode of reading. As Beecroft puts it, “a national literature is one that reads and interprets texts through the lens of the nation-state” (197).

The sixth ecology, the global one, is still developing. Accordingly, Beecroft discusses current literary-ecological conditions rather than a full-fledged successor of the national ecology. In so doing, he identifies what seem to him two major trends. The first one is a move towards a bland type of narrative, which is easily accessible (and translatable) and whose *couleur locale* offers a seemingly firm grounding in a specific location or milieu. This narrative focuses on “shared global experiences” (281). Much contemporary crime fiction, with its generic format and interchangeable characters and locations, would qualify. The second trend continues the complexities of the serious fiction of the twentieth century, but places those complexities in a global context. This “plot of globalization” employs “multi-strand narration” (283), the strands of which as often as not play out in completely different and convincingly created environments. Thus, this narrative device tries to convey our current globalized condition. Beecroft mentions Roberto Bolaño’s *2666* and Amitav Ghosh’s *Ibis* trilogy, but he might equally well have mentioned David Mitchell’s *Ghostwritten* or *Cloud Atlas*.

“I will view it as a measure of the success of this project,” Beecroft tells us, “if it invites further discussion and debate” (28). That is an admirably modest position. But it should not distract our attention from what is an impressive achievement. There is much to admire and very little to criticize in *An Ecology of World Literature*. My only caveat concerns Beecroft’s argument that ecologies always strive “to reduce the quantity of information within the system” (198). It seems to me that this particular angle—not more than half-developed, in any case—confuses rather than clarifies the issue. But it is a very minor caveat indeed.

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Héctor Hoyos. *Beyond Bolaño: The Global Latin American Novel*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. Pp. 283. ISBN: 9780231168427.

As the title of this book suggests, Roberto Bolaño frequently has come to stand in for Latin American literature in the context of comparative studies, thereby distorting the true range and richness of the field. Héctor Hoyos, a Colombian who is a professor at Stanford, wishes not to push Bolaño aside, but to make him the gateway to an array of novelists who have something to teach. Open to the world, immersed in the contemporary, these writers are nevertheless rooted in Latin American experience.

He has grouped these novelists into five chapters insightfully focusing on different topics: Nazism, South-South escapism, the supermarket, iconography, and novels dealing with drug trade, concluding with art performances in the tradition of Duchamp and Beuys. The selection of novels is astute and the theory orienting the study is refined, complex, and mostly convincing. Not surprisingly, he grounds his approach on an image found in a Borges short story, "The Aleph," where a person in Buenos Aires discovers in a basement a single spot where all the universe can be simultaneously found. In a similar way, the novels Hoyos studies provide a vision of a wide, international, extensive world.

For example, the Nazi characters Bolaño catalogues in *Nazi Literature in the Americas* are not just an allegory, or a trace of the many Nazi refugees in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, but also part of an interconnected world history, a kaleidoscope. While interdependence makes all narratives potentially global, the stories of Nazism have intruded brutally and deeply in Latin America: it is not just a foreign, European topic. The reader will encounter here Volpi's *In Search of Klingsor* and Ignacio Padilla's *Shadow Without a Name*.

A very different reality appears in the chapter dedicated to South-South escapism. The ease of travel in the contemporary world and the strong economy of some Latin American countries have permitted Latin Americans to travel more often to countries that are not the great metropolises of the past. Here, though, the choice of example raises many questions, since Chico Buarque's *Budapest* is more a personal exploration than a real journey within the Global South. Furthermore, while Hungary is not a leading metropolis in the Latin American imaginary, it is far from an orientalist exotic destination. Curiously, Hoyos believes that characters in this novel,

published in 2003, would do better if they used the Internet as a means of communication, specifically Skype. However, Skype was not available until August of 2003. The ease with which the main character learns Hungarian should make all of us who have struggled to learn it consider how this cosmopolitan vision is tinged with fantasy and utopian desire.

The chapter entitled “All the World’s a Supermarket (And All the Men and Women Merely Shoppers)” is admirable, playful, and profound. Hoyos here studies three masterful, disturbing, and original novels, Diamela Eltit’s *Mano de obra*, Fuguet’s *Mala onda*, and César Aira’s *La prueba*. The next chapter examines how drugs have generated an iconography closely connected to the religious. Here, Fernando Vallejo’s novel *Our Lady of the Assassins* and the representations of Pablo Escobar by Fernando Botero are well intertwined. The second part of this chapter deals with *La Santa Muerte*, a book of short stories by Homero Aridjis. Since these two works have been turned into good movies, it is a lost opportunity not to have analyzed these adaptations in this chapter. The whole issue, indeed, of how Latin America becomes global through film, especially through Argentinean, Mexican, and Cuban movies, could be explored in future studies in order to deepen the topic of this monograph.

The chapter on Duchamp and other avant-garde experimentation seemed to this reader somewhat off-focus, even if thoughtful. The conclusion is an attempt to stake out the importance of Latin American literature, described as emergent and combative although not nationalist. However, Hoyos wants to make a case for the importance of Latin American literature as a player in an international, contemporary world. While close readings and apt contextualization are illuminating, in order to measure the real impact these authors are having beyond their countries and languages, some hard data would have been useful. Readers who are not well versed in Latin American literature will find hard to follow the author’s passing references to Sarmiento or Borges’s stories, to Zambra or Lemebel. This work seems to target at times an audience of Latin Americanists, at other times an audience of international critics. All in all, though, this is an impressive book. The claim that there cannot be a true consideration of the global novel without including authors of a Latin America that goes beyond Bolaño is most convincing.

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César Dominguez, Haun Saussy, and Darío Villanueva.
Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications. London and New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. 169. ISBN: 9780415702683.

Let us begin with the very last sentences of this book:

The teaching of literature plays an irreplaceable part in the formation of pluralist, democratic, and cosmopolitan citizens. In this regard, it is very probable, as Ed Ahearn and Arnold Weinstein argue, that “comparative literature is arguably the sole humanistic discipline equipped to meet this educational and ideological challenge.” (142)

This optimistic conclusion, which stresses the civic, political and ethical values of a humanistic education, comes at the end of a crucial chapter, “The Return of Literature,” devoted to the new perspectives created by the digital revolution. After discussing the apocalyptic positions of some famous scholars (first of all, of course, Harold Bloom), and especially Alvin Kernan’s in his controversial *Death of Literature* (a title based on a trite topos of theory), the chapter investigates risks and potentials created by intermediality and globalization, finding adequate answers in key concepts, such as the glocal or the cosmopolitan ethic. Developed by the German sociologist Ulrich Beck, the notion of the glocal was already applied to literary studies by Mary Louise Pratt, who stressed the importance of a continuous interaction between horizontal and vertical comparison, relating the global and the local. Relying on a clear *Ringkomposition*, this last chapter echoes the first, which dealt with the future of literary studies. This historical and methodological itinerary, complex and stimulating, analyzes several crises, transformations, and vicissitudes, stressing the profound connection with anthropology (at the core of any form of comparatism), and the intensive intersection with the literary theory.

In the last decades, comparative literature fully exploited its lack of discipline-specific objects and methods, a feature already described in 1958 by René Wellek and now transformed in the propulsive force of an “indiscipline.”¹ This transformation implies a frenetic expansion of comparative literature from many points of view: the most important ones are investigated in the central part of the book. First of all, one should

1. David Ferris, “Indiscipline,” in *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*, edited by Haun Saussy, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, 78–99.

cite the geographic expansion, linked to the overwhelming dominance of Eurocentrism: three chapters on Āurišin's interliterary theory, decoloniality and world literature explore such a crucial aspect in all its epistemological, political and ethical implications. The concept of decoloniality, conceived by Walter D. Mignolo as a project of de-linking from any hegemonic idea, has a chronological range quite different from that of post-colonialism, since it dates back to the Christian and Castilian colonization of the Americas and to its massive control of institutions, sexuality, knowledge and subjectivity.

The other new trends produced by the expansion of comparative literature are: thematic criticism (examined in a chapter that could have been more developed), translation theory (which offers interesting insights into the category of untranslatable), comparative literary history (which avoids any teleological vision, favoring a spatial and geo-political prospect), and interartistic comparison, which is a perfect turning point to intermediality and visuality, and to the contemporary, metamorphic imagery. There are certainly other fields and trends that could have been included: neuro-aesthetic aspects, queer theory, the ethical turn, and the return of formalism. Nonetheless, this book is an invaluable and useful didactic tool, because it foregrounds a convincing notion of literature and literary studies. These disciplines do not remain confined in an anti-historical defense of the humanistic tradition. Instead, they are open to the contaminations of the global and intermedial contemporary world.

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Marc Escola et Sophie Rabau. *Littérature seconde ou la Bibliothèque de Circé*. Paris: Editions Kimé, 2015. Pp. 262. ISBN: 9782841747047.

Cet ouvrage considère diverses relectures, directes et indirectes, reprises, de l'épisode de Circé au chant X de l'*Odyssée*. Il se présente donc sous le signe des réécritures, de la littérature seconde, comme le dit le titre, et des allusions ou des commentaires. Il s'attache ainsi à Apollonios de Rhodes, à Lycophon, au Pseudo-Héraclite, à Anne Dacier, traductrice française

de l'*Odyssee* (1708), à Joyce, à Rousseau, à l'helléniste français Victor Bérard, à l'ethnologue français Jean Cuisenier, dans un large parcours historique et dans un tout aussi large parcours des types d'écrits — de divers statuts, hétérogènes, ainsi que l'ont voulu les auteurs, afin que soit dégagée une poétique de cette littérature seconde, fût dans ses témoins les plus minces. Les analyses sont précises, le recours aux textes est constant. L'idée centrale, qui exclut que cet ouvrage se présente comme une étude d'influences ou de réception, se dit simplement : ces reprises, aussi disparates soient-elles, relèvent d'une poétique. Cela semblera paradoxal, éventuellement contradictoire. Mais le long chemin parcouru permet, *in fine*, la lecture de tableaux, dressés dans la plus pure tradition structuraliste — l'histoire des commentaires et des reprises d'un objet textuel singulier et limité est ainsi moins une histoire que la métamorphose — qui autorise des classements — d'une forme, celle du commentaire. A ce paradoxe s'ajoute les inquiétudes que suscite chez le lecteur la manière dont l'argument est présenté ou encadré. Chaque chapitre est placé sous le signe d'une salle de bibliothèque — ainsi, à la bibliographie est attribuée la salle des catalogues. On ne sait si cela traduit une obsession de la réification des objets d'études, une manière de réflexivité (pauvre) de la part des auteurs (le commentaire des commentaires, que constitue ce livre, justifierait cela), ou, plus simplement mais d'une façon inquiétante, l'assimilation de la littérature et de ses commentaires à une muséologie. Ces dernières lignes n'entendent pas amoindrir l'intelligence de cet ouvrage, mais souligner que l'histoire des reprises d'un épisode de l'*Odyssee* est bien proche du dessin de l'éternité de l'immobilité. Que le lecteur puisse venir à une telle notation ne laisse pas d'être troublant.

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Calvin Thomas. *Ten Lessons in Theory. An Introduction to Theoretical Writing*. New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2013. Pp. 240. ISBN: 9781623564025.

The field of modern literary theory took a new direction around the turn of the new millennium. As signaled by the titles of books such

as *Reading after Theory* (Cunningham, 2002), *Life. After. Theory* (eds. Payne and Schad, 2003), *After Theory* (Eagleton, 2003) and *Theory after Theory* (eds. Elliott and Attridge, 2011), “high” theory seemed to have transitioned to post-theory. Calvin Thomas’s *Ten Lessons in Theory: An Introduction to Theoretical Writing* follows such works in its reflection on the waning of the subdiscipline known as Theory, but its focus is less on examining key ideas and concepts of post-theory than on delivering a robust defense of Theory’s continuing relevance.

Thomas’s advocacy is a spirited rhetorical performance, made more valiant when considered in the context of our distinctly post-theory climate. The tenor of the new epoch was crisply captured by François, professor of literature at the Sorbonne, in Michel Houellebecq’s *Submission* (2015) when, toward the beginning of the novel, he breezily remarks, “The academic study of literature leads basically nowhere, as we all know” (10). Nowhere it may lead; nevertheless, François concedes that literary studies carry a certain “marginal value,” for “literature has always carried positive connotations in the world of luxury goods” (10). His idea of literary studies as a futile if harmless activity, associated with privilege and refinement, has, of course, a long tradition. And few people, whether within or outside literary studies, would quibble over his assessment of its modest use-value in today’s job market. But the pivot on which François’s sentence turns—as *we all know*—is stickier, casting as it does, what is essentially a tribal idea into a universal fact.

Between the 1970s and the 1990s, the ideas represented by François were challenged, contested, exposed, and excoriated from a wide and loosely associated range of perspectives, collectively known as modern literary theory. For most literary theorists, the academic study of literature was nothing less than a way of liberating human life from oppression, ideology, and reification, providing not just conceptual tools for interpreting *The Tempest* or *Jane Eyre* but a revolutionary way of understanding the world. Houellebecq’s staging of the return of the individualist bourgeois man-of-letters corresponds with, and is a reflection of, the dimming of Theory, or, as some have pronounced, its demise.

On this verdict, Calvin Thomas is defiant. He upholds that “(T)heory is resolutely *undead*, permanently relevant and perpetually re-entant” (3), found everywhere “as a battery of disturbing *questions*, and an unsettled and unsettling set of strategies” (2), pertaining “not only to students ‘of the humanities,’ but to all ‘the undead’—to everyone, that

is, who still actively participates in our specifically human reality” (4). To demonstrate its vitality and enduring powers, he takes ten key sentences from the canon of Theory and provides a compendious study of the ideas they offer—what he calls the unpacking of the “conditions and consequences of these sentences” to perform the ten “lessons” (xii). The sentences upon which Thomas constructs his lessons are worth listing in full for they provide the scaffolding of this skillfully structured work. They are: “The world must be made to mean” (Stuart Hall); “Meaning is the polite word for pleasure” (Adam Philips); “Language is, by nature, fictional” (Barthes), “Desire must be taken literally” (Lacan); “You are not yourself” (Barbara Kruger), “This restlessness is us” (Jean-Luc Nancy on Hegel); “There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism” (Benjamin); “The Unconscious is structured like a language” (Lacan, again); “There is nothing outside the text” (Derrida); and “One is not born a woman” (Beauvoir).

Upon these sentences, he brings to bear the foundational ideas of Marx, Hegel, Nietzsche, Freud, Foucault, and others into a sustained critical dialogue not only with the theorists in question but with the ideas of Jameson, Barthes, Eagleton, Žižek, Philips, Edelman, and more. In lesser hands, this ambitious exercise might have easily ended up in a dizzying theoretical tour, rushed and routine, but Thomas develops an admirably tight narrative, marshaling vast multiplicities of often competing theories into an elegant labyrinthine argument, all the while offering sharp and fresh accounts of the different positions in question. The book would make for a perfect introduction to readers new to Theory. Equally, even the most erudite readers will find themselves engaged by Thomas’s astute considerations and deft unpickings of the inconsistencies and contradictions found in widespread, commonly-held assumptions.

Thomas states in the Preface that he has made it one of the central aims of the book to communicate theoretical issues of the utmost complexity in pleasurable prose—prose that is worth reading for its own sake. This conscious and creative effort to push against the high degree of insularity found in too many theoretical books marks a welcome departure from the days when obscurity was professionally accepted, even flaunted in some circles. That is not to suggest that this book is an easy read. Continually iterative, liberally peppered with inverted commas, italics and boldface, Thomas’s style is insistently “theoretical.” So for instance, on the opacity of theoretical writing, he writes: “I would like to suggest that

what animates most theoretical writing is not a spiteful insistence on ‘just being difficult’ but rather a strenuous commitment to *difficultly being just*” (21). Or on his book: “And so, while the book as a whole constitutes a novel approach to theory, it also asks to be approached as a sort of theoretical novel” (xiii). In passages such as these, the writing risks coming close to the hilarious pontifications made by Didier, the literary theorist, in Edward St Aubyn’s *Lost for Words* (2014).

What prevents semantic satiation is Thomas’s deep commitment to political and ethical responsibility that striates the rhetorical flourishes. And it is hard not to be warmed by the central point that the ten lessons all move towards: that the “theoretical” practice of the academic study of literature gives insights that lead specifically to somewhere rather than nowhere because ideas worth engaging with are those that make possible radical changes in ourselves and in the fabric of society.

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Philippe Chardin, Marjorie Rousseau dir., avec la collaboration de Magali Renouf. *L'écrivain et son critique : Une fratrie problématique*. Paris : Kimé, 2014. Pp. 567. ISBN : 9782841746507.

« On fait de la critique quand on ne peut pas faire de l’art, de même qu’on se met mouchard quand on ne peut être soldat » ; « La critique est au dernier échelon de la littérature, comme forme presque toujours et comme valeur morale, incontestablement » ; « Une chose certaine et facile à démontrer à ceux qui pourraient en douter, c’est l’antipathie naturelle du critique contre le poète — de celui qui ne fait rien, contre celui qui fait, — du frelon contre l’abeille, — du cheval hongre contre l’étalon. Vous ne vous faites critique qu’après qu’il est bien constaté à vos propres yeux que vous ne pouvez être poète. [...] Je conçois cette haine. Il est douloureux de voir un autre s’asseoir au banquet où l’on n’est pas invité, et coucher avec la femme qui n’a pas voulu de vous. Je plains de tout mon cœur le pauvre eunuque obligé d’assister aux ébats du Grand Seigneur »... Dispersés dans la correspondance échangée entre Gustave Flaubert et Louise Colet

(1846, 1853) ou émaillant la préface de *Mademoiselle de Maupin* (1834) de Théophile Gautier, ces sentiments peu amènes et ces anathèmes lancés par des écrivains sur des critiques, qui se seraient acharnés à les malmener ou à se méprendre sur leur production, ne sont pas chose rare au XIX^e siècle. Épinglés pour leur outrecuidance, moqués pour la stérilité de leurs « œuvres », honnis pour leur incapacité à appréhender la nouveauté, craints pour leurs sentences autant que pour leurs silences, les critiques furent fréquemment vilipendés par les professionnels de l'écriture. Aujourd'hui encore, selon Pierre Jourde, la critique aurait pour unique vocation d'être le « parasite » de la littérature ! S'arrêter à ce ressentiment équivaldrait toutefois à nier toute l'ambivalence et l'épaisseur de la relation écrivain-critique, à négliger les couples qui se formèrent et à méconnaître une activité qui, dans un sens kantien, consiste à « appliquer des critères, à poser des jugements, à évaluer et à interpréter » les œuvres littéraires, à se situer vis-à-vis d'une *doxa* commune,¹ mais dont l'hybridité constitue un élément caractéristique, fondamental et irréductible.

Écrivains et critiques n'ont pas toujours été frères ennemis, à moins d'entendre cette « Thébaidé » littéraire en des termes proches des vers tragiques de Racine, qui voyait entre ses personnages antagonistes et dans « l'excès de leur haine », tout ce qui les réunissait au point que « prêts à s'égorger, ils paraissaient amis » (V, 3, vv. 1449–1456). L'on garde bien sûr en mémoire les saillies et les condamnations à l'emporte-pièce, telle la réponse de Philippe Sollers qui, lorsqu'on lui demandait quel avait été l'événement littéraire le plus négligeable du XX^e siècle, éruçait : « Toute la critique littéraire » !² Il convient toutefois de se souvenir également de nobles métissages. Si Proust s'est opposé à l'explicitation de l'œuvre par la biographie de son auteur, le *Contre Sainte-Beuve* a non seulement entériné son talent de critique mais il a également confirmé ses qualités de romancier, dans une symbiose équilibrée. C'est l'engagement de Sartre et de Camus qui les ont poussés à cette alliance des genres, comme si l'efficacité du message politique passait, notent Philippe Chardin et Marjorie Rousseau, par « la conjonction des prestiges de la pensée et des séductions du romanesque » (23). D'autres, se sont dressés pour faire

1. Robert Dion, « Critique littéraire », dans Paul Aron, Denis Saint-Jacques, Alain Viala dir., *Le Dictionnaire du littéraire*. Paris : PUF, 2002. p. 127.

2. Philippe Sollers dans *Lire*, n° 257 (été 1997), cité par Patrick Kechichian, « Le critique en crise d'identité », *Les Temps modernes*, n° 672 (*Critiques de la critique*, Jean-Pierre Martin dir.) (janvier-mars 2013) : 15–25 (n. 1).

trionpher une approche « transfrontalière »³ et concéder au critique un peu de l'aura de l'auteur. « Le livre est un monde », confiait Barthes, et en soi « le critique éprouve devant le livre les mêmes conditions de parole que l'écrivain devant le monde ».⁴ S'il ne demande pas qu'on lui « concède un style ou une vision », le critique attend néanmoins « qu'on lui reconnaisse le droit à une certaine parole qui est une parole indirecte ».⁵ Cette initiative répondrait même à un mouvement continu qui fait reposer « le lignage » de la littérature sur une tradition de (re)lecture, de commentaire et de critique, qui précisément nourrit, en retour, la création littéraire, tour à tour aiguillonnée ou prompte à entrer en résistance.⁶ Pareil sentiment tend aussi à estomper les hiérarchies et le partage entre une littérature « primaire » et des œuvres dites « secondaires ». Fi donc de l'« entreglose » péjorative que déplorait jadis Montaigne : « Il y a plus affaire à interpréter les interprétations, qu'à interpréter les choses : Et plus de livres sur les livres, que sur autre sujet. Nous ne faisons que nous entregloser. Tout fourmille de commentaires, d'auteurs il en est grande cherté » (III, 13).

Poser ensuite la question de la signification du terme « critique », en apparence univoque, revient non seulement à s'interroger sur le rapport à l'œuvre et à sa réception mais aussi à envisager « l'adresse » de cette critique, ses formats, ses styles, ses métamorphoses au fil du temps et son aspect protéiforme. La critique n'a-t-elle pas eu, dans le sillage de Bergson, sa « physiologie » (Albert Thibaudet, *Physiologie de la critique*, 1930 ; *Réflexions sur la critique*, 1939 ; *Réflexions sur la littérature. Critique française, critique allemande*, 1925), puis son « anatomie » (Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism : Four Essays*, 1957) ?⁷ Toutes deux tentèrent d'unifier les effets de la critique, d'en déconstruire les techniques, d'en éclairer les croyances et l'interaction avec les codes sociaux, d'y faire la part du jugement personnel et d'une approche objective, voire systémique, héritée de la poétique d'Aristote et centrée sur des éléments clairement objectivables (modes, symboles, mythes, genres, thèmes). Diderot n'envisageait

3. Nous empruntons ce terme à Antoine Compagnon, « Quand les écrivains ne s'aimaient pas », *Temps modernes*, n° 672 (janvier-mars 2013) : 8–14.

4. Roland Barthes, *Critique et vérité* (1966), dans *Œuvres complètes*. Paris : Seuil, 2002 : vol. 2, p. 793, également cité par Patrick Kechichian, *op. cit.*

5. Roland Barthes, *Essais critiques* (1964) ; Paris : Seuil, 1991 : p. 9.

6. Cf. Antoine Compagnon, *op. cit.*

7. Voir à ce propos et de manière plus générale : Patrick Kechichian, « Le critique en crise d'identité », *op. cit.*

la « sottise occupation » du critique que comme un obstacle au plaisir du spectateur (*Pensées détachées sur la peinture, la sculpture, l'architecture et la poésie*). Thibaudet entendait, à rebours, insuffler dans l'œuvre « sa volupté de lecteur » (Antoine Compagnon) et son érudition selon une démarche qui visait avant tout à partager et à communiquer son propre plaisir. De l'œuvre de Thibaudet, l'on a surtout retenu la tripartition : *critique journalistique, critique universitaire* et *critique due à des écrivains*. Cette typologie a été affinée par l'analyse d'une *critique intuitive*, dite aussi *impressionniste*, qui procède par jugements de valeur et où la subjectivité s'est, un temps, positionnée contre le positivisme de Taine ou de Lanson. L'évolution des sciences humaines a généré une *critique idéologique*, dont l'ambition, sous l'influence du marxisme et du structuralisme, visait à resituer la littérature dans le vaste champ des pratiques culturelles en lui déniait tout caractère prétendument apolitique (Terry Eagleton, Pierre Macherey, Roland Barthes). À ces catégorisations, il convient, au moins, d'adjoindre encore les objectifs d'une *critique psychologique* qui aspira à dresser une « histoire naturelle des esprits » (Paul Bourget). L'engouement qu'elle suscita pâlit finalement sous le coup des révélations sur l'inconscient — celles dues à Freud et à Lacan — pour favoriser un dialogue entre psychanalyse et littérature, dans le but de démonter l'auteur comme l'on passe au scalpel un « cas clinique ».⁸ Cette entreprise, comme le montre Alexandre Seurat (269), a partagé Hermann Hesse et Virginia Woolf. Elle n'eut guère l'heur de plaire à un Nabokov ou à un Musil, pas plus que l'exploration de la psyché, l'usage revendiqué de la subjectivité, revenue en grâce dans le postmodernisme, et l'analyse des pratiques discursives n'avaient séduit les détracteurs de la Nouvelle critique, ressentie par l'Université comme une « nouvelle imposture » (Raymond Picard). Derrière ces évolutions, se dessinent la mouvance des institutions de la vie littéraire, dans leur multiplicité de nature et de fonction, au gré aussi de *polémiques* ou d'une « disputatio éternelle » (7) — terme dont le sème paraît indissociable de celui du mot *critique* et inséparable de toute démarche créatrice.⁹ Sans défaitisme, Antoine Compagnon était néanmoins

8. Sur ces distinctions, voir les notices « Critique idéologique » de Ruth Amossy, « Critique intuitive » et « Critique littéraire » de Robert Dion, « Critique psychologique et psychanalytique » d'Éric Bordas, dans Paul Aron, Denis Saint-Jacques, Alain Viala dir., *Le dictionnaire du littéraire*, op. cit. : 125–29.

9. L'on se reportera sur ce point aux réalisations récentes dans le domaine de la réhistoricisation du fait littéraire et notamment au projet, soutenu par l'ANR, « AGON — La dispute : cas, querelles, controverses & création à l'époque moderne » (<http://www.agon.paris-sorbonne.fr/>).

contraint d'avouer, en 2013, qu'aucune des trois critiques mises en exergue par Thibaudet « ne se port[ait] très bien ». Au fil du temps, l'espace de la critique journalistique n'a cessé de s'amenuiser. Cette forme a trouvé toutefois, sur la *toile*, de nouvelles modalités d'expressions qui relaient ses origines salonniers et conversationnelles.¹⁰ La critique savante paraît bien en peine, depuis quelques années, de se frayer un chemin parmi le grand public. La demande sociale pour la critique académique semble s'être considérablement tarie, parallèlement à un gain en technicité, qui résulte de sa mise au pas sous le boisseau des évaluations universitaires. Pourtant, on a noté récemment les enviables succès du même Compagnon (*Un été avec Baudelaire*, 2015 ; *Un été avec Montaigne*, 2014) ou de Sarah Bakewell (*How to Live or A Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer*, 2010) qui ont conduit un large lectorat à redécouvrir les classiques de la littérature, française notamment. Quant à la voix des écrivains, si elle semble souvent devenue « inaudible », « à moins d'une affaire qui fasse scandale et qui radicalise et ridiculise tous les pétitionnaires », ¹¹ elle pourrait s'être réfugiée, pour un temps seulement, dans la sphère privée. L'affirmation d'une critique créatrice ou fictionnalisée et l'évolution des pratiques universitaires qui misent de manière croissante sur les enseignements de *Creative Writing* pourraient bien, en ce domaine, faire mentir d'inconséquentes déplorations.

L'écrivain et son critique vient donc, à point nommé, offrir sur toutes ces questions une tentative de bilan. Cette mise au point érudite, de quelque 600 pages, est issue de la littérature comparée et organisée selon le biais original de la *fratrie problématique*. L'ouvrage collectif découle du colloque international de la Société française de littérature générale et comparée (SFLGC), tenu à Tours en octobre 2012. Il offre un lointain écho, à dix ans d'écart, à l'approche retenue par la SFLGC en 2002, dont il se revendique et dont les résultats ont été publiés par Wladimir Troubetzkoy et Florence Godeau, sous le titre : *Fratries. Frères et sœurs dans la littérature et les arts de l'Antiquité à nos jours* (Paris : Kimé, 2003).

L'écrivain et son critique rassemble pas moins de quarante-deux contributions, réparties selon trois chapitres : « Approches chronologiques et génériques » ; « De quelques effets sur la création littéraire des modèles théoriques, des critiques et des censures » ; « L'écrivain et le critique — le même et l'autre ». Ces subdivisions sont encadrées par trois apartés méthodologiques et conceptuels, repris sous l'étiquette

10. Antoine Compagnon, « Quand les écrivains ne s'aimaient pas », *op. cit.* : 8.

11. *Idem* : 14.

« Réflexions générales ». Leur objectif vise à éclaircir les rapports entre critique et création en littérature et à baliser ainsi les échanges entre « expérience critique et expérience formelle » (Daniel-Henri Pageaux). Sous la plume de Frédérique Toudoire-Surlapierre, auteure de *Que fait la critique ?* (Paris : Klincksieck, 2008), il s'agit d'interroger les origines du jugement critique avec le regard du logicien, du psychologue cognitif ou de l'anthropologue qui jauge le goût de l'esprit humain pour la comparaison et l'analogie. En conclusion, Yvan Leclerc ressuscite pour sa part un « idéal de la critique », celui puisé à la lecture attentive de Flaubert.

L'originalité de l'ouvrage réside assurément dans la multiplicité des points de vue convoqués. L'approche diachronique (dont on pourra cependant déplorer qu'elle ne remonte pas au-delà du XVII^e siècle) s'étoffe ici d'une analyse générique diversifiée, concentrée autour du roman (Bago, Chagas, Roth, James, Sobh, ...), certes, mais sans délaisser totalement l'étude de la poésie (Nerval, Baudelaire, Mallarmé ...) et du théâtre (Tirso de Molina, Corneille, Claudel, ...). Il ne néglige pas le rôle du spectateur ou du lecteur comme « pôle » ou comme « puissance critique » (Logan J. Connors). Il scrute l'évolution des modes de lecture et se penche sur les héros-lisant, à l'instar de l'enquête d'Hana Voisine-Jechova qui guide son lecteur dans les mises en abyme de la littérature tchèque fin-de-siècle. Le livre s'attarde aussi sur l'étude des pratiques comparées de traduction, de critique et d'écriture en invitant à mesurer les écarts observés entre la réflexion théorique et ses actualisations littéraires (Marjorie Rousseau, Hélène Cassereau-Stoyanov). Les horizons géographiques des différentes contributions témoignent d'une même étendue en prêtant attention à la littérature française ou anglo-saxonne, mais aussi, conjointement, à celle de l'Estonie, de l'Inde et de l'Amérique latine. L'ouvrage favorise de la sorte un comparatisme des cultures critiques, exercice suffisamment rare pour être souligné et dont Elena Langlois s'acquitte en retraçant les « trois âges » de la critique indienne aux prises avec les valeurs nationales, occidentales et coloniales. Des notions-clés comme l'autorité, l'engagement ou la transgression, et la confrontation de l'esthétisation du réel à différents courants idéologiques trouvent naturellement leur place dans l'examen des rapports conflictuels qui parcourent instances critiques et instances créatrices. Tanel Lepsoo, par exemple, s'interroge sur le rapport du « réalisme socialiste » à l'idéologie officielle chez l'auteur estonien Johannes Semper, tandis que Judith Sarfati Lanter, privilégie les positions de Peter Handke et de Claude Simon et la transposition fictionnelle des discussions auxquelles ils ont pris part

ou dont ils ont fait l'objet. Elle montre patiemment comment ces écrivains subversifs, qui partageaient des préoccupations esthétiques communes (*e.a.* la critique du langage dominant dans la littérature engagée, le travail sur la forme et l'agencement des récits), connurent en définitive des fortunes critiques contradictoires.

La destinée de genres ou de registres spécifiques (satire, pamphlet, ...) n'est pas ignorée, à l'instar de la tradition parodique de la glose critique dont la souche française, depuis Rabelais, est bien connue et qui s'enorgueillit d'une progéniture nombreuse et bigarrée (Thémiseul de Saint-Hyacinthe, Pope, Nabokov, Chevillard, Byatt, ...). La confrontation de la critique littéraire et de la critique du droit, qui érige les figures du censeur ou du juge en critiques particuliers, vient jeter ici un nouvel éclairage sur l'examen des rapports complexes de condamnation et d'autoprescription qui, selon des perspectives d'enquête plus larges, rejoignent notamment les ramifications fécondes de l'ANR *Juslittera*, développé dans le giron de l'université d'Orléans. De la surenchère contemporaine des procès, Hélène Maurel-Indart esquisse le tableau des luttes pour la garantie du droit d'auteur ; Emmanuel Pierrat souligne les dangers pour le monde littéraire des actions intentées par des associations ou des particuliers qui s'estiment dépossédés de leur honorabilité ou de leur vie privée par une fiction littéraire qui paraît puisée à leur expérience propre. Dans ces deux communications, qui confèrent à cette section une pertinence en lien avec le contexte plus général de moralisation de la littérature, l'on se trouve en prise avec la double responsabilité du critique. Sollicité pour son expérience aigüe dans l'analyse du fonctionnement des genres et de l'énonciation, il se prononce à l'aune d'une réalité dont il observe la sacralisation de plusieurs pans — ceux de la souffrance et du deuil, entre autres. Le critique devient ainsi l'arbitre d'une scène judiciaire chargée de se prononcer sur l'originalité artistique mais qui étend réciproquement, et sournoisement, son influence à une autre scène, littéraire cette fois, où l'autocensure est devenue une tentation contraignante. Les accusations de plagiat « psychique », essuyées par Marie Darrieussecq à l'automne 2007, ont souligné, à l'envi et au-delà des pièges rhétoriques, toute l'importance de la clairvoyance des critiques mis en présence.¹²

12. Voir à ce sujet la contribution d'Anne Strasser, « Camille Laurens, Marie Darrieussecq : du 'plagiat psychique' à la mise en question de la démarche autobiographique », *Contexte(s)*, n° 10 (*Querelles d'écrivains XIXe-XXIe siècles : de la dispute à la polémique*) (2012), <https://contextes.revues.org/5016>.

Si l'atelier organisé dans le cadre des rencontres de Tours et intitulé « La littérature comparée mène à tout, même à la littérature » n'a malheureusement pu trouver ici une recension fidèle, il a néanmoins suscité de féconds débats qui hantent la préface et le corps du livre. La transformation du critique universitaire — en particulier du comparatiste — en écrivain offre à ce titre des pistes d'analyse novatrices. L'expérience de Valérie Deshoulières, consignée ici, mais originellement débattue en parallèle avec celles de Bélanda Cannone, de Tiphaine Samoyault et de Julie Wolkenstein, offre une approche contrastée de l'innutrition réciproque de l'écriture (implicite) et de la critique (explicite). La dernière partie du volume laisse ainsi éclater la vanité des antagonismes. Elle souligne combien toute frontière est, par nature, illusoire, plus encore lorsqu'il s'agit d'établir les limites entre la recherche de l'écrivain et le travail du critique. Oscar Wilde plaidait dans *The Critic as Artist* pour l'indistinction. Mónica Zapata l'entérine lorsqu'elle étudie plusieurs glissements symptomatiques dans la littérature argentine et dominicaine où l'essai critique devient fiction et où la fiction se fait essai....

L'on peut regretter que *L'écrivain et son critique* fasse peu usage de sociologie et qu'il n'ait point étoffé encore son caractère interdisciplinaire. Lui faire ce reproche reviendrait toutefois à nier partiellement le cadre plus étroit dans lequel son contenu s'est préalablement inscrit. L'ouvrage a le grand mérite de tracer une ligne claire dans un paysage habité de querelles, de contradictions, d'enjeux symboliques, esthétiques, matériels et moraux qui renvoient, plus largement, aux « conditions » de la littérature. L'établissement d'une bibliographie critique actualisée en aurait fait un outil plus riche encore et bienvenu pour les études littéraires en général. Une longue préface des directeurs scientifiques, presque une recension en soi, et un index des noms et des œuvres citées font toutefois du volume un précieux instrument de travail et de réflexion qui invite, à son tour, à dresser des analogies inédites et à ouvrir de nouvelles perspectives d'investigation.

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Marc-Mathieu Münch. *La Beauté artistique : L'impossible définition indispensable : Prolégomènes pour une « artologie » future*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2014. Pp. 145. ISBN: 9782745327000.

Contre ce qu'il identifie comme un consensus actuel et qui voudrait que l'art ne puisse pas se définir — consensus synthétisé par Ernst Gombrich dans la préface de 1997 de son *Histoire de l'art* : « à la vérité, l'art n'a pas d'existence propre. Il n'y a que des artistes » —, Marc-Mathieu Münch entend fonder une science humaine nouvelle, une « artologie », qui serait mieux placée que toutes les disciplines existantes des sciences humaines pour définir « le noyau artistique », c'est-à-dire pour définir l'art et la beauté artistique. Si l'ouvrage est mince (145 pages), son ambition est donc très grande. Elle l'est d'autant plus que ce consensus, qui voudrait que l'art ne puisse pas se définir, est présenté comme rien moins que l'échec, dans toute la tradition occidentale, de la philosophie et des sciences sociales réunies ; réussir à définir l'art et la beauté artistique relève donc du défi. Un tel défi est au centre de *La Beauté artistique*.

Penser « l'artologie » en tant que science humaine dont l'objet et l'enjeu sont la définition de l'art implique d'abord de souligner ce que l'auteur considère comme les limites des approches existantes (c'est-à-dire des approches qui ont construit l'histoire occidentale). Tel est l'enjeu des trois premiers chapitres de l'ouvrage : le premier chapitre souligne les apports et les limites de la tradition philosophique qui s'intéresse à l'art, le deuxième chapitre souligne les apports et les limites des sciences humaines (sociologie et psychanalyse au premier chef) et le troisième chapitre est tout entier consacré à Claude Lévi-Strauss. En quelques quatre vingt dix pages, c'est le constat de l'échec de toute la pensée occidentale qui se trouve dressé. Contre la tradition occidentale qui, de Platon à Heidegger, a fait dépendre l'esthétique de la philosophie, et contre plusieurs tentations réductionnistes (réduire l'art à la pensée, à du social ou encore à de l'économique ...), Marc-Mathieu Münch entend « comprendre le phénomène art » sans le réduire à autre chose que lui-même. Dans le premier chapitre, s'appuyant sur trois approches, qu'il juge originales mais inabouties et trop dépendantes de leur base philosophique — l'approche phénoménologique de Roman Ingarden dans *L'Œuvre d'art littéraire*, l'approche de Nelson Goodman dans *Langages de l'art* et l'approche de Rainer Rochlitz

telle qu'il la présente dans *L'Art au banc d'essai. Esthétique et critique* —, il passe en revue ce qu'il considère comme les apports de la philosophie à l'analyse de l'objet esthétique, en particulier dans les travaux de Mikel Dufrenne et de Gilles Deleuze. Dans le deuxième chapitre, Münch envisage les apports des sciences humaines, tout particulièrement la sociologie (de Norbert Elias à Bourdieu en passant par Howard S. Becker et Nathalie Heinich) et la psychanalyse (remontant à Freud, Marc-Mathieu Münch synthétise les apports de Charles Mauron pour l'approche psychanalytique des œuvres et des auteurs, de Didier Anzieu pour l'approche psychanalytique de la création, de Bruno Bettelheim pour l'approche psychanalytique de la réception, avant de souligner les limites de l'approche psychanalytique). Le troisième chapitre est entièrement centré sur la figure de Lévi-Strauss, pour souligner ce que la partie « art » de l'*Anthropologie structurale* a apporté à l'analyse de l'art — à savoir : une compréhension de la fonction de l'art dans la vie sociale et culturelle d'une société donnée — en même temps que ce que l'approche de Lévi-Strauss néglige — à savoir : la nature esthétique de l'objet d'art. Münch peut ainsi terminer ce troisième chapitre en affirmant : « Les philosophes, les chercheurs en sciences humaines et le plus grand d'entre eux, peut-être, au XXe siècle, Claude Lévi-Strauss, ont donc beaucoup apporté à leur temps, chacun dans son domaine. Malgré cela, il semble bien qu'ils aient échoué à définir la nature de l'art et de la beauté de manière convaincante » (96).

Heureusement pour tous ceux que les théories de l'art intéressent, Marc-Mathieu Münch affirme réussir là où toute la pensée occidentale a lamentablement échoué. Car l'« artologie » doit permettre de définir la spécificité du « phénomène art ». En quarante cinq pages (chapitre 4), l'auteur s'attache donc à donner une telle définition, en s'appuyant sur trois hypothèses : 1. « l'art parle de tout et à tous les humains » ; 2. « l'art est un phénomène humain interactif » ; 3. « l'art ne vient pas après autre chose, mais immédiatement comme réponse à la condition humaine [...] l'art est une réponse directe à la condition humaine et non pas une conséquence philosophique, sociale, communicationnelle ou autre ». C'est dans la documentation produite par les artistes eux-mêmes — arts poétiques, traités, préfaces, pamphlets, manifestes, correspondances, carnets, etc. — que Münch trouve la matière de sa réflexion. Et c'est à partir de l'étude et de la mise en relation de ces documents que Münch déduit le double principe du « pluriel du beau »

et du « singulier de l'art ». Que l'on s'intéresse aux fonctions assignées à l'art, aux sujets artistiques qui ont au fil des époques intéressé les humains ou encore aux significations de l'œuvre d'art, on est dans le registre de la pluralité. Qu'elles relèvent du bonheur collectif, du bonheur individuel, de l'utilité ou de l'inutilité, les fonctions assignées à l'art sont très diverses. De même, de la guerre à la mort en passant par l'amour, la nature minérale ou les animaux, les sujets artistiques sont placés sous le signe d'une grande pluralité. Et les significations que l'on peut trouver à une œuvre d'art sont, elles aussi, plurielles. Mais, par-delà ce « pluriel du beau », Münch affirme avoir découvert, dans tous les textes qu'il a étudiés, « un invariant planétaire, une affirmation anthropologique sur la nature de l'art » (106). C'est ce qui lui fait articuler le « pluriel du beau » au « singulier de l'art ». L'invariant — qualifié de « planétaire » —, tel qu'il est formulé par les artistes dans les corpus étudiés par Münch, serait le suivant : « une œuvre d'art réussie est celle qui est capable de créer dans la psyché d'un récepteur un effet de vie, un effet de vie par la mise en mouvement de toutes les facultés du cerveau-esprit. Un effet de vie psychique, donc, mais lié intimement au corps : un moment rare de plénitude de l'être » (107). En d'autres termes, aux yeux des artistes, l'œuvre d'art réussie serait celle qui produit, chez le récepteur, une « plénitude de l'être » que Münch désigne par le terme « effet de vie ». Pour étayer cette « affirmation planétaire des artistes », une rubrique intitulée « Preuves » juxtapose quelques citations de Berlioz, Rodin, Delacroix, Kandinsky, Wagner, Valéry, Gounod, Debussy, Shitao, Sie Ho ou encore du *Livre de musique de l'Antiquité chinoise*. Si, au fond, l'affirmation de l'importance de l'émotion artistique ne semble pas révolutionner la pensée de l'art — depuis au moins Aristote, c'est bien en termes d'émotion esthétique (émotions tragiques, « terreur » et « pitié », chez Aristote) qu'est définie l'œuvre d'art — peut-être l'enjeu de l'argumentation est-il moins dans la mise au jour de cet « invariant planétaire » que dans les conséquences qu'en dégage Münch dans les trente dernières pages de son livre. De fait, il annonce que « l'effet de vie offre [...] une solution radicale à trois des problèmes les plus difficiles de l'esthétique » (109). Le premier concerne la question de la valeur. On a « fautivement tendance à croire qu'appartiennent à l'art toutes les œuvres ayant la prétention de créer un effet de vie ». C'est une erreur car l'art ne commence que quand il réussit, donc quand il produit une émotion (et pas seulement quand il cherche à la produire). Reste que

l'émotion produite n'est pas forcément la même pour tout le monde, en tous lieux et en tous temps.... Le deuxième problème concerne le corpus : l'effet de vie permettrait de fonder un critère irréfutable pour construire un corpus, celui de « la postérité » : « lorsqu'une œuvre est vivante pour des générations pour lesquelles elle n'a pas été faite, c'est qu'elle possède une valeur objectivement, c'est-à-dire anthropologiquement indubitable » (110). On fera remarquer que cette « postérité » à laquelle Münch accorde une valeur « objective » et « indubitable » varie et évolue en fonction des lieux et des époques : ce qui est « indubitablement » reconnu (ou ignoré) un jour peut sortir de l'oubli et y retomber.... Le critère « objectif » et « anthropologiquement indubitable » n'est-il pas aussi historique, politique et circon-tancier, comme le montre bien la réflexion sur le canon littéraire qui s'est développée depuis une trentaine d'années et dont témoignent par exemple *The Making of the Modern Canon* (1991) ou encore les débats autour de l'ouvrage de Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon* (1994) ? Le troisième problème concerne la méthode de travail : « la thèse de l'effet de vie oblige d'admettre que l'art est un système interactif reliant par définition deux sujets, le créateur et le récepteur, à un objet » (111). Penser l'art comme un système interactif a assurément des conséquences méthodologiques, mais quelle approche globale de l'art aujourd'hui récuserait l'idée que l'art est un système interactif ?

L'ouvrage de Marc-Mathieu Münch se lit facilement et pose des questions essentielles pour qui s'intéresse aux théories de l'art. Le lecteur reste toutefois sur sa faim. Certes il aura compris qu'il s'agissait de montrer que toutes les autres approches ont échoué à définir l'art et que seule la « théorie de l'effet de vie » — dont la nouveauté radicale, affirmée avec force, peine à se dégager — peut réussir à définir l'art dans son essence et son « invariant planétaire », et peut apporter des solutions aux errements des chercheurs et des théories qui l'ont précédée ; mais aura-t-il été convaincu ?

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Marit Grøtta. *Baudelaire's Media Aesthetics: The Gaze of the Flâneur and 19th-Century Media*. New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp. 192. ISBN: 9781628924404.

If there ever was an evocative adjective to describe the current effort in humanities to foster interdisciplinarity, it would be “kaleidoscopic.” The colourful glistening patterns created through the device’s subtle game of mirrors may be said to embody scholars’ creative endeavours to bring meaning from bits and pieces of theory collected in different disciplines in the hope to create new thought patterns. It is exactly this Marit Grøtta seeks to achieve in her innovative monograph *Baudelaire's Media Aesthetics: The Gaze of the Flâneur and 19th-Century Media*. With the ambitious purpose of bridging the gap between previous (sometimes canonical) literary and visual analyses of Baudelaire’s prose poems and essays, Grøtta offers a thorough examination of the poet’s art as the aesthetics of Paris’s *flâneur par excellence*. Grøtta—arguably a *flâneuse* herself—leads her reader on a delightful stroll through the pioneering nineteenth-century media city—it is thus a book that deals with literature, perception, and the configuration of the senses in the first phase of modernity” (1).

Sensitive or perceptual frames are at the centre of Grøtta’s embrace of mediation theory in describing Baudelaire’s position as a precursor of modern urban life and contemporary empirical metaphors. From such a perspective, the notions addressed in Grøtta’s work produce a double echo in contemporary society. Baudelaire, embodying the *flâneur*, “is an urban stroller, a street-artist, an accidental gaze, an amateur detective” (3); he is the repository of “a new perceptual regime” (7). This regime, Grøtta argues, is embodied in Baudelaire’s personal aesthetics stemming from what she calls “his precinematic sensibility”; that which Baudelaire, in a playful image, represents as “a kaleidoscope endowed with a conscience” (87). The figure of the *flâneur* is initiatory in itself not only because he represents the experience of blooming urban life and its “overload of sensory perception” (5), but also because his way of expressing this perceptual experience gave birth to now commonplace images. The two hundred years of information overload that we have come to define by means of consumerist images such as infobesity, information glut and more recently infoxication, was first defined through the poetic subject’s visual prism for which expressive imagery was to be found in new nineteenth-century media. In this way, for the poet-*flâneur* (or the

flâneur-poet) “the mind [became] a camera obscura,” “Paris [was] like a kaleidoscope,” (143), and life became a moving picture.

With the *flâneur* as a central motif, Grøtta’s approach shows affinities to Walter Benjamin’s seminal reading of Baudelaire. The urban malaise Baudelaire seeks to address in his prose poems is what Benjamin associates with the experience of shock “inflicted by [...] rapidly changing urban surroundings” (Grøtta 5) and the loss of the auratic power of the work of art. The gaze of the *flâneur*, then, is alternatively allegorical and melancholic; as he becomes in turns “the amateur detective (the distant and rational observer) and the gaper (the perplexed observer)” (5). Benjamin’s position seems paradoxical at times: embracing more readily techno-utopianism or techno-pessimism depending on the motif Baudelaire is developing. To this dilemma, Grøtta answers with an assertion that “studies of the *flâneur* should take as a premise that vision does not objectively represent reality and that visibility is always something created” (6). Instead of originating from a bewildered “naked eye” (i.e. the direct experience of urban malaise), Baudelaire’s gaze is “framed, fashioned, and *mediated* through the visual media of the period” (6). Baudelaire’s malaise was induced by a new environment and by his rejection of some of the new media associated with it. However, his aesthetics testifies to his deep understanding of the perception demanded by this new environment as a *game* with forms associated with new media. In other words, although Baudelaire, an ardent supporter of art for art’s sake, may not endorse the new media representing a new cultural field, he is conscious that these new media “shape [...] the way we *see* reality” (7).

A time museum of sorts, this book can be conceived as a stroll through galleries devoted to the new media available in Baudelaire’s society. The role of newspapers, photographs, precinematic devices, toys, and corporeality in Baudelaire’s works is substantiated by remarkable analyses of his *Petits Poèmes en Prose*. Grøtta skilfully masters the delicate art of lively description. Her depictions of *physiologies* (or *tableaux*) and *fait divers*, photographic practices such as the *carte de visite*, kaleidoscopes and phenakistiscopes, and even nineteenth-century toys, supported by quotes from Baudelaire’s works and correspondence, describe the delightful polyphonic patterns of life in nineteenth-century Paris. This kaleidoscopic structure allows both for cherry-picking as well as for linear reading. It may thus fuel media-specific arguments or discussions on more general aesthetic considerations.

Grøtta sees in Baudelaire's appropriation of newspaper formats the very birth of his series of prose poems, also known as *Le Spleen de Paris*, published in *La Presse* in 1862. These poems, she argues, embody Baudelaire's media aesthetics, as they seek to make sense of modern life. In each poem, a narrator—"the poetic subject" (41)—tells colourful anecdotes garnered during his urban excursions. In order to expose the poetic subject's seemingly unaltered gaze, Baudelaire actually frames his understanding of urban life by means of two literary figures of speech. First, allegory, which can be construed as a re-appropriation of *physiologies* in newspapers—those portraits aimed at representing the type of persons one could encounter at the marketplace. Second, the anecdote, whose journalistic counterpart is the *fait divers*. Interestingly, Grøtta compares this dichotomy with Baudelaire's view on poetry and art through her analysis of the poem "Perte d'auréole." In this text, Grøtta argues, Baudelaire presents his solution to the budding struggle of poetry with new media in the literary field, not as an introverted closure but as a clever usurpation of new media's codes (i.e., commonplace, poster and quasi-poetic languages) in order for the (new or modern) poet to "go [...] incognito" (41).

When roaming through the streets incognito, the *flâneur* may allow his gaze and imagination to run wild. Ultimately, what Baudelaire gives us to see in his works is the gaze of the *flâneur* interpreted through the prism of his imagination. Because he knows that his gaze is mediated, Baudelaire borrows from photography the notion of "pure mediality" (55)—a "mediated vision that offers more to see" (55). In her chapter on photography, Grøtta analyses two of Baudelaire's prose poems, "*Les fenêtres*" and "*Mademoiselle Bistouri*". In both cases, the concept of frames—windows in the first case, and the frames in which Mademoiselle Bistouri displays her precious doctor pictures in the second—is a central element of Baudelaire's aesthetics. Grøtta explains that "Baudelaire's idealization of [a] framed, semitransparent, and illuminated view [...] paraphrases the visual conventions of photography" (56). Here again, these conventions are translated into a literary mode through allegory as a figure of speech. Baudelaire, a privileged viewer, understands reality as a negative that needs to be interpreted: when wandering through the streets, *he only* can identify allegorical characters in the figures he observes in window frames; when describing Miss Bistouri's obsession with doctor pictures, *he only* can identify the fetishist nature of the new art of photography. In

Grøtta's words, "[by] adopting the visual apparatus of photography, the poet-*flâneur* sees more than he does with only the naked eye, and allowing his imagination to fill in the picture, he provides the image with a caption" (59). Using repetitive photographic motifs, Baudelaire "adopts the gaze of the camera" in order to frame the scenes he witnesses in his urban environment. To this, he appends "the act of providing images with captions" (70) as an analogue to imagination.

Grøtta takes the motif of vision one step further in her following chapter on precinematic devices. The latter do not simply frame but *alter* human vision (74). With precinematic and optical devices, Baudelaire's contemporaries understood that "the human eye could no longer be trusted to provide an objective visual perspective, but was [...] vulnerable to manipulation and recoding" (77). Although he considers devices such as the kaleidoscope or the phenakistiscope as toys (scientific toys, as he calls them), Baudelaire seems fascinated with their power to manipulate and recode reality. He compares this process to the power of art in his essay "Morale du joujou." "According to Baudelaire, toys represent the child's ideas of beauty and it seems that their appeal comes from the way they forcefully and intensely affect the child's imagination" (81), Grøtta argues. From such a perspective, precinematic devices nurture children's sensitivity to manipulated representations of reality—i.e. the function and motifs of art and poetry. Grøtta more specifically considers that this tendency is verified through the aesthetic trends of decomposition/recomposition of images—what she calls *montage*—and movement. According to Grøtta, the best examples of these tendencies in Baudelaire's work are manifest in his recourse to the image of the kaleidoscope when describing crowds and in his tribute to Constantin Guys's sketches, which focus "on the particular vision required to capture movement" (86).

Although it does suggest a connection with the idea of movement—"the body of the *flâneur* is a body in motion" (103), Grøtta's subsequent chapter on corporeality seems somewhat at odds with the general structure of her work. Though the body may easily be understood as a form of new media that started developing from the nineteenth century onwards, Grøtta's decision to devote a whole chapter to this topic may seem debatable. Her analysis of the motifs of violence, crowds and the commonplace as a type of mass communication in "Le Mauvais vitrier," "Les Foules" and "L'Horloge," "Le Joueur Généreux" and "La Corde" is nonetheless remarkable. Similarly, Grøtta's fifth chapter on toys may at first sound as a repetition

of the material already covered in her chapter on precinematic devices. She does indeed reiterate a number of her remarks on “Morale du joujou.” However, she takes her reflection one step further by addressing the fetishism of commodities in Baudelaire’s retelling of his childhood memory of a woman he identified as the “toy fairy” (126). In this passage, Grøtta masterfully interprets Baudelaire’s indirect reliance on yet another media specific to nineteenth-century society, i.e. *fantasmagories*.

Fantasmagories and a number of the other media Grøtta analyzed in her previous chapters resurface in her somewhat flawed conclusion. After providing her readers with a very effective recapitulation of the principles of Baudelaire’s media aesthetic, which she describes as a “media-saturated imagination” (146), Grøtta includes sub-sections devoted to Marx’s, Benjamin’s, and Freud’s appropriation of similar new media images. Admittedly, each section reads as a well-written overview of the issues of Marx’s and Benjamin’s use of phantasmagoria in their respective descriptions of commodities and Paris, and of Freud’s understanding of the psyche as a photographic apparatus. Still, one may wonder why Grøtta chooses to address these theoreticians’ personal appropriation of media imagery in modernity in this particular part of the book. As an effort to further investigate the influence of Baudelaire as a precursor of our contemporary expression of our urban-saturated mode of perception, these sections are certainly worthwhile. However, to do these topics full justice would certainly require more specialized studies.

All in all, Marit Grøtta’s monograph is a delightful and perfectly documented work that certainly deserves to be read by comparative literature scholars. As an original effort to bridge the gap between too often separated though arguably related disciplines, this book definitely offers new avenues through which to explore the link between literary analysis and visual (or other) mediation. Readers may choose to adopt the position of the urban stroller in order to discover the media landscape of nineteenth-century Paris. Alternatively, they may elect to become (amateur) detectives in order to investigate how literary and visual disciplines intermingle in Baudelaire’s mediated vision and often neglected prose poems. Whatever their decision may be, they will surely appreciate the opportunity of going back in time offered by Grøtta’s remarkable scholarly work.

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Michal Peled Ginsburg. *Portrait Stories.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2015. Pp. 224. ISBN: 9780823262601.

Throughout the history of literature, one can find an abundance of texts focusing on portraits. Mythical traditions even incorporate stories about portraits. Since antiquity, narratives, poems, and dramas have dealt with portraits. Moreover, they have depicted their appearances, genesis, and impact. Broadly speaking, many texts include detailed descriptions of portraits, which can even become central or key motifs. This phenomenon can assume many different aspects and illustrate various perspectives. Images of people can serve as a motivation to reflect about pictures of human beings in the figurative sense, or to delineate a certain figure—often assuming that their character, their social circumstances, and their personal history can be extrapolated from the description of their portrait. Frequently, the focus of interest is the portrait's imagery itself. Therefore, certain pictures and statues can motivate many authors to address the difference between the dead and the living, especially if the literary text deals with the relation between the portrait and the depicted person. Closely related to this aspect is the engagement with the dichotomy of appearance and reality, illusion and truth. Portrait stories are characterized by people's self-understanding as subjects of their experience and actions as well as by the self-understanding of art, of which portrait art can be seen as a metonymy. In general terms, the portrait emerges as the interface between aesthetic and epistemological, psychological and anthropological interests.

Michal Peled Ginsburg's comparative monograph is precisely devoted to this complex nexus of topics. Selecting a wide variety of literary works on portraits, portraitists and their sitters, she takes an innovative stance. Ginsburg's focuses primarily on the ways in which the relation between subjectivity and representation is addressed in "Portrait Stories." Painters, sitters, and their portraits--and not least the viewers of said pictures—call for a reflection on subject and subjectivity. As shown in Ginsburg's textual analyses, processes of constitution and affirmation as well as damaging and negation of subjectivity through portraits are often linked to power structures. These themes and issues are outlined at the outset of the book; they are consistently evoked again in the following chapters. First of all, power is important in the relationship between the parties involved in portrait sessions, especially between the painters and their model. According to

an atavistic notion still potent today, in the act of portrayal the painter seizes power over the person being painted – not only over the body but also over the soul of the archetype. Modern literature also adheres to this idea of pictorial magic—particularly when evoking tales of artists' magical powers and the enchanting effects of their work. Furthermore, social relationships between persons are constituted, reinforced or even subverted in the process of creating, viewing and handling portraits. Those images also serve to reflect on individual subjectivity in relation to that of others, e.g. as an occasion to analyse one's own integration into social contexts, to question romantic relationships, or the dependency on social rank, status, and gender. Ginsburg makes abundantly clear that portrait stories revolve around power structures between living people and artefacts. This is especially true in works that transfix the viewer and maybe even the subject of the portrait itself. Pictures perceived as a doppelganger of the sitter express the fascinating and terrifying aspects of the doppelganger phenomenon at large: they indicate the divide between body and soul, as well as their imminent separation by death; the doppelganger contests the model's identity, intervenes in the lives of the portrayed and their families, and might even question the responsible subject's autonomy. Portraits as images, doubles, and simulacra address the sense of vision, which constitutes the source of their impact. Indeed, the stories discussed and analysed by Ginsburg from different perspectives illustrate the relation between power and vision. They show that hierarchy can be established through sight.

Ginsburg's interpretations of portrait stories in different literatures consistently emphasize the relation between visual arts, social roles and social relationships—and hence between image and power. In this way, Ginsburg manages to link aesthetic and ethical-political discourse. Insofar as pictures depict people, the portrait also becomes a medium of power—the power held by the portrait's subject over its beholder. Insofar as they can be interpreted as metonyms of power structures and used as such in literature, these pictures offer an opportunity to discuss power and hierarchy in general and their role in the lives of the subjects involved. Many portrait stories evoke relationships between different family generations, involving the parents' and ancestors' power over their children. This power of the predecessors—manifested and materialised in pictures—symbolises the defining influence of the past on the present as well as the regulations and confinements the development of

subjectivity has to succumb to. Ginsburg's study pays special attention to repetitions and to the shifts and reversals of traditional topical ideas of pictures. Thus, the portraitists' power can turn into impotence if the picture or its archetype challenges them or causes a state of dissociation. Even owners and mere observers of pictures can become controlled by them and might be deprived of their autonomy.

The examined corpus is comprised of works from the fictional literature of the 19th century. The theme of painting and portraits is foregrounded in many novels, novellas and stories from the era of Romanticism, Realism and Aestheticism. Ginsburg turns her attention not only to texts in which the importance of the portrait motif is readily apparent but also to texts in which it seems to be an accessory motif only, but then turns out to be the secret core motif. Ginsburg's point of departure is her interest in the literary shaping of the relationships between portraits and power structures as well as between aesthetic, ethical and psychological dimensions of portrait stories. Ginsburg consistently examines the ways in which the relations between text and story or narration and painting, writing and painted pictures are aesthetically presented.

The first chapter—unsurprisingly—deals with Poe's "Oval Portrait." This often-analyzed text examines the complex and ambiguous hierarchies between the figures and their multiple representations. Ginsburg's reading offers a new and original perspective: for her the text is a reflection on the difference between the portrait and the narrated story, between the text and its reading on the one hand and the picture and process of seeing on the other. Both the narrated image and the narration relate to the portrait's secret in an independent and non-hierarchical way. Further, two stories by Henry James, "The Special Type" and "The Tone of Time," perfectly document the literary examination of pictorial polysemy—particularly in their relationship to texts inscribed into them and to texts about them (chapter 2: "The Portrait's Two Faces"). James discusses the relation between past and presence with regard to the motif of the picture; yet the preservation of the past appears to be a construction that cannot be distinguished from its own falsification. A portrait that gives the false impression of having been painted a long time ago (like "The Tone of Time") can suggest a shift from purposeful authentication to deception.

Chapter 3 ("The Portrait Painter and His Doubles") concentrates on three texts about painters as representatives of critical subjectivity.

In E. T. A. Hoffmann's narration "Die Doppeltgänger," the motif of the doppelgänger is linked to the portrait of one of the doubles, hence orchestrating a constellation of perceived reality, ideal and treacherous illusion typical for Hoffmann. In Gautier's "La Cafetière" and Nerval's "Portrait du diable," pictures acquire magical or rather diabolical powers over their beholders. As was the case with Hoffmann, the relationship between archetype and likeness is ambiguous in these works. The three stories are connected by the reappearing constellation of male artist and female sitter. All pose the question of the painter's presence in his work. Balzac's "La Maison du chat-qui-pelote" deals with the problematic idealisation of a female sitter by the male portraitist and the effects this has on their lives. Both are in their own way the product of how they are perceived by others, and Balzac suggests that the life of the woman depends on the existence of her portrait. The central female character of Henry James' "Glasses" is nothing more than a (beautiful) surface; she exists only through her relations to male beholders (cf. chapter 4: "On Portraits, Painters, and Women").

As an addition to the variations of the motif of the female portrait, chapter 5 analyses texts about male portraits ("Portraits of the Male Body"). In Kleist's "Der Findling," the allusions to the title character's mysterious connections to a lost son and a lost lover suggest ominous consequences. The inscrutability of representation leads to catastrophe. In Thomas Hardy's "Barbara of the House of Grebe," a stone sculpture is endowed with the representational functions of a lost lover. Like its archetype, the statue transforms into a monster and essentially contributes to the dehumanisation of its dedicated observer. Reoccurring and ambiguous doublings are staged in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. The two-part relationship between painter and sitter here includes a third aspect: an observer is included a priori in the text. Ginsburg documents the many ways in which sitter, image and observer double in the novel and how those different types of doubles—i.e. human beings, mirror images, pictures and texts—compete with each other.

In Storm's "Aquis submersus," Ginsburg identifies inscription as a significant motif and central concept. As such, it links written texts and paintings. Inscriptions, serving as information supplements, have an impact both on the figures themselves and on their relationships with other figures. In a way recalling Poe's "Oval Portrait," Storm structures his narrative as a representation of narration, which nonetheless remains

unavoidably separated from what it represents. This difference manifests itself namely in the necessity to translate an ancient inscription. Inter-linking and repeating references connect the story of the personae to that of the medium of its representation. In George Sand's "Le Château de Pictordu," a woman paints her absent mother's portrait. Thus a complex relationship of references is established between the daughter, her real mother, the picture of her mother and the ideal vision the artistically inclined daughter has of herself. The difference between the natural and the artificial is subverted, and the 'creation' of the mother by her daughter reflects the reversal of conventional models of provenance and hierarchies (cf. chapter 6: "Portraits, Parents, and Children"). In his portrait story, Nikolaj Gogol connects the theme of the portrait with that of money ("The Portrait," cf. chapter 7). The story of a portrayed money-lender becomes a parable of representations and of the power that lies in the command one holds over these representations. Being similar to pictures so lifelike that they seem to watch the observer with human eyes, money also exerts power over people's lives. In particular, its power to (unnaturally) multiply things on its own accord makes it appear diabolical. This form of power corresponds to the common hierarchy in which the representation is subordinated to what it represents.

It might come as a surprise that, of all things, the portrait should become such a fruitful and polyvalent motif in literary representations. This is especially true when considering the fact, also evoked by Ginsburg, that in traditional aesthetic reflections the portrait is regarded as an inferior genre because it depicts nothing but "a mere individual" (57). Such a reduction to the unique might appear to be deficient in the face of an aesthetic requiring art to deal with the universal and the absolute. However, this focus on the specific and the individual seems to be a motif in literature that can be used to great effect to transcend its own limitations (57). As several of Ginsburg's examples indicate, the failure of aesthetic ambitions rather than their success is the cause of the reader's most acute sense of wonder.

Based on close readings of various works, Ginsburg's analyses are characterized by their precision and attention to various details. In this way, they can carve out a range of new levels of meaning. The findings and conclusions that result from those readings are comprehensible and innovative. Though there already exists a plethora of studies about the representation of images and painting in literature—even about at

least some of the authors Ginsburg examines—this book introduces important new perspectives on the literary examination of representation and subjectivity.

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Irina Paperno. “Who, What am I?": Tolstoy Struggles to Narrate the Self. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014. Pp. x + 229. ISBN: 9780801453342.

This admirably concise study, by a Berkeley professor of Russian literature and intellectual history, addresses the large body of Tolstoy's writings that fall outside his widely-admired career as a novelist. Indeed, even if one includes the many drafts that underpin his published fictions, they are easily outweighed by what Irinia Paperno calls Tolstoy's “self-narratives” (other terms for this mode of writing would be “personal documents” and life-writings). His first self-consciously literary effort, “A History of Yesterday” (1851), grew out of youthful experiments with diaries, journals, and various other exercises in self-evaluation, as he sought to emulate Rousseau and “to turn himself into an open book” (1). This initial impetus for writing, which Paperno examines in detail in her opening chapter, never deserted Tolstoy. He would keep diaries at several lengthy intervals in his sixty-year career, pursued an extensive correspondence, started to draft several autobiographies, and did complete a conversion narrative, *A Confession* (1882). At this point, in the wake of his third, most decisive rejection of nearly all his fictional works, including *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace*, Tolstoy went on to publish a wide array of essayistic writings which, when relevant, figure in this book's penultimate chapter.

With a topic that draws on some sixty volumes in the monumental Jubilee Edition of Tolstoy's complete works, selectivity is essential; and Paperno does not disappoint. Thus her discussion of his correspondence in Chapter Two focuses on the mutually self-probing letters that he exchanged between 1874 and 1879 with Nikolai Strakhov, a philosophically

minded literary critic who, unlike Tolstoy, also enjoyed direct connections with Dostoevsky. The two men's efforts to define their faiths apart from the established religion of their surroundings was initially promising, but eventually came to a halt. One issue, among others, lay in Strakhov's growing interest in *Anna Karenina* specifically (which was written and published in this period) and more generally in the possibilities of the nineteenth-century European novel. These views had begun to clash with Tolstoy's more negative attitude toward mainstream fiction. In *What is Art?* (1897), whose origins go back to the early 1880s (38), he would contend that, from a world literature viewpoint, the European realistic novel that he had come to know and admire in his earlier years amounted to mere provincialism.

At stake for Tolstoy was an emerging religious crisis, which spilled over into his efforts at this point to choose between two distinct approaches to narrating the self. Chapter Four investigates his several failures to write an autobiography in the modern, secular sense of following the linear development of a unique individual in a this-worldly setting. Though some of Tolstoy's vignettes of early childhood in these drafts do anticipate Freud's concept of "screen memories," in which a person's present-day concerns infuse an account of supposed past experiences (84-86), his place in the tradition that stems from Rousseau must be considered "retrogressive" (102). That is, instead of writing the autobiography of an evolving "self," what Tolstoy was able to produce was an Augustinian confession dedicated to examining the "soul." The task of narrating his life he left to his associate and disciple P. I. Biriukov; but when he received the first volume of this authorized biography, he was reluctant even to read an account of his life that was written by someone else (93).

Interpreted by Paperno as a typical conversion narrative in Chapter Three, *A Confession* reversed the temporal trajectory of the attempted autobiographies. Instead of seeking out early personal memories as points of departure for a manageable life-story, Tolstoy focused on decisive change in the present, toward which he oriented his past and according to which his life could be judged. In Paperno's analysis, the text that results is marked by a complex deployment of the first-person pronoun, which includes a "strong authorial I" who has undergone conversion, a "biographical I" identified with key facts in Tolstoy's life, and a sinful "allegorical I." Her presentation of the elaborate interplay among these first-persons singles out the "strong moments where the split becomes palpable" (64), as well as touching on other possibilities, like the "we" of progressive Russian authors

in the later 1850s. In the process Paperno provides a useful chapter-by-chapter overview of this work, which is often glossed over in studies of Tolstoy's fiction, but which is central to his projects of "self-narration" even as it marks his growing impatience with the novel.

Thus, in less than a decade, Tolstoy's writing practice had veered away from the "high culture" status held by imaginative literature in favor of non-fictive alternatives harking back to his earliest venture in authorship. The last third of *"Who, What Am I?"* moves on from this period of reorientation to survey various new developments in the essayistic writings and late diaries. Among the religious, philosophical, and social issues that occupied Tolstoy, comparatists will probably be most interested in ones with a clear literary resonance. As he struggled, like many others, to come to terms with Hegel's master-and-slave dialectic and to find a way to do so that could mesh with his approach to the Bible, Tolstoy finally resolved this interpretive puzzle by writing a story. "Master and Man" (1894–95) is one of his very best late works of fiction, and Paperno's discussion of its Hegelian roots is a model of literary criticism attentive to philosophy and intellectual history (114–23). A second provocative topic involves the almanacs of daily readings that grew out of Tolstoy's late diaries (152–54). Consisting of aphoristic extracts from a wide range of writers, many from the West but from elsewhere as well, these anthologies of what might now be called "wisdom literature" reveal a Tolstoy who, having renounced his claim to be a world-class novelist, had become the editor of a different kind of world literature.

For readers without easy access to the Jubilee Edition of Tolstoy's works, *"Who, What Am I?"* includes an appendix with the original Russian wording for all quotations given in English. For students of Russian literature, the book is not just an important addition to Tolstoy scholarship but a major reevaluation of what the act of writing meant for this author. Comparatists will find it to be an outstanding inquiry into the nature of autobiographical writing broadly understood, whether in its cross-cultural development, in its interdisciplinary ramifications, or especially in the varied motives, methods, perplexities, and goals that marked Tolstoy's telling experiments in self-narration.

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Albena Lutzkanova-Vassileva. *The Testimonies of Russian and American Postmodern Poetry: Reference, Trauma, and History*. New York and London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp. 296. ISBN: 9781628921878.

L'ouvrage d'Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva : « Les témoignages de la poésie postmoderne russe et américaine » (en anglais) se présente sous la forme d'un volume de 296 pages accompagné d'un impressionnant appareil de notes, d'une bibliographie essentiellement anglo-américaine et russe, et d'un index qui facilite la lecture. Il est constitué, suivant un plan cohérent, d'une introduction, de deux parties équilibrées et d'une conclusion (que l'on aurait souhaitée moins brève). Dans l'introduction, intitulée « Témoigner de l'Histoire : la voix de la poésie postmoderne », l'auteur expose les questions principales qui font l'objet de son étude : celle de la nature de la réalité présentée par les poètes postmodernistes, de son rapport au monde réel, et surtout d'une éventuelle lecture rationnelle d'un discours délibérément hermétique, niant le concept même de la « réalité ».

La première partie, intitulée « Traumas postcommunistes, témoignages postmodernistes : référence, histoire, et mémoire du conceptualisme et du métaréalisme russes » fournit une brillante analyse des référents du postmodernisme russe. Elle s'ouvre par un chapitre consacré au problème de la prétendue absence du signifiant dans le conceptualisme russe. Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva s'appuie sur la théorie du trauma, une branche de la psychologie moderne qui connaît un essor particulièrement important aujourd'hui. S'inspirant des travaux de la spécialiste du trauma psychologique Cathy Caruth, Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva aborde le conceptualisme tardif (et le métaréalisme) comme la conséquence d'un trauma de la conscience causé par l'implosion soudaine de l'Union Soviétique. Après avoir, durant des décennies, imprimé dans la conscience de la population ses idéologèmes stéréotypés et ses slogans mensongers, l'idéologie communiste sombre dans le néant du jour au lendemain, laissant place à un vide sidéral. Selon la chercheuse : « toute une époque est abolie » et cette expérience catastrophique, dépassant les limites de la perception humaine, produit sur les artistes de l'époque post-totalitaire, déconnectés de la réalité et incapables de comprendre ce qui leur arrive, un effet de sidération et de désagrégation. La crise culturelle et sociale démesurée dont ils sont victimes provoque chez

eux une perte de sensibilité, les rend comateux et ilotes, inaptes à la perception et à la cognition.

Le sens « référentiel » du trauma trouve ici toute sa pertinence, car c'est un référent négatif qui exprime l'indicible, c'est le signe imperceptible d'un traumatisme psychique qui témoigne de sa véritable cause in absentia, d'une façon inadéquate et sans rien représenter.

Ce choc traumatique culturel et psychologique ne va pas sans conséquences physiques et c'est un aspect parmi d'autres auquel s'attache Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva dans le deuxième chapitre, « Le striptease des concepts totalitaires... », et les suivants. Elle montre, à travers plusieurs citations de textes poétiques et théoriques (Rubinstein, Prigov, Rykline, Kuritsyne, Lipovetski, Epstein...), la désarticulation des vers qui témoigne de la désintégration pathologique de la personnalité (crise d'identité, perte de soi, impression de tourner en rond). D'éclairants exemples tirés d'autres formes d'art (figurines en papier-mâché et plats de porcelaine de l'artiste russo-américain Grisha Bruskin, installations d'Ilia Kabakov) dénonçant la nature déviée de la réalité communiste et parodiant les clichés vides de sens de la « grandeur » et de « l'éternelle perfection » de l'homo soviétique, illustrent visuellement la détresse physique du sujet, la désarticulation de son corps martyrisé (cécité, démembrement, éviscération).

Après un « Interlude Bulgare » bref mais instructif, commence la deuxième partie, intitulée « Le trauma, la référence, et les media-technologies dans la poésie postmoderne américaine : le témoignage du *Language Writing* ». Argumentant que le même processus traumatisant s'est produit dans les grands pays industriels occidentaux (en premier lieu aux US), où les technologies de l'information jouent un rôle dominant, l'auteur se tourne vers une autre école postmoderne de la fin du XXe siècle, celle du *Language Writing* américain. Mettant en parallèle deux univers poétiques géographiquement éloignés, mais thématiquement très proches, elle examine dans quelle mesure la crise qui a frappé la *société idéologique* soviétique est comparable à celle qui est survenue aux US à l'ère de la *société de l'information*. De façon claire et convaincante, elle démontre que la disproportion grandissante entre l'homme au potentiel biologique limité et la masse d'information illimitée dont il est bombardé suscite le même désespoir, les mêmes dégâts psychiques et physiques. Se méfiant des mécanismes de totalisation, les écoles poétiques russe et américaine pratiquent la même autoréférence, partagent le même intérêt

pour l'expérimentation et le jeu avec la langue. Elles défient en commun la signification et proclament la fin de la réalité phénoménologique au profit d'une réalité multidimensionnelle.

Le courant russe constructiviste de même que le *Language Writing* américain n'ont pas coupé le lien avec la réalité, conclut la chercheuse. Dans les deux cas, nous n'avons pas affaire à de textes opaques et fermés, mais plutôt à une autre manière de dialoguer — non conventionnelle, en contrepois au « surplus de la réalité » qui obstrue la vue. Ces poèmes postmodernes ont une valeur documentaire. Loin d'être non-référentiels, ils apportent leur témoignage sur notre triste époque de la rupture de transmission avec les générations précédentes, époque « des montres molles et du temps historique arrêté » (Epstein, « After the Future »).

Dépassant de loin le cadre du discours poétique, mais située à l'intersection de la philosophie et de la politique, la problématique du postmodernisme a une dimension historique et nécessite une approche interdisciplinaire et transculturelle. C'est l'originalité et l'actualité du livre d'Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva. Face à ce sujet éclectique, réputé difficile et insuffisamment connu, elle s'est fixé un objectif ambitieux : celui de lui donner un sens. Pari qu'elle gagne haut la main, en proposant les clés historiques et politiques qui ouvrent aux lecteurs anglophones l'accès à la poésie russe et américaine postmoderne.

L'ouvrage d'Albena Lutzkanova-Vassilieva présente un intérêt non seulement pour les spécialistes, mais aussi pour un public plus large. Tout lecteur qui se pose des questions sur le monde postindustriel d'aujourd'hui y trouvera matière à réflexion et un certain nombre de réponses nuancées et solidement étayées.

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Britta Benert, dir. *Paradoxes du plurilinguisme littéraire 1900 : Réflexions théoriques et études de cas*. Bruxelles : P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2015. Pp. 278. ISBN : 9782875742674.

Ce volume rassemble plusieurs essais dont l'ambition est de mettre en relief « la dimension affective et identitaire » de la réception du plurilinguisme

au XIX^{ème} siècle. Ce phénomène montre en effet des similitudes avec la littérature comparée, discipline dite « perceuse de frontières ». Dans cette anthologie, Britta Benert vise à mettre en lumière le caractère diffus du sujet. Au cœur de cette démarche, l'hybridité linguistique et l'évolution de l'histoire du plurilinguisme occupent une place essentielle. L'instrumentalisation de la langue dans un but commercial et la poétologie expliquent la chronologie du concept de plurilinguisme. Les rapports entre les hommes et les langues, ainsi que « la nouvelle doxa de la polyphonie » dont parle Todorov, constituent le noyau de la méthodologie de ce volume. La perspective générale de l'ouvrage se concentre sur la littérature européenne, sans toutefois s'y limiter.

Dans son introduction, Benert évoque d'emblée Leonard Forster, qui a élargi la réflexion sur le plurilinguisme littéraire, en introduisant les concepts d'*intratextuel* et d'*intertextuel*. Cet ouvrage surprend d'ailleurs par son propre plurilinguisme et par son ouverture sur une large palette de politiques linguistiques. Comme Benert le souligne, le plurilinguisme a été soutenu à la fois par la littérature périphérique du monde postcolonial ainsi que par les textes de littérature comparée. Si le XIX^{ème} siècle a privilégié une attitude nouvelle fondée sur l'encouragement des auteurs d'une langue nationale et l'essentialisation de la langue maternelle, le plurilinguisme s'est développé de façon radicalement différente. Britta Benert réussit à épinglez les diverses manifestations de ce processus. Le caractère diffus du plurilinguisme est ancré dans son individualisme. Tout au long de cette anthologie, la terminologie utilisée par les auteurs donne au plurilinguisme une dimension toujours autre. Britta Benert mentionne trois de ces occurrences, à savoir le « cosmopolitisme, la langue maternelle/l'altérité linguistique et la question de réception » (21). En touchant au cosmopolitisme, Benert fait référence à Levente Szabo, fondateur de la première revue comparatiste. Le concept goethéen de *Weltliteratur* fut à la source de la revue *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* qui fut fondée en Roumanie dans le but de promouvoir les langues minoritaires. De plus, George et Wilde, les aristocrates du bilinguisme, sont assimilés au même cosmopolitisme de par leur identité multiple. Benert voit l'hybridité comme une caractéristique primordiale du plurilinguisme parce qu'elle lutte contre l'idée de pureté, réfutée à notre époque. En outre, la réception et l'altérité linguistique forment les deux autres piliers de l'approche de ce recueil. Le dialogue avec l'autre impose le besoin d'une perception reconceptualisée des situations plurilingues. A cet égard, Benert choisit des termes comme « aveuglé » ou

« réducteur », pour parler du manque d'attitude correcte envers l'autre. L'originalité de cet ouvrage repose sur la manière dont le plurilinguisme est vu, c'est-à-dire comme la somme de plusieurs perspectives, qui ne s'excluent pas mais, au contraire, s'enrichissent mutuellement. La première partie du volume se concentre sur l'histoire littéraire en adoptant une approche chronologique. De façon quelque peu inattendue, le début du volume a pour objectif de cerner au plus près les dimensions du plurilinguisme, en créant « une contre-histoire plurilingue » (25). Par conséquent, les questionnements posés dans les articles de la deuxième partie sont multiples. « L'approche panoramique » (25) montre combien les interrogations identitaires des auteurs sont liées au plurilinguisme. En effet, au début du 20^{ème} siècle, on observe l'émergence d'un grand nombre d'écrivains « venus d'ailleurs ». Enfin, la dernière partie du volume se concentre sur le processus d'acquisition du langage ainsi que sur la reconceptualisation de la langue maternelle. Ces études trouvent ici une cohabitation heureuse, tout en soulignant la multiplicité des perspectives permettant d'éclairer le phénomène du plurilinguisme. Ce volume offre donc une succession de considérations sur ce phénomène linguistique, situé au centre du dialogue interculturel, lequel ne pourra que séduire le lecteur. En invitant ce dernier à un voyage riche en découvertes, Benert rassemble dans cet ouvrage une multitude de voies d'accès au plurilinguisme, tout en précisant sa portée. Loin de vouloir fournir une vision unitaire ou exhaustive du plurilinguisme, Benert utilise la perspective des années 1900 afin d'enrichir l'approche du lecteur d'aujourd'hui.

Les cinq premières contributions invitent le lecteur à s'interroger sur les différents points de vue existant dans plusieurs pays à propos du plurilinguisme. L'ouvrage s'ouvre avec l'essai de K. Alfons Knauth sur l'hétéroglossie comme intralingue et interlingue dans le symbolisme français. Se concentrant sur les oeuvres de Paul Verlaine et d'Arthur Rimbaud, Knauth désire mettre en évidence des phénomènes stylistiques caractéristiques de la poésie symboliste française qui révèlent les écarts du plurilinguisme. Il semble placer le symbolisme entre la « couleur locale » et le « polyglottisme », pour ensuite le désigner comme « le premier manifeste du plurilinguisme littéraire en Europe » (34). De plus, l'opposition entre le plurilinguisme européen et celui de l'Amérique latine souligne les tendances nationalistes de l'un et coloniales ou postcoloniales de l'autre. En fin de compte, la tradition de la littérature multilingue avec son mélange « ridicule » s'oppose à la pureté du polyglottisme, qui fas-

cinait tellement Ezra Pound, « il miglio fabbro ». Anne Ducrey signe le deuxième essai de ce recueil. La promenade qu'elle nous offre parmi quelques poètes russes met en évidence « l'effet de tissage » du russe et du français. Dans ce cas, le plurilinguisme est immédiatement associé à la traduction. Le besoin de constituer une langue propre a encouragé les russes à se pencher vers l'Europe, ce qui leur a permis de développer un langage poétique unique. Dirk Weissmann décrit le paradoxe « Stefan George » comme le début de la renaissance nationale allemande, du fait que son oeuvre correspond à un changement de conscience linguistique. Tel un artisan de langues nouvelles, George semble soutenir l'idée de coexistence culturelle et linguistique. L'article de Karen Vandemeulebroucke examine un cas de refus du plurilinguisme. L'oeuvre de l'écrivain flamand francophone, Georges Rodenbach, se trouve au centre de cette réflexion. Rodenbach voulait donner une identité propre à la littérature belge, tout en ayant lui-même une attitude ambivalente vis-à-vis du français. Dans *Bruges-la-Morte*, la servante, une paysanne flamande « d'une nature simple », joue un rôle important, précisément parce qu'elle ne connaît pas le français. Alors que Molière aurait utilisé la servante comme modèle d'autorité et d'intelligence, comme l'est Toinette dans *Le Malade imaginaire*, Rodenbach présente les traits indésirables de son personnage flamand comme tels. On pourrait détecter en cela la critique d'une certaine hégémonie littéraire francophone. L'essai de Lawrence Rosenwald traite du multilinguisme américain des années 1900, à travers des oeuvres de T.S. Eliot et Sholem Aleichem. Cet essai fournit une image bidimensionnelle du multilinguisme littéraire, qui est tantôt collectif, tantôt individuel, épique ou lyrique. La perspective de Rosenwald est à la fois diachronique et géographique. En citant la formule d'Edward Sapir, "all grammars leak" (toute grammaire est poreuse), l'auteur insiste sur la difficulté de traiter exhaustivement un domaine très riche et diversifié.

La question de l'identité constitue le fil rouge de la deuxième partie de ce volume. Rainier Grutman ouvre cette section par une réflexion sur le moment biculturel de la littérature française de la fin de XIX^{ème} siècle. L'auteur développe le concept d'hétérolinguisme, compris comme « entrecroisement de plusieurs codes linguistiques ». Celui-ci donne aux textes « la capacité de devenir un véritable carrefour linguistique » (125). Dans ce travail remarquable, l'auteur décrit plusieurs étapes dans l'histoire littéraire française, en illustrant les influences extérieures à l'hexagone et

la réticence avec laquelle elles ont été reçues. Dans une conclusion optimiste, il souligne les avantages de cet accueil, au nom d'une « fusion en un tout supérieur » (139). Une approche semblable permet à Denise Merkle de parler des tensions identitaires dans le polysystème littéraire victorien. Elle prend comme exemple les cas d'Oscar Wilde, auteur et traducteur polyglotte, et d'Israel Zangwill. L'œuvre de ce dernier se caractérise par une attitude ambivalente envers le Yiddish, langue « nationale » des Juifs de la diaspora. Selon Merkle, les deux auteurs sont conscients de la réalité de la profession littéraire et s'engagent dans un jeu trans-linguistique pour s'assurer l'accueil favorable du public. L'essai de Britta Benert problématise l'incommunicabilité entre les hommes. En analysant l'œuvre de Lou Andreas Salomé, elle souligne l'insuffisance de la langue à atteindre « une parole juste » (165). Ceci rend nécessaire la pluri-vocalité du texte, qui peut émerger grâce au plurilinguisme, en tant qu'« expression du moi, *expressionniste* » (165). Comme Benert le suggère, Lou-Andreas Salomé, la « comparatiste idéale », offre un excellent exemple du rapport affectif et individuel au plurilinguisme. De son côté, Gerald Bär traite de plusieurs exemples d'auteurs qui ont restructuré l'ego littéraire en utilisant le motif du double. La jeunesse éternelle de Dorian Grey, tout comme la colonisation intérieure dans l'œuvre de Conrad, reposent sur l'idée du double. Les œuvres de Kafka et de Pessoa font également preuve d'une fragmentation identitaire qui résulte en une quête du vrai ego, « true self ». Cet essai illustre donc comment la restructuration des identités des personnages s'effectue au-delà des frontières linguistiques.

Les essais rassemblés dans la dernière partie de l'ouvrage traitent des connexions théoriques du plurilinguisme. Dans son essai, Monika Schmitz-Emans distingue plusieurs modes d'hybridation. Elle utilise le mot « maccaronism » en référence au processus d'adoption de certains termes d'une langue à une autre. En particulier, Schmitz-Emans montre comment les éléments ludiques des poèmes de Christian Morgenstern, « Lalula » et « Werwolf » soulignent l'aspect construit et hybride de la culture. Biagio D'Angelo étudie le rapport entre littérature et musique, modes d'expression séparés par ce qu'il appelle un hiatus. Il se concentre en particulier sur le plurilinguisme de l'opéra brésilien *Il Guarany* de Carlos Gomes. Levente T. Szabo se penche sur le multilinguisme selon Brassai et Meltz, les fondateurs de la première revue de littérature comparée, *Acta Comparationis Literarum Universarum*. Il introduit le terme « proto-multilinguisme » afin de décrire la combinaison de plusieurs

langues et cultures autour d'une histoire nationale. De plus, il met en exergue le cas des Roms, ethnie dont la langue et la culture n'est pas attachée à une nation spécifique. Szabo propose en fin de compte un modèle identitaire élargi, dépassant les clivages étroits et prônant un équilibre entre différentes langues et cultures. Pour sa part, Toshie Nakajima dépeint l'influence japonaise dans la littérature française du XIX^{ème} siècle. En particulier, elle analyse les sources japonaises dans les œuvres de Lafcadio Hearn et de Paule Riversdale. Le titre du dernier essai du volume, « Not The Power to Judge », tente de rendre justice à toute langue, à tout peuple, conquérant ou conquis. Juliane Prade se concentre sur l'oeuvre de Joseph Conrad et met en lumière la violence que toute langue exerce sur une autre. L'auteur dévoile ainsi l'importance de l'hétérogénéité, comme prérequis des « normes et exceptions, individualité et communauté, expression et communication » (272, traduit librement de l'anglais par Beleau).

En conclusion, cet ouvrage développe une nouvelle approche du plurilinguisme littéraire mettant l'accent sur l'ouverture à l'autre. Ce volume retiendra l'attention de tout lecteur par la diversité des perspectives internationales qu'il met en dialogue. Il esquisse sans conteste de nouvelles directions de recherche qui permettront de mieux baliser les dimensions linguistique, littéraire et sociale du plurilinguisme.

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Diana Mantcheva. *La Dramaturgie Symboliste de l'Ouest à l'Est Européen*. Paris : L'Harmattan, Univers théâtral, 2013. Pp. 350. ISBN : 9782336293233.

Le livre de Diana Mantcheva, *La Dramaturgie Symboliste de l'Ouest à l'Est Européen*, est le fruit d'un pari tentant autant que risqué: tentant par ses objectifs et risqué par son envergure. Son point de départ est la dramaturgie symboliste francophone et le parcours de son transfert à l'est. Les scénarios donnés en exemple par l'auteur relèvent d'une logique du genre proximal et de ses différences spécifiques. A l'intérieur du périmètre symboliste, l'est est circonscrit par rapport à l'ouest, après quoi l'auteur explicite les vari-

antes nationales et les modifications subies par la dramaturgie francophone paradigmatique dans trois espaces culturels d'adoption : russe, polonais et bulgare. Au plus haut niveau de cette démonstration, les avatars européens du symbolisme apparaissent comme des symptômes des scénarios de la modernisation culturelle et de la prise de conscience de l'« européisme » local, dans chacun des espaces culturels slaves.

Le livre comprend deux volets distincts. Le premier se concentre sur les maîtres : le francophone emblématique Maurice Maeterlinck, aussi bien que le russe Alexandre Bloch, le bulgare Emanouïl Popdimitrov et le polonais Stanislaw Wyspianski. L'auteur adopte une lecture morpho-structurale — privilégiant les discours dramatiques par rapport à leurs mises en scène. De plus, elle poursuit d'une part les réalités textuelles et de l'autre les rapports entre la scène et la salle. Ce type de découpage donne lieu à une typologie, ayant comme repères les contextes socio-historiques et littéraires desquels le corpus analysé est issu.

L'analyse comparative du corpus met en relief un noyau sémique commun de la dramaturgie symboliste. Celui-ci rend compte de la parenté génétique du modèle francophone emblématique et de ses trois variantes slaves. Cette convergence se décèle dans la préférence pour l'ambigu, le surnaturel et le schématisme, ainsi que dans la primauté du cosmogonique et du transcendantal manifeste dans l'ensemble du corpus. Il convient également de mentionner une ouverture sur le syncrétisme des arts et sur un riche matériel folklorique et mythologique (païen et biblique). Cette caractéristique est à la source de la réécriture slave. En ce qui concerne les différences, elles ont trait à la mission sociale et éthique dominante dans le symbolisme slave, ce qui contraste avec la teinte plutôt philosophique et esthétique des modèles francophones.

Le second volet approche sous un angle comparatiste un seul aspect de la dramaturgie symboliste : la réécriture des mythes helléniques, des sujets bibliques et de la matière folklorique chez les écrivains des deux côtés de l'Europe. Cette esthétique, appelée parfois à l'époque — dans une perspective wagnérienne — « récit mythique », est globalement considérée par Mantcheva comme une « trame intertextuelle » destinée à subir des transformations particulières. Le terme « intertextuel » se prête ici à des interprétations variables (celui qui l'a breveté — Gérard Genette — n'est mentionné par l'auteur qu'en passant ; son apport théorique n'est jamais convoqué au premier plan ni interprété). Tantôt il est question de l'emprise sur tel ou tel auteur symboliste d'un matériel préexistant, dont il se sert comme d'un récipient vide. Celui-ci va être rempli d'une matière nouvelle,

censée rendre compte de visions du monde, d'idéologies ou de choix esthétiques distincts et même opposés relevant d'un certain contexte (national, pour la plupart du temps). Tantôt ce vocable passe-partout reste obscur, sinon abusif, et vidé de toute substance sémantique : que signifie la formule « imagerie intertextuelle » (293) ou bien « l'histoire intertextuelle de Job » (295)?

Ce second volet est plus systématique, plus riche en hypothèses ou en remarques de détail. Il est même plus inspiré que le premier. Les analyses, se concentrant ici sur la trame narrative (intrigue, personnages, cadre spatio-temporel), permettent à l'auteur de déceler, au-delà de la similitude fabulaire, la dynamique plutôt centrifuge des drames symbolistes slaves, qui suit des voies différentes de celles des modèles occidentaux. Dans cette partie du livre, il est question non seulement de la tendance de ces oeuvres slaves à l'éclectisme et au mélange, au ludique, au facétieux, mais également et surtout de leur intérêt pour l'histoire nationale et la réalité politique contemporaine. Cette empreinte identitaire marquée porte aussi sur la sélection de thèmes nouveaux.

La conclusion est censée dresser le bilan du trajet du modèle symboliste, de la dynamique de la relation est-ouest et de ses conséquences. L'auteur approfondit ici le rapport de forces entre l'imitation du modèle francophone et sa subversion, ou plus précisément ce qu'elle appelle le dépassement de la forme orthodoxe par les versions slaves, un processus apte à rendre compte de l'europanisation de cette aire culturelle et de ses tourments.

Le volume de Diana Mantcheva s'impose comme une entreprise d'envergure. Il s'agit d'un livre nécessaire et utile qui explore une région généralement peu connue — bien qu'assez fréquemment discutée — et moins encore comprise et évaluée avec compétence et pertinence critique. Cet ouvrage constitue une excellente initiation philologique et herméneutique, qui présuppose une connaissance des littératures slaves et des modèles francophones alliée à une maîtrise intime des textes et de leurs rapports avec le public. Mantcheva met en lumière de nombreux détails et nuances. Toutefois, ses argumentations ne sont pas toujours cohérentes et le fil rouge de ses démonstrations ne se laisse pas aisément saisir. Somme toute, le livre trahit un certain manque d'équilibre entre esprit de géométrie et esprit de finesse, en faveur du second.

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Emma Mason, ed. *Reading the Abrahamic Faiths: Rethinking Religion and Literature*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. Pp. 295. ISBN: 9781472509505.

Emma Mason's provocatively edited collection, *Reading the Abrahamic Faiths: Rethinking Religion and Literature*, intends "to resist a sacralizing of the literary to think religion instead as a way of imagining an experiential and political reading practice" (3). Indeed, the purpose of the text is to link "religious reading" with political activism. In this way, its urgency is palpable. In a revision of Ricoeur (1970), Mason states that the collection's purpose fosters "a hermeneutics of trust rather than of suspicion" (4) so that the political dimension of "religious reading" elicits "care" for "the poor and powerless," i.e., a social justice sensibility (5). She links her approach to the "Marxist politics of liberation theology" and its "intervention in a world scarred by mass poverty, human inequality, and ecological collapse" (4).

Thus she aims for readers' emotional transformation not because of "religious literature"—no one is converted by the religious text—but rather because of "religious reading." The process itself is fraught. In this way, she rethinks Sloterdijk's "call for a 'non-religious interpretation of the transcendent or holy (Sloterdijk, 2009, p. 4)'" to emphasize that readers are "emotionally changed, not by religious literature, but by religious reading" (5). This approach freights the subject and not the object with transcendence.

The constitution of the subject is constituted is the key to Mason's "affective turn" toward "care" and its necessity. "Care" is, she argues, a natural effect of "religious reading" because "human beings are abundantly careful and respectful with texts" (5). However, the "efficacy" of "religious reading" has been displaced by a "literary critical field won over by empirical models of analysis" (5–6). Presumably, the field has taught "religious reading" incorrectly and the proof of her claim is the field's "carelessness." The historical traditions of religion and literature within such "a literary critical field" as well as the present debates over this coupling, have colluded to suppress political activism.

Consequently, "this affective way into thinking rejects a search for textual 'merit' (aesthetic, intellectual, economic, soul-saving, or moral)" (4). Mason's hopes for the volume are to shift focus from the object of religious contemplation to the constitutive aspects of subject formation in "religious reading," with or without a religious text. From this shift, she

proposes a new mode of praxis that encompasses not only the three “Abrahamic faiths,” but also accommodates post-secularist scholars without religious affiliation. These “thinkings of religion ... seek to open up” the Abrahamic faiths to “a readership interested in writers who creatively negotiate a world in which people believe with and beyond dogma” (6–7).

The project’s opening gambit is to “imagine a thinking ... of religion” that “enables a compassionate reading of texts to access hopeful unknowns.” This form of “religious reading offers an inclusive and politicized alternative to the interdiscipline of religion and literature in its exclusive and inward facing form” (6). Inferentially, the “interdiscipline of religion and literature” is apolitical and exclusionary because it focuses on an “inward facing form”; aesthetic disinterest becomes part and parcel of the problem.

Mason suggests that “such thinking and reading does not have to equate to religious texts” because the critical element in the process is “interpretation” (ibid). Since any and all texts are subject to interpretation, the reader’s focus must be on “a care for the known and unknown” and this care is the essence of “religious reading.” Mason argues that this awareness and “care” “materialized through the particularities of Abrahamic and Dharmic religions,” since both of these types of religion are “to aid the poor and powerless” (ibid). The whole project hinges on subjects produced through a mode of “religious reading” that is akin to a *techné* of social justice. Since the objects do not change, the process of reading works on subjects: subjects must read religious texts differently in order to become agents of social justice.

Although discrete authors gesture irregularly to the “dharmic,” the book is invested in the analysis of the Abrahamic religions. The problem of constituting subjects of political change through “religious reading” is framed often against an author’s imagination of the historical exegesis of biblical narrative in order to change the valence from suspicion to trust within the hermeneutical method. While the collection is bracketed by essays from Yvonne Sherwood, Prasenjit Duara, and Susan Basnett, the heart of this collection concerns its four primary divisions.

Each “thinking of religion,” Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Postsecularism, receives its own section, “curated” by a literary scholar who identifies how the section’s essays relate to its topic of religion and literature. The “Abrahamic faith curators” start by reviewing how their monotheistic example is incredibly diverse, and has a rich historical relationship already to literature. These three sections suggest that the monotheistic faiths share a

common root in the figure of Abraham; hence they are “Abrahamic faiths.” Collectively, they reposition biblical narratives, readings amplified by religious and non-religious literature in order to “rethink them.” As a result, each writer rehearses the historical trajectories of reading previously applied to these shared narratives.

In the Judaism section, Cynthia Scheinberg notes that the section’s cultural diversity is expressed as “the breadth of variations of what it can mean to engage Jewishly with literature, to link Judaism with literature, or even to consider what the term ‘Jewish literature’ might mean” (64). She notes for her readers that Judaism has a long practice of “thinking of religion” and she works to create a context for the section’s essays by linking their aims to the Judaic concept of *mitzvah* (65) or obligation. The sense of reading with an obligation covers a disparate set of essays, including Jo Carruthers’s “Acts of Hearing in the Book of Esther,” a fantastic rereading of Esther, focused on a link between the Judaic prayer of the *Shema* and Esther’s heroism (91).

In the Christianity section, Joshua King introduces the essays by attending to scholars’ “close reading” so that “pushing into new frontiers in the study of religion and literature does not mean abandoning close reading for broad themes. Rather, attempts to rethink the study of religion and literature might make their greatest contributions through fine-grained attention to the details and literary structures of texts” (117–18). His approach echoes Sheinberg in the sense that the included scholars utilize self-consciously an historical tradition of the “interdiscipline of religion and literature.” Like Sheinberg too, King’s essays are equally diverse. However, the first essay, Adriaan van Klinken’s “The Black Messiah, or Christianity and Masculinity in Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s *The River Between*” merits comment. It is an intriguing and thoughtful analysis of African Christianity and its effects on “African literary culture” (132), an area underanalyzed and often left to post-colonial studies for interpretation, as its author points out. Anyone who works within the comparative African and Caribbean traditions of literature will find this essay to resonate with the work of Keith Sandiford’s work on African Messianism, *Obeah, in the West Indies* (2010), and Tilman Dederling’s analyses of Hendrik Witbooi during German colonization of Namibia (1993; 2007).

In the Islam section, the question of religion in relation to literature is imbricated in the diversity of the Muslim world. Thus the introduction for the Islam section asserts Islam’s ethnic diversity in order to discuss a

multivalent notion of “religious reading” in both sacred and secular texts. Like all of the introductions for the preceding sections, the editor of this section, Ziauddin Sartar, underscores that Islam’s relationship to literature reflects more than “something that is focused firmly on dogma and personal beliefs of Muslims.... The literature that is produced within an Islamic perspective ... represents Muslims as human and humane characters struggling simultaneously with their historic memory and the complexities of a contemporary world” (173). To that end, Sartar’s section is not disparate in terms of topic although the type of essay differs in this section from its predecessors. A particularly sensitive and timely essay on the Egyptian novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, by Ziad Elmarsafy, “On Naguib Mahfouz’s Late Style: Remembering Art, Remembering the Self,” contextualizes Mahfouz’s aesthetics against the backdrop of the anniversary of an attempted assassination on his life “by a young Islamist who, despite never having read Mahfouz’s work, was convinced that the eighty-three-year-old novelist was the epitome of evil” (193). The essay underscores that “care” is a foundational feature of Mahfouz’s aesthetic project. For comparatists, working with pan-Mediterranean literatures, Sartar’s introduction emphasizes the unique differences among individuals, pegged to linguistic and religious diversity within Islam.

Finally, the Postsecularism section, edited by Anthony Paul Smith, represents a flawed, but interesting attempt to think religion after secularism. Smith is exclusively concerned with the secular/post-secular debate in Islamic and Christian terms and he leans heavily on Talal Asad. Without the analysis of Asad, the introduction would be seriously questionable (in other words, his reliance on Asad is not the flaw). It would lessen the volume if a discussion of post-secularism did not include him. However, the flaw concerns specifically Smith’s omissions. His references are skewed only to post-secularism within Islamic and Christian moments. It would have helped him considerably had he engaged John Caputo’s work on Derrida (1997); the Michael Walzer collection on Jewish Political Thought would have also been relevant (2003). In fact, there are many other contributions outside Islam and Christianity that would have been valuable to include. More troublingly, since Mason’s introduction stated the purpose of the volume to be a politicized “religious reading,” within the “Abrahamic faiths,” Smith’s emphasis on only two of the Abrahamic constituencies implies that Judaism and Jews are now excluded from the “Abrahamic” after secularism. While the essays in this section were quite thoughtful, the unarticulated

aspects of Smith's introduction produced some startling implications for this reader. Nevertheless, Daniel Whistler's "The Categories of Secular Time" is an exceptional text, especially in its analysis of Hölderlin and "inhuman time" (239). I kept thinking of Jean Améry's recitation of Hölderlin while he was on a work detail at Auschwitz (2009; Millet, 2011) and wondered how Whistler's analysis of "inhuman time" in the poet would be applied to someone in a death camp (239).

This is a rich book, but it has its controversies and its weaknesses. Several of the essays hew to an implicit belief that Judaism is reducible either to its "exceptionalism" or the Arab/Israeli conflict. One of the most challenging essays in this vein is Yvonne Sherwood's "The Hagaramic and the Abrahamic; or Abraham the Non-European," the first essay after Mason's introduction. Sherwood's endgame is the introduction of "the Hagaramic" as a new way of thinking "the Abrahamic." It emphasizes Hagar as a figure of "the remembered disowned" (39). To get to this aim, Sherwood traces the different "genealogies" of the concept of "the Abrahamic." I could not determine if she endorses or critiques these genealogies. However, the sum effect of their juxtaposition is the suggestion that Jews lack legitimacy everywhere, even within their own tradition of the Hebrew Bible. Certainly, Sherwood does not intentionally argue that Jewish ontology is grounded in the dispossession of the autochthonic inhabitants of Canaan, but the effect of her piece could lead to this conclusion (28ff), especially since in her discussion of "Genealogy II, Genesis as Heterogenesis," she claims the authority for the position from a Syriac text because the "Hebrew is incomprehensible" (27). Since she neither gives the Hebrew nor the Syriac to demonstrate her point, readers are left with its signification and that signification seems like manipulation. However, this observation does not invalidate the collection, but encourages its debate. In this respect, the book is invaluable because it forces communities of scholars to question not only themselves, but each other.

Although there are a handful of comparatists associated with the volume, the essays are overall focused on national traditions, and single authors. The writers presume that religion itself provides the comparative essence necessary to the project; hence the introductions all stress the heterogeneity of their groups. This text is not for the undergraduate classroom although the Carruthers essay is immensely readable and could be easily adapted for upper-division students. The text is more likely to find its way into graduate seminars and the hands of researchers. As co-editor with Mark Knight of Bloomsbury's *New Directions in Religion and Litera-*

ture series, Mason has extensive experience with the topic and the text itself reflects her acumen and experience with that series.

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Chris Danta and Helen Groth, eds. *Mindful Aesthetics: Literature and the Science of Mind*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. 236. ISBN: 9781441102867.

The cognitive turn in literary studies is often regarded as part of a movement within the humanities that privileges a scientific approach in order to reevaluate literature and literary studies. Scholars have increasingly applied theories derived from philosophy, psychology, or neuroscience

to the study of literature, thereby highlighting the validity of literary representations of the human mind. Interestingly, recent developments in cognitive science have been influenced by the art of writing as well.¹ These cognitive theories do not consider the mind as merely confined to the human skull but as the result of a constant interaction between an agent and its environment. In that sense, cognitive science has foregrounded the study of literature in recent debates.

The present volume, edited by Chris Danta and Helen Groth, seeks to reflect the vast range of these ongoing discussions within the realm of cognitive literary studies. The editors have selected the term “mindful aesthetics” to emphasize the “careful” way in which cognitive theories are or should be applied to both literature as well as art in general. The volume does not claim to provide any definitive answers to this issue, but instead it “encourages more sceptical and theoretical reflections that interrogate the propriety of literature’s relation to other systems of knowledge” (2). It focuses both on the possibilities as well as the boundaries of literary applications to cognitive science.

As Paul Giles also points out in his afterword, this aim intentionally lends a polemical tone to the volume. The articles are arranged in three broad clusters, within which no consensus is reached. From a general perspective, the volume provides historicist and universal analyses that seek to explain intuitive thinking on the basis of literary evocations of the mind. Psychologist Brian Boyd, on the one hand, attempts to use Vladimir Nabokov’s work as a tool in psychological research in “Psychology and Literature: Mindful Close Reading.” On the other hand, Stephen Muecke applies notions drawn from reproductive biology to advocate the continued existence of literature in “Reproductive Aesthetics: Multiple Realities in a Seamus Heaney Poem.” In doing so, he explains how the meaning of a poem may shift according to the reader’s “fostering” of poetry. Of essential importance to Muecke is the context in which literature exists, and the nature of this context, be it intertextual, referential, or intersubjective.

In contrast to these universalizing approaches, other essays offer a more thorough investigation of the historical context of science and literature. Penelope Hone examines the association between James Sul-

1. See for instance Richard Menary, “Writing as Thinking” *Language Sciences* 29, no. 5 (2007): 621–32; and Andy Clark and David J. Chalmers, “The Extended Mind” *Analysis* 58, no. 1 (1998): 7–19.

ly and George Eliot from the perspective of the “psychology of noise.” Concentrating on Sully’s theories on dreams, Helen Groth likewise shows the interconnection between Eliot and Sully, and, more generally, between literature and psychology in the nineteenth century. Although both essays are quite thought-provoking, one wonders whether no other examples could be found of the interconnection between cognitive science and literature in the Victorian era. This question is particularly important as the relationship between Sully and Eliot has already been examined in a number of other studies, for instance in the work of Vanessa L. Ryan.² An entirely different historical context emerges from “The Flame’s Lover: The Modernist Mind of William Carlos Williams,” an essay in which Mark Steven links the positivist approach in science so prevalent at the beginning of the twentieth century to modernist poetry.

From a theoretical perspective, a number of essays focus on and question the cognitive turn in literary studies. Claire Colebrook’s and Paul Sheehan’s contributions draw attention to the conflicting nature of cognitive literary studies and literary theory as it emerged in the twentieth century. Colebrook groups the current “cognitive” and “affective” tendencies in literature studies under the general title of “vitalism,” given their shared (anti-theoretical) conviction that literature is grounded in life (31). This view identifies an active human center in every language utterance, including literature. This position, however, is not compatible with the tenets of post-structuralist theory whose fundamentals involve the immateriality of text and a rejection of any center to human praxis.

However, it could be argued that theory’s rejection of a center at the core of cognition can also be identified in certain strains of cognitive philosophy, which are usually subsumed under the general label of “distributed cognition.” Within this paradigm, the mind is defined through its interaction with its environment. Cognitive literary studies by David Herman, Alan Palmer, and Dirk Van Hulle³ have relied on insights drawn from this paradigm. Several articles collected here build

2. Vanessa L. Ryan, “Reading the Mind: From George Eliot’s Fiction to James Sully’s Psychology” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 70, no. 4 (2009): 615–35.

3. For more information, the reader can turn to David Herman, *Storytelling and the Sciences of Mind*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013; Alan Palmer, *Social Minds in the Novel*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2010; Dirk Van Hulle, *Modern Manuscripts: The Extended Mind and Creative Undoing from Darwin to Beckett and Beyond*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014.

on the same tenets. Anthony Uhlmann indicates that the post-structuralist notion of intertextuality may very well be understood in terms of the notion of the “extended mind,” as proposed by Andy Clark and David Chalmers. According to Uhlmann, too much focus has been placed on the concept of “metaphor.” It is therefore necessary to scrutinize “relations” more closely in the cognitive analysis of literary texts. Relations are also of vital importance in John Sutton and Evelyn B. Tribble’s essay on group agency. Their thoughtful and well-researched investigation into skilled group action, collective thought, movement and emotion, and shared identity is adequately applied to the first person plural narrator of Lloyd Jones’s novel *The Book of Fame*.

Another group of essays deals with narratological issues in the contemporary period. Recent neuroscientific insights into the brain and mind are applied in Julian Murphet’s and Hannah Courtney’s contributions. Borrowing the term from Gary Johnson, Courtney, in an eloquent and highly enjoyable discussion, labels *Saturday* a “neuronarrative.” She traces McEwan’s preoccupation with the field of neuroscience at the levels of content and form, showing that McEwan introduces a specific narratological device into his writings, namely the slow-motion scene or “slow scene,” a category missing in Gerard Genette’s theory on narrative time duration. This device, which describes “distended moments,” differs from more traditional techniques of “introspection” as these moments occur in the slow scene and in the moving, timed moment.

The three groups of essays published in this volume provide an abundance of arguments legitimizing the use of literary research, thus placing it at the center of the entire field of cognitive literary studies. This suggests that the book seeks to defend or indeed to “upgrade” literature in order to make it functional again. In doing so, this volume insists that literature is not just an artistic product but also an instructive medium that deserves to be funded and researched. This rationale can be ascribed to the current economic climate and its profit-driven ideals, which the humanities are trying to keep at bay. This view does indeed pervade the entire volume, as one of the first assertions by Danta and Groth immediately demonstrates: “literature is valuable because it reveals to us the powers of the human mind and knowledge of human nature” (1).

This defensive tone does not affect the quality of the volume as a whole. On the contrary, in assembling such a wide range of perspectives in order to ensure the credibility of the discipline, the editors have been

able to present different, sometimes even conflicting, approaches. Colebrook and Sheehan, for example, call for a greater consideration of the vital differences between literary theory and cognitive literary studies. Indeed, juxtaposing these approaches may lead to a number of problems that critics have perhaps all too willingly ignored up to now. Colebrook's and Sheehan's insights invite greater cautiousness on the part of the reader. One of the great merits of this collection is the way in which it produces conversations around such differences of opinion, which results in the ability to read a number of the contributions dialogically.

However, in some articles excessive emphasis is placed on scientific aspects, which leads to a reduction of the literary contribution of the study. In Boyd's essay, for instance, the literary excerpt taken from Nabokov is not a focus of study in its own right; it is almost an accidental pretext, which could be replaced by any other example. Boyd covers such a wide range of psychological findings that no place is left for real literary analysis. By contrast, Hone's literary analysis of George Eliot's work is carefully constructed. However, this case study, which focuses on the cognition of Eliot's characters, fails to provide a scientifically grounded analysis of the characters' mental faculties as such.

The essays collected here thus reveal a tension between the importance that should be given to purely scientific findings or to literature itself in the domain of cognitive literary studies. This awareness raises a number of interesting questions, which enhance the value of the collection. For example: are literature and science indeed really compatible, as cognitive approaches would have us believe? To what extent does literature fit into the mold of science? Can literature really be grasped entirely by rational, scientific explanations? Do we expect literature to shed light on science, or vice versa? Although no definitive answers are provided, Murphet's essay "A Loose Democracy in the Skull: Characterology and Neuroscience" is of special interest in this regard. Indeed, he investigates the tension between what neurological studies tell us about the mind and the way in which we, by contrast, experience our own minds as constituted by a center of identity, a core of consciousness. Furthermore, in singling out the films of David Lynch, which do not represent the mind in a clear-cut manner, Murphet's case study appears more problematic than, for instance, the essays focusing on Richard Powers or Ian McEwan. Thus, Murphet shows that cognitive literary studies can move beyond literary examples that, perhaps all too self-

evidently, fit the mold of scientific findings. Indeed, some literary works can readily reflect the scientific discoveries that immediately preceded their composition. The realist style can also serve as a vehicle for scientific issues. In his essay, then, Murphet refutes the views of critics who question cognitive literary studies because of their alleged reluctance to analyze experimental or “unnatural” narratives.

Mindful Aesthetics: Literature and the Science of Mind is a useful compilation of twelve essays exploring the different ways in which cognitive science has deepened our understanding of literature and how literature can be examined from a cognitive scientific perspective. More importantly, it avoids the temptation to find immediate solutions for the somewhat problematic position of literary studies within the sciences. Rather, it articulates nuanced questions concerning the nature of literary research and its relation to the scientific method. The absence of an overarching conclusion suggests that the editors wished to emphasize the diversity of perspectives expressed in their collection. This distinctive feature testifies to the scholarly quality of this volume.

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Marcel Cornis-Pope, ed. *New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression: Crossing Borders, Crossing Genres. A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* 27. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2014. Pp. 455. ISBN: 9789027234636.

This collective book, which is a volume in the ongoing Benjamins series on the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages, has benefited from the support of Virginia Commonwealth University, as well as the International Comparative Literary Association and the “Union Académique Internationale.” The editor, Marcel Cornis-Pope,

who is a professor of English and Media at Virginia Commonwealth University, served as President of the Coordinating Publication Committee of ICLA from 2013–16. In addition to the general introduction to the book, Cornis-Pope also wrote a couple of contributions collected in this anthology. The volume includes a list of Works Cited and a List of contributors (offering essential information about its twenty-five authors), together with a useful Index of Names, Titles and Major Topics.

The book is organized in four parts, each one gathering several contributions: 1) multimedia productions from theoretical and historical perspectives (the two aspects being treated separately); 2) regional and intercultural projects related to the topic of the book; 3) forms and genres; and 4) readers and rewriters in multimedia environments.

In the general introduction, Cornis-Pope deals with literature and multimedia throughout the latter half of the twentieth and early twenty-first century. Following in the wake of Nancy Kaplan, he poses an interesting question about how we understand literacy nowadays. Indeed, this notion should include not only textual literacy, but also visual, electronic and gestural (non-verbal) or even social literacies as well.

It is generally admitted that the relation between literature and other media has been absent from turn-of-the-century reports on the state of literary studies. Cornis-Pope focuses on that relation, offering another interpretation to “hybridity,” one that is not necessarily connected to multiculturalism but to multimedia expression. Historically, textual study mainly referred to the act of reading printed verbal texts. However, the end of the twentieth century has witnessed a true explosion of new media forms, expanding the very notion of “text.” This important shift occurred especially in the 1990s, and has had consequences both on the way we define literacy itself, and on the social status that literacy confers (which is marked by access to information). One of these consequences is that the discipline of literary studies has been concerned with many other media, stretching to its limits the very definition of textuality. This shift has been reinforced by the new hypertext and networked communication technologies, which have favoured a nonlinear mode of reading and writing somehow approaching Roland Barthes’s definition of the “plural text.”

In this context, Cornis-Pope explores the new paradigm shift for “textual” analysis, following in the footsteps of J. A. Kaufman. At the same time, he discusses A. Kirby’s demonic visions of contemporary

culture. This is especially the case when he describes the emergence of a new “digimodernism,” which succeeded postmodernism in the mid-late 1990s and quickly eclipsed it. This “digimodernism” is conceived as a new movement that reasserts the validity of grand narratives and proves susceptible to promote, in the end, some kind of a “toxic fundamentalism” (Kirby 238).¹

Frankly, the distinction between postmodernism and digimodernism, and between earlier modernist multimedia and new media will not be clear for all theorists. This volume thus invites new debates, since the global shift towards multimedia forms of creativity and cultural interconnection also implies new responsibilities for authors and theorists.

Further, this book emphasizes literary production/expression in multimedia environments, including new hybrids that break down the boundaries between the different arts, and allow a new interpretation of discourses based on the contamination with elements derived from other artistic practices.

Another point of interest is the impact of cyberliteracy in the subaltern sphere, which can be rather frightening, as G. Spivak already pointed out in 2002. Some of the contributions of this book deal with that topic, mainly underscoring the fact that global messages are filtered through regional or local interests. This leads to the creation of either thematic or formal hybrids. Obviously, the purpose of this strategy is to win over Third World market. As a matter of fact, postcolonial studies have stimulated scholarship focussing both on media representation of Others and on the process of Othering, in a way that points towards a polycentric form of multiculturalism. The latter could foreground cultural exchanges between Europe and its others.

On the other hand, this kind of hybridity is evident even within Europe and its sub-regions. This phenomenon affects genres and replaces the traditional grand narratives (mainly based on national or ethnocentric visions) with forms of intermediality that emphasize existing tensions between the global and the local. As many contributions in this book suggest, literature and other arts have recently moved towards that intermediality.

1. This notion concerns even terrorism, from Kirby's point of view. See, for example, Alan Kirby, *Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure Our Culture* (New York: Continuum, 2009).

As Cornis-Pope sees it, if the humanities are to retain their fundamental role in our interdisciplinary media-driven world, they have to reconfigure themselves significantly. New technologies (hypertext reading/writing, networked communication, multimedia performances ...) have served the goal of enhancing the interactive component in literary studies, strengthening the sense of the multi-levelled nature of literature. However, Cornis-Pope suggests that we should try to abandon old habits of reading and writing, thus allowing new technologies to create a new space for scriptural and cultural experimentation.

In the introduction to the book, Cornis-Pope also outlines the state of research in the field, showing how discussions in this area have stressed the increasing multimedia configuration of the second half of the twentieth century. The volume draws on both theoretical and applied work in the area of multimedia and electronic literature, either exploring the roots of intermediality or focusing on the increasingly more complex exchanges between literature and new media. It also takes into account some recent developments in non-literary media, such as comics and graphic works in general. Still, from Cornis-Pope's point of view, new theorizations of multimedia work are necessary.

The contributors to this book recognize the current and global shift towards the visual and virtual in all areas of textuality. As mentioned above, the twenty-five contributions are arranged into four sections, according to their response to four main questions posed by the editor about that shift. Part one sheds light on the definition, hybrid genre and interrelated forms of various multimedia products, ranging from earlier hypertexts to digital literature and transmedial works either on computers or in gallery installations. It is completed with some historical explorations of this kind of cultural production. This part puts together contributions by Katarina Peović Vuković, Rui Torres/Manuel Portela/Maria do Carmo Castelo Branco de Sequeira, Verónica Galíndez-Jorge, Bernardo Piciché, Michael Wutz, and Karl Jirgens. Jirgens's interesting essay deals with the historic sources of the neo-baroque features of electronic and multimedia writing, connecting some of Samuel Beckett's works from the 1950s–1960s with the experimentation carried out by some members of Ou.Li.Po (such as Italo Calvino and François Le Lionnaise).

Contributions collected in Part Two (by Yra van Dijk, Pedro de Andrade, Eva Midden, Reneta Vankova Bozhankova, Nevena Daković/Ivana Uspenski, and Marcel Cornis-Pope) provide a regional and intercultural

mapping of the recent multimedia cultures of Europe. The authors of Part Three (Talan Memmott, Astrid Ensslin, Leonora Flis, Bogumila Suwara, Joana Spassova-Dikova, Victoria Pérez-Royo, and Reneta Vankova Bozhankova) focus on the broad range of intermediate forms and genres that has characterized literature in recent times, such as digital expressions, multimedia performances, blogospheres, etc.

The interactive connection between authors/texts/readers in multi-medial forms of literature is the main topic of Part Four, taking its cue from one of the major theorists in the field, Alan Bigelow, whose contribution opens this last section of the book. Other contributors are Francesca Pasquali, Janez Strehovec, Susana Tosca/Helle Nina Pedersen, Artur Matuck, and again Marcel Cornis-Pope.

This collection of essays offers an example of the kinds of international projects and inquiries that have become possible at the interface between literature and other media, both new and old. The book shows how hypertextual, multimedia, and virtual reality technologies are involved in this process. The general purpose of the volume is to integrate literature into the global informational environment, starting from the assumption that literature is actually benefitting from that interaction with other media. Thus, innovative literary practices emerge, emphasizing cross-cultural interplay as well as translation. All in all, this is a very interesting book for scholars and other people interested in the new hybrid forms of textuality in our interdisciplinary media-driven world.

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Simona Bertacco, ed. *Language and Translation in Post-colonial Literatures: Multilingual Contexts, Translational Texts*. New York and London: Routledge, 2014. Pp. 234. ISBN: 9780415656047.

Dans l'ensemble des travaux postcoloniaux, la question du rôle des traductions dans des contextes plurilingues a été assez peu étudiée. La dernière décennie du XX^e siècle a certes vu plusieurs études de valeur concernant la pragmatique de la traduction (vu travaux de Basnett et

Trivedi à ceux de Tymoczko, tous deux en 1999), mais la dynamique restait à confirmer. C'est dire si cet ouvrage collectif est bienvenu. Dans l'introduction, S. Bertacco observe que l'approche monolingue est contraire au plurilinguisme du monde postcolonial, c'est pourquoi la traduction doit être placée au centre des études. L'auteur en appelle ainsi à un modèle traductologique des études postcoloniales. Les quatre parties de l'ouvrage s'attachent à préciser les grands aspects de celui-ci.

La première partie, « Translational Texts », se concentre sur diverses approches comparatistes plurilingues des textes postcoloniaux. Bill Ashroft s'intéresse au débat sur les anglais du monde (« World English(es) ») et les problèmes traductologiques généraux qui s'ensuivent ; Chantal Zabus revient sur le processus d'indigénisation qu'elle abordait dès son fameux ouvrage *The African Palimpsest* (1991) ; Roberta Cimarosti analyse l'anglicisation des Caraïbes telle qu'elle est présentée dans *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* (1958) de Derek Walcott tandis que S. Bertacco insiste sur la faible représentation des études sur la traduction dans les recherches postcoloniales, et montre, grâce à des exemples venus des « premières nations » canadiennes et des Caraïbes anglophones, comment la question traductologique est importante. A ces propos généraux succède une partie, « Translation as Pre-Text », qui aborde différents contextes — le Zimbabwe pour Doris Sommer et Naseemah Mohamed ; les villes postcoloniales, en l'occurrence Montréal et Calcutta, pour Sherry Simon ; Chypre pour Stephanos Stephanides et le théâtre de langue anglaise en Malaisie pour Susan Philip — où le fait de vivre et d'apprendre en traduction constitue pour ainsi dire la norme quotidienne, donc le « pré-texte » d'autres formes d'innovation culturelle. La troisième partie, « Contexts of Translation », s'intéresse aux traducteurs et aux démarches qu'ils adoptent dans leurs relations aux textes et aux auteurs afin de mesurer les options formelles qu'elles engagent, que ce contexte soit celui du Pacifique (Michelle Keown), des littératures postcoloniales de langue anglaise, de Joyce à Rushdie (Franca Cavagnoli), ou de l'Italie de l'après-Seconde Guerre mondiale (Biancamaria Rizzardi). La quatrième et dernière partie enfin, « Colonial Past, Digital Future », abordent le rôle du langage et de la traduction à une époque digitale. Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien explore la question de la confusion linguistique postcoloniale à partir d'une étude de *Pillowbook* de Peter Greenaway, tandis que Michael Cronin envisage plus largement le rôle et l'avenir de la traduction des lettres postcoloniales à l'âge de la littérature digitale.

Cet ouvrage, pointant dans des directions très diverses, appelle au développement des études postcoloniales, particulièrement par la reconnaissance de contributions venues d'autres zones que celles de l'anglophonie. Sont ainsi suggérés des nouvelles approches et des outils méthodologiques parfois inédits permettant d'introduire plus systématiquement les études de traductologie au sein du domaine postcolonial.

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Barbara Buchenau, Virginia Richter, and Marijke Denger, eds. *Post-Empire Imaginaries: Anglophone Literature, History, and the Demise of Empires*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015. Pp. 465. ISBN: 9789004300705.

This volume is the result of an ASNEL conference held at the University of Bern in 2012. An innovative contribution in the field of postcolonial studies, this collection of papers addresses the ever-evolving cycle of empires, their rises and declines as well as their very present state. Its originality lies in its comparative and interdisciplinary approaches that bring several periods and times into dialogue. Are empires completely dead or still at work? How can we still feel their presence or legacies? The heritage of empires is mixed and complex and now resonates in the forms of circulation of power in an era of globalization that includes a possible return of imperialism since 9/11 (Morefield). After decades of postcolonial theorizing and everlasting traces of imperial nostalgia, this volume raises crucial questions related to space, time, and power.

The first section of this project is devoted to conceptualizing Empires. Dalheim's introductory piece questions the homogenizing aspects of the term and its ambiguity as a fact of discourse that oscillates between a celebration of land-acquisition (Ferguson) and the insouciant exploitation that led to social and cultural trauma (Mishra). Dalheim's conclusions urge one to consider both for a sustainable problem-solving approach. This section pinpoints how empire "is not merely a political and economic strategy but also functions as a state of mind" (52). It investigates how it is based on narrations of heroic explorations and expansion, schooling propaganda

to colonize the mind. Using the lens and setting of the Roman Empire, Emig's "Hermeneutics of Empire" shows how Sutcliff's 1954 adventure novel *The Eagle of the Ninth* subtly addresses the decline of the British Empire. Knopf's analysis of explorer figures reveals contemporary ironical figurations whereby Native focalizers laugh about the strangeness and inappropriateness of British explorative endeavours and thereby challenge post-Empire nostalgia. In her analysis of the school teacher as metonym in three Australian novels (Malouf, Goldsworthy, and Scott), Eva-Maria Müller points to how ironical frameworks afford a gaze into the more distant past and engagement with Australian Indigenous cultures.

The second section entitled "Different Imaginaries: Comparing Empires" pursues the comparative approach initiated in the first one to show that imperialist ideas never die; they mutate and differ and have distinct legacies. Yet, as Hiatt's contribution on translation of empires highlights, one should beware of homogenizations that can lead to seamless translation and comparison across cultures, ignoring gaps in chronology or spatial and temporal uncertainties. Several contributions in this section point to the differences and similarities between the British and Roman empire, the latter being the earliest proper empire to which Britain became exposed, one which was also built on the destruction of Troy. In her analysis of Evaristo's and Conrad's parallels between the Roman empire and modern Imperial Britain, as well as her postcolonial reading of Caesar's commentaries, Silke Stroh shows that although both systems need to be distinguished in terms of openness and organization, cultural representations seem to focus on similarities. She shows how Conrad and Evaristo's foregrounding of Britain's Barbarian past on the social and cultural periphery is used to ironically undercut modern British colonial and even postcolonial claims of superiority. Landry's analysis of the Ottoman empire reveals the imbrications between East and West but also their differences in terms of accommodation policies. Furlanetto's article on neo-ottomanism further investigates this question. When the Turkish Republic was born, she argues, the Kemalists dismissed the Ottoman and Islamic tradition as retrograde and damaging. 1980s Turkish literature is read as engaging with what is perceived as a utopian past, which is celebrated for its tolerance and cosmopolitan values. These Ottoman utopias convey messages of political and social renewal that look for proximity with the American multicultural discourse. However, the literary corpus is here also studied as a romanticized representation of the Ottoman

empire, which, re-imagined along the lines of the American experience, ignores the tensions and flaws of the Ottoman past. Last but not least, this section interrogates the illegal running of empires and their intricate connections in, for instance, the opium trade and wars.

In “(Post) Empire imaginaries in historical media”, critical approaches establish links with the postmodern and media representations. Zvirlein’s contribution opens this section. It explores how travellers in the eighteenth century offered visions of imperial decay, thereby raising questions and making observations that complicated empire from within. It looks at how Gibbon and Walpole’s representation are inherently conflicted because they fused images of imperial dominion with images of post-imperial ruin. Raiskin’s close semiotic analysis of American travel ads and their discursive elements points to dominant myths still imbued with imperialist nostalgia. How can American travellers and tourist intruders enjoy the spoils of colonialism with its primitivism and luxury while reworking that troubling history? How do these images of fairy colonial order obscure the contemporary exploitation of vacation sites? This contribution also pinpoints the discomfort of certain ads for vacations in American territories when engaging with the tropes of war and modernity. In a similar vein, Timo Müller investigates the James Bond films as documents of imperial nostalgia that reveal imperialist chauvinism and more prominently Britain’s anxiety over its changing status in the post-imperial world. Müller’s essay foregrounds pivotal phases in the history of the film series, looking at more nuanced perspectives of the secondary characters and the Brosnan era that is read as subverting the earlier notions of Bond’s imperial superiority and the series’ capacity to engage with geopolitical realism. More recent Bond films portray the hero falling into an ambivalent and dirty world where he needs to fight against the openly imperial and amoral attitude of ministers.

The last section “Contested Imaginaries, Perilous Belonging” addresses the dark side of post-imperial imaginaries in relation to aesthetic features of twentieth century literary texts. Sandten’s analysis of Caryl Phillips’s *The Nature of Blood* points to how the novel transcends former centres of colonial discourse. Cloete’s analysis of Beuke’s *Zoo City* as an alternative reading of Johannesburg bringing the wildlife experience in the city in a zootopia reveals how the postcolonial text addresses issues of dispossessions and difference. Engaging with Mbembe’s observations about the unresolvedness of the mental landscape, Cloete’s analysis explains how

the novel reveals the imperial mimicry of the city's architecture. In LeVihn-Kutzler's reading of toxic terror in *Animal's People*, global endangerment is partly due to racism and corporate globalism. Toxic contamination is read as a form of terror that affects people across political borders. It can also be regarded as a form of "slow violence" which is often erased by contemporary mediascapes in favour of spectacular events. The novel in question uses magic realism to engage with the unborn generations that will be affected by the chemicals. If Meyer approaches space and the post-imperial in *The God of Small Things* with Soja's complex concept of *Third-space* as a lived space marked by society and history, Gohrisch investigates the connections and discrepancies between the aesthetics of comedy and the politics of agency and survival in Levy's *The Long Song*. She highlights the conflicting messages of the novel and its focus on middle class ideals that obscure the confrontation of racist issues. This last section emerges as somewhat weaker and heterogeneous but also as engaging with other fields such as zoopoetics or ecocriticism. It is disappointing that the volume focuses on Anglophone literatures only, which restricts its comparative and innovative agenda. The compilation of articles without a clear theoretical introductory framework on the question makes things quite hectic and heterogeneous, which is both a flaw and a quality especially in the context of the plurivocality of postcolonial studies. But what all these contributions reveal and address is the need for further interdisciplinary and contrastive readings of imperialisms that struggle to further interrogate the paradoxical yearning for both the continued existence of Empires and their demise.

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**Jasbir Jain. *Forgiveness between Memory and History*.
Indian Institute of Advanced Study: Rastrapati Nivas,
Shimla, 2016. Pp. 104. ISBN: 9789382396376.**

The idea of forgiveness both at the personal and social level is embedded within our psyche. Yet one often finds it difficult to articulate thoughts upon such a subject. This work by the eminent scholar Jasbir Jain takes

up the challenge of providing an effective discourse on the need of forgiveness at the individual and political level. Today's systemic violence has altered society as well as thought processes and human relationships. People often suffer from past emotional traumas. In order to start any healing process, one needs to shed off anger, hatred, bitterness, blame and resentment towards others. Therefore, any discourse about forgiveness will prove quite timely. Violence and forgiveness are linked in their questioning of their respective role in the future of humanity. Western discourse primarily regards forgiveness as a potential gesture of reconciliation. While Western episteme locates forgiveness in legal and historical issues, the Indian tradition has largely commented on its potential as well as on its absence. The author of this monograph attempts to relate violence and forgiveness to cultural pasts and religious discourses, particularly in the Indian context.

Divided into five parts, including a distinct prologue and epilogue, this work resonates with telling observations and questions. Jain's prose style always remains free from jargon. The spontaneity with which she formulates her arguments makes the volume immensely valuable not only for academics but also for literary historians and culture critics. The topic of forgiveness has not been thoroughly discussed hitherto. Forgiveness constitutes a personal challenge that implies accepting responsibility for one's own life, rather than blaming or judging others. However, Jasbir Jain broadens the scope of the term significantly. Her detailed work poses the following question: "What happens when forgiveness enters political discourse, compelling it to recognize the presence of inequality, power, guilt, injustice and memory? Can it intervene in the course of history?" Jain acknowledges the fluidity of time and memory. Indeed, she refers to contemporary incidents and creative works providing examples of how violence can be transcended into forgiving.

This formidable treatise is another gem in Jain's already vast critical oeuvre. She yet again probes deep into a complex issue. The first chapter, "Prologue: Contesting Discourses," takes up Havel, Fanon and Gandhi's attitude towards violence and non-violence. The characters in Naomi Munaweera and Nayantara Sehgal's creative works are examined to question whether retaliation can undo the past. Human beings have to negotiate between remembering and forgetting, and to become sensitive to the relationship between tradition and its meaning. This exhaustive chapter first explores debates about forgiveness in Western discourse. It subsequently focuses on the specificities of Eastern traditions. It further explores the

relationship between history, memory and the present, suggesting ways in which it could become meaningful for the future of humanity.

The second chapter, entitled “Why Forgiveness? Meaning, Relevance and the Problematic of Discourse” examines in depth the need for forgiveness. It traces its history in political discourses right from the times of Emperor Ashoka to the Gandhian era. The author seeks to determine whether forgiveness is unconditional or involves repentance, change of heart, punishment or healing. Citing relevant facts from recent history, viz the Nuremberg Trials (1945–49) and the Tokyo Trials (1946–48), Jasbir Jain further discusses ongoing debates on forgiveness and its process. As she points out, forgiveness must be problematized in a way that acknowledges its multiple dimensions. Jain also critiques Julia Kristeva and others who believe that as it is impossible to forget, it is impossible to forgive. She articulates a clarion call to stop hatred being carried forward to future generations. She states, “It is better to confront the horror and realize the equally shared guilt and seek to prevent it” (16).

In the third chapter, “Negotiating between Past and Present,” the author addresses the lacuna left by the Western discourse of forgiveness, which excludes Eastern cultures. She analyzes in detail the eightfold path propounded by Buddha, as recorded in Ashoka’s edicts. In her engagement with the cultural past of India, she evaluates the issues of conflict, exile and war evoked in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. In her preface, Jain stated that the central three chapters of the monograph are by and large the outcome of intensive research on the epics conducted with the purpose of delivering resource lectures at an academic programme in Shimla. Thus, she subtly suggests that we must review our pasts from a fresh perspective. We must work towards forgiveness, as mentioned in the epics, religious and literary texts, sufi and bhakti writings. Confession proves another way of shedding the burden of guilt. This is aptly elaborated through Jain’s detailed analysis of Mahasweta Devi’s story, “Kunti and the Nishadin” and Shashi Deshpande’s “Hear me Sanjaya.”

What is the role of memory in giving us hope and courage to forgive? The fourth chapter of the volume, adequately titled “Is there a Future in the Past?” precisely addresses this question. Focusing on working out strategies for peace, Jain believes one needs to look at the past through the subjective-objective lens of art. Dealing with “partition narratives which record history which even the present generation is familiar with” (56), the author primarily focuses on two different narratives which bring out two opposing reactions—Intizar Husain’s “The City of Sorrow” and Amrita Pritam’s

novel *Pinjar*. Jain also examines Tahira Iqbal's *Deshon Mein* and Sanwal Dhami's Punjabi Story "Malham." These works foreground inner cleansing and restoration of trust and faith, which leads to understanding and healing. Jain time and again asserts that "forgetting is not always an essential prelude to peace or forgiveness; the past is difficult to face, but it still needs to be remembered, because it reflects and shapes our future" (72).

The concluding chapter, "Epilogue: Understanding the Other," broadens Jain's thought by suggesting that one can remember and yet forgive. In this ethical configuration, individual consciousness and relationships rise above difference. In this way, they contribute to the recognition of the other as an equal. Thus, forgiveness deserves attention despite being a fraught process. Religion need not be a barrier to understanding the other; it need not prevent relationships from developing. As the author shows, cultural histories and contemporary literature provide several examples of forgiveness, reconciliation and healing. Further, texts which compel soul-searching are carefully woven into the fabric of this monograph.

All in all, future generations will certainly turn to this book while seeking redemption. The extensive bibliography is evidence of the laborious work which has gone into the making of a slim yet thorough volume on such an arduous subject. Living or dead, the vast array of philosophers, political thinkers, translators of the epics and stories and creative writers of India/South Asia mentioned here will owe a debt to the author for being a part of an exhaustive project clearly aimed at the betterment of humanity.

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Malashri Lal, Chandra Mohan, Enakshi K Sharma, Devika Khanna Narula and Amrit Kaur Basra, eds. *Gender and Diversity: India, Canada and Beyond*. Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2015. Pp. 294. ISBN: 9788131607145.

In our work and in our living, we must recognize that difference is a reason for celebration and growth, rather than a reason for destruction.
—Audre Lorde

It is a challenging job to pin down, quantify and assess the achievement of a book that contains twenty essays from different disciplines on the almost panoramic subject of gender and diversity. These essays cross many borders in their discussion and analysis of the intersections of multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, diaspora, transnationalism, and pluralism. They also reflect upon the impact on women, gender discourse and social and political policy making in Indian and Canadian contexts. These ideas are especially relevant and significant at a time when debates rage around intolerance, terrorism, nationalism, honor killings, and other divisive factors. Hopefully, a better understanding of diversity and plurality will help us to negotiate these divides. Among other things, this is what the book tries to achieve. It also maps the journey of women towards empowerment as we are now in the sixteenth year of the twenty first century. It takes stock of the situation to determine whether we have made real progress or gained mere material advancement. To this end, essays from various fields like English, History, Public Administration, and others converse with each other, creating and supplementing knowledge crucial to both countries. Much as I would like to, lack of space denies me the privilege of dealing with each and every essay. However, I shall take up some of them to discuss the representative concerns of this book.

The first section, devoted to "Cultural Pluralism," which has erasing of borders at its core, deals with heterogeneity, marginalizations, multiculturalism and its discontents, pluralism and diversity. Sneja Gunew, in her essay entitled "Post-multiculturalism, Diaspora, Immanent Cosmopolitanism: A Future Anterior," relies on Lyotard's understanding of "post" in "postmodernism." According to the philosopher, the term does not merely imply going back. Rather, it suggests an engagement with "analysis, anamnesis, anagogy, anamorphosis, which elaborates on an 'initial forgetting'" (12). This makes it possible to develop cogent arguments about multiculturalism, or more precisely, post-multiculturalism. The latter can be understood by analyzing the notion left out in debates on multiculturalism, namely, cosmopolitanism. Expanding theoretical debates, the author defines vernacular or subaltern cosmopolitanism as a concept which, being associated with marginalized groups, questions the supposed homogeneity of a national culture. She uses this concept as a tool or "method, a form of reading and analysis that produces new forms of knowledge" (12) to examine Anita Rau Badami's novels as a response to the inherent tensions between multiculturalism and diasporic anxiety. In her essay "Negotiat-

ing Differences: Cultural Spaces, Pluralism and Diversity,” Jasbir Jain differentiates between multiculturalism and pluralism. She focuses on the meaning and implication of commonly used words and their impact on cultural interactions. She believes that plural cultures should grow and “rub off on each other” (35). On the other hand, Chandra Mohan engages with the question of how the concept of alterity and its “explication of the ‘other’” (40) have changed within Indigenous cultures over a period of time. His essay, “Shifting Paradigms of Alterity in the Indigenous Culture and Literature: Canadian, Indian and Australian Contexts,” identifies three phases in this process. In the first phase of “political representation,” Indigenous communities are crushed into submission, while being deprived of any political presence. In the second phase, one detects a tendency to regard their literatures as representations of the marginalized “other.” The third phase marks the global appropriation of the “other” as part of political multiculturalism. This entails the transformation of the Indigenous subject as a marketable commodity.

Sushma Yadav provides a political analysis in “Culture, Diversity and Pluralism in India and Canada: A Public Policy Perspective.” She argues that diversity slightly differs from pluralism, defined as the “engagement that creates a common society from all that plurality” (54). Thus, pluralism cannot simply be equated with diversity. Rather, it suggests an “energetic engagement with diversity” (55). As she discusses the failure of multiculturalism, she emphasizes the felt need for a developmentalist agenda in which state and non-state actors should participate. Amrit Kaur Basra’s essay, “Gender, History and Historiography in India and Canada: Some Reflections,” situates feminist writings within the “historiographical strands connected with the history of India and Canada” (71). The author concludes that women, by challenging male-dominated historiography, have emerged as “makers of history.”

The second section, “Gender Perspectives,” addresses women’s concerns along with issues related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities. Devika Narula focuses on the use of narratology by women writers in order to foreground their resistance to oppression, to intensify awareness and to bring about social change. She criticizes the painting of Bani Thani (belonging to the Kishangarh School of painting in Rajasthan) for being a “beautiful stylized aesthetic piece” (90) that shows only the woman’s profile rather than her multi-faceted personality. Clearly, the male gaze is at work here. Narula examines how

women writers use tropes of “silence,” “submission,” “invisibility,” “subjugation,” among others, to protest against patriarchal domination and to retrieve their dignity. In her article, “Woman’s Body: The Gender Question in Fiction and the Media,” Vinita Gupta Chaturvedi sheds light on the violence perpetrated on women, especially during periods of communal frenzy. Women are perceived as having no right over their body. They are regarded as representatives of the “other” that can be used, misused, beaten, or ill-treated by men. Garima Gupta provides statistical evidence of policies regarding LGBTQ communities in her essay entitled “LGBTQ Community: Canada and India,” the only piece to deal directly with LGBTQ concerns. She shows how official policies and social conditions have evolved favorably for this marginalized group. Canada has fared better than India in this case.

As its title indicates, the third section, “Life-Story / Her Story,” explores the genre of autobiographies and biographies, some of which may be fictional in nature. Jameela Begum’s essay, “Translating Life Writing Across Cultures: Narratives of Select Indian and Canadian Women Writers,” points out that “[c]onstructing a text of the self” is a task involving both reliving the tale and distancing oneself from it. This process disrupts “conventional narrative structures and translates traumatic experiences” (182). In his contribution, “Crossing the Boundaries: Feminist Archives and the Redemptive Power of Sisterhood,” Sachidananda Mohanty examines the works of Sarala Devi, an Odisha writer, as early theorizations in favor of freedom and rights for women. We come across similar concepts in the works of later feminists such as Margaret Atwood. Accordingly, Mohanty draws parallels between non-Western and Western feminist writings to establish a universal sisterhood cutting across time, space and cultures. Shraddha A. Singh, in the article entitled “Body as Text and Context in the Works of Atwood and Goswami,” shows how the female body is inscribed as a textual discourse constantly scrutinized and caught up in the gaze of society. Thus, the body becomes both the site of conflict and survival.

The fourth section, “Practical Applications,” contains an account of research conducted in a cross-cultural milieu and explores challenges to woman’s selfhood. Prem Srivastava’s “Knowledge Keepers—Canadian Cinema about the Indigenous: Special Focus on Atanarjuat and Unnatural and Accidental” offers glimpses into Canadian Indigenous cinema. This essay seeks to establish how both texts function as archives

and “keepers” of the history and knowledge of the native community. This view contrasts sharply with Chandra Mohan’s contention that, in the modern world, the Indigenous has become a commercial commodity. In her essay “Diversity and Questions of Alliance: A Case Study of the Assam Mahila Samiti, India and the Mahila Shanti Sena, Canada” Hemjyoti Medhi problematizes the sociological question of “identity politics and the politics and polemics of diversity” (247) in the formation of women’s associations. The section concludes with Meenu Anand’s essay, “School Education and the Challenge of Diversity: India and Canada.” This contribution analyzes research conducted on how schools play a primary role in the construction of gender identities (femininity and masculinity) among young girls and boys across India and Canada.

This book is an attempt at using interdisciplinary research as an invitation to change mindsets, politics and policies concerning women and diversity. As these issues are here to stay, research and policy making must be coordinated if we are to understand, negotiate and celebrate our differences. Through the lens of gender, this collection tries to offer perceptions of reality, which are anchored in the cultural life and lived experiences of people in India and Canada. It hopes to reach out to other plural cultures too by establishing connections within and without. To sum up in Audre Lorde’s words, “[i]t is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.” As this book is a bit too ambitious in scope, it fails to provide a tightly focused view of the subject at hand. However, it appears to be structured like a postmodern text which includes plural narratives offering their own versions of reality. This book is a timely contribution to the current need to discuss and understand the connotations, significance and worth of diversity in our age. This provocative volume contains enough material to encourage further research. Although a little expensive, it is a valuable source of reference and therefore worth buying both for institutional libraries and personal reading. Definitely a “must have” for any book shelf!

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**Manorama Trikha. *Post-colonial Indian Drama in English*.
New Delhi: Pencraft International, 2015. Pp. 407. ISBN:
9789382178095.**

This painstakingly researched volume is an important addition to the existing body of criticism on Indian drama in English. Drama has remained one of the least visible genres of Indian English literature as far as our critical tradition is concerned; this volume makes its own contribution towards righting this imbalance.

The author uses the label “Indian Drama in English” to include not only plays written originally in English but also a number of plays written in the Indian *bhasas* and then made available in English translation. This gives her the opportunity of substantially expanding the scope of her work; *Post-colonial Indian Drama in English*, in spite of its name, becomes a more nuanced, comparative study that straddles multiple language and dramatic traditions rather than confining itself to the single language framework. It ends up documenting a number of aspects of the incredible diversity and complexity of Indian drama.

The seven dramatists Trikha focuses on are Nissim Ezekiel, Asif Currimbhoy, Vijay Tendulkar, Girish Karnad, Partap Sharma, Gurcharan Das and Mahesh Dattani. Of these, Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad write primarily in Marathi and Kannada respectively while the others write primarily in English. One can, of course, quibble over the selection of dramatists—it may be possible to argue for instance that including Hindi playwright, Mohan Rakesh’s works, which have immediate resonance to the themes explored in this volume could have made the scope of the work more exciting, or that some of the playwrights chosen enjoy very different degrees of critical acclaim—but such quibbles are superfluous after a point in time. It is ultimately the author’s prerogative to decide on the objects of the study as it is her responsibility to make a meaningful contribution to the body of knowledge about, and understanding of, the texts concerned. And that is a responsibility Trikha discharges admirably. Not only does *Post-colonial Indian Drama in English* analyse critically the texts concerned, but it also ends up throwing light on the social and political contexts of post-colonial India that inform and engender these texts.

Trikha employs a thematic approach, using suitable themes and motifs to group together relevant texts under different chapters. The family,

nationalism, violence, history and myths—these are some of the pivots that are used to tie together the different texts. Thus, the themes of confrontation and decadence within the family offers her the opportunity of exploring Vijay Tendulkar's *Gidhare* (translated as *Vultures*), one of the most dystopic of Tendulkar's plays, in the light of other plays on the subject by Nissim Ezekiel and Gurcharan Das. *Vultures*, which generated more than its bit of controversy when it was first performed, focuses on the breakdown of the family as a site of affective investment in contemporary India. It foregrounds siblings and offspring who do not hesitate to harm their blood relatives for the pettiest of personal gain.

This gives Trikha the opportunity of exploring further the institution of the family in Tendulkar's work—she moves on to focus on Tendulkar's *Sakharam Binder*, a play replete with apparently comic reversals that raise some very pertinent questions about gender roles and hierarchies and the relationship between man and woman in a family. Indeed, it is a play that questions the relevance of the very institution of marriage if such an institution cannot guarantee dignity and equality to both parties. By looking at plays such as these and *9 Jakhoo Hill* (Das), *Marriage Poem* (Ezekiel) and *Kanyadaan* (Tendulkar), Trikha attempts to understand not just the plays themselves but the contemporary social and political Indian contexts that lie behind them. This is a strategy she uses across all the chapters in *Post-colonial Indian Drama in English* to tie the disparate texts together and better understand the social and political fabric that informs such texts.

The construction of history and the preoccupation with nationalist discourse in its varied incarnations are two of the major characteristics of post-colonial spaces, as many theoreticians have pointed out. Both form important areas of focus for Trikha's study. So does the theme of disillusionment, which follows the euphoria of political independence. The author focuses on all these elements, as is evident from her readings of plays like Vijay Tendulkar's *Dambadwicha Mukabala* (translated as *Encounter in Umbugland*) and Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq*, two plays that have been read by critics as being thinly disguised critiques of political power-mongering in post-colonial India even as they use fictional or historical contexts to feign distance from one's immediate realities.

One of the defining characteristics of modern Indian theatre has been the way it has sought to manage its multiple inheritances—the idioms of classical Indian theatre, indigenous or “folk” theatre, and Western

theatre. In doing so, it has often gone back to the vast and rich repertoire of Indian myths. This is particularly true of a playwright like Girish Karnad, though it is also a trait that characterizes many other Indian dramatists. While Trikha does not go into the performative elements of how Indian theatre manages to reconcile the demands of these different traditions (and it would probably be unfair to expect that, given the already daunting scope of this work), she does focus extensively on how modern Indian theatre has used myth to telling effect. In one of the most informative chapters, "Alternative Visions of Life in Myth, Art and Religion," the author explores the use of myth in plays like Girish Karnad's *Yayati*, *Hayavadana* and *Naga-Mandala* and uses that as her point of entry to read Asif Currimbhoy's *The Dumb Dancer* and *Om*, Gurcharan Das's *Mira* and Partap Sharma's *Zen Katha*.

The *Hayavadana* tale, of course, is of particular interest to comparatists, as it is part of a most interesting trajectory of literary interaction. The Indian *Kathasaritsagar* provided the *ur*-text which was adopted and transformed by Thomas Mann, who wrote *Transposed Heads* based on this tale. With Girish Karnad going back to this myth, the tale comes back to India in a new form, one that has a bearing, among other things, on discourses of contemporary nationalism in India. Equally fascinating is Manorama Trikha's analysis of the use of the snake-myth in *Naga-Mandala*, where Karnad has used the Naga myth to comment on gender roles, familial oppression and inequality in modern India. This is certainly a useful volume for students and scholars of Comparative Literature who wish to engage seriously with post-colonial Indian drama.

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Diana Looser. *Remaking Pacific Pasts: History, Memory, and Identity in Contemporary Theater from Oceania.*

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In an era in which, according to the United Nations, 20.2 million people worldwide are counted as refugees fleeing wars and persecution, extant

trends within literary and cultural studies to leave the conventional boundaries of national philologies and look at global or transregional landscapes of cultural mobility and exchange are as timely as ever. Within American Studies—as the field in which this reviewer is positioned—the move toward a transnational broadening of an already widely interdisciplinary field has initiated a paradigm shift, not least since Shelley Fisher Fishkin’s famous description of the “transnational turn” in 2004. Most recently, this crossing of borders in multiple directions has produced a “rising tide,” in Steven Yao’s words, of both Transpacific (American) Studies (see also Dirlik; Suzuki; and Shu and Pease), and of Transnational Indigenous Studies (see Allen; see also Bauerkemper), which particularly inquires into comparative identities and shared political agendas among Indigenous cultures from different regions. It is not only to both these fields, but also to Asian Studies in general, and to Theater and Performance Studies as well as Postcolonial Studies in their widest sense that Diana Looser’s impressive *Remaking Pacific Pasts: History, Memory, and Identity in Contemporary Theater from Oceania* makes a substantial contribution.

Departing from the belief in “[t]heater’s variable capacity to excavate the past in order to represent new histories, bodies, and imagined futures for a contemporary Oceania” (2), this study investigates plays and performances from the Pacific—that is, from the four regions of Hawai‘i, Aotearoa/New Zealand, New Caledonia/Kanaky, and Fiji—across the time span of the past fifty years. In a careful balancing act between, on the one hand, defining a larger region by axes of specific comparison, and, on the other, avoiding generalization and an undifferentiated blending into what Epeli Hau‘ofa calls “the black hole of the gigantic pan-Pacific doughnut” (qtd. in Looser 3), the author provides both a survey of major developments, historical backgrounds, and political contexts, and a set of exemplary, “molecular” case studies (28). Without any claim to completeness, the analysis covers works from the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s “that address significant questions of national and regional identity, illuminate various dramaturgies and models of historical understanding, and tell interesting and informative stories about the development of dramatic traditions in given locations” (22). The choice of texts is not an easy one, given the historically shaped differences of cultural affiliation and languages in a largely Anglophone landscape of Pacific scholarship (with Hawai‘i as colonized by and assimilated into the United States; with New Caledonia being in between “an independent country and a regular

overseas territory of France” [21]; and with Fiji as a nation with a 57 percent majority of Indigenous people). In spite of these differences, Diana Looser convincingly highlights collective notions of identity all across “Oceania” as a region centering on the ocean as a defining cultural factor. The “connective cultural tissues,” she argues, are manifold; they “have cultivated a regional sense of community-shared ideologies and commitments, mutual circumstances of decolonization and self-determination, and common histories of trade and exchange” (28). For this reason, the decision not to include Australia, “because the ethnic and linguistic origins of Australian aboriginal peoples are generally distinct from those of the Island communities in the Pacific Ocean” (4), is not only an economic but also a methodologically plausible choice.

Introducing readers to both the geographical and historical diversity of the field, chapter 1 is the textual complementary to the visual maps inside the volume’s front and back covers: it provides readers with a valuable, thirty-seven page survey of key works, artists, movements, and dominant themes, not only in the regions later selected for in-depth study, but also in Papua New Guinea (as “one of the most productive sites for written drama by indigenous authors in Oceania” [29]), Western Melanesia, including the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (with Wan Smolbag as Vanuatu’s first professional theater group), Tahiti, Guam (where a Chamoru cultural renaissance did not happen until the 1990s), and off-island contexts, such as the diasporic Pacific communities (Pasifika) in New Zealand. These are accompanied by similar overviews of theater traditions and major players in Fiji (where drama can largely be categorized historically as either “pre-coup” or “post-coup” theater), New Caledonia/Kanaky (in which, as in Tahiti, “indigenous agency is both a strategy and a goal” [43]), Hawai’i (which is “most defined by its intersectionality” (47) and intracultural dynamics), and Aotearoa/New Zealand, where the “national social policy of the past generation has been underpinned by a commitment to biculturalism based on historical relationships between Māori and Pākehā [European New Zealanders]” (54).

The following four analytic chapters then use specific case studies to explore “the possibilities of the theater to reexamine questions of history, memory, and their central relationships to personal and cultural identity, staging—sometimes controversially—aesthetic, historiographic, and political interventions” (1). Chapter 2 investigates “the complexities of intercultural regional genealogies” (109) though a comparative reading of three

plays with a shared theme: the iconic historical figure of Captain Cook. Even though originating in different regions, Dennis Carroll's *Way of a God* (Hawai'i, 1998), Pierre Gope's and Nicolas Kurtovitch's *Les Dieux sont borgnes* (New Caledonia, 2002), and Robert Sullivan's and John Psathas's *Orpheus in Rarohenga* (Aotearoa, 2002) use the motif of "first encounter" scenarios in order to diagnose "the sedimentation of colonial mythologies in the Pacific" (65) and strengthen revisionist perspectives—both from Indigenous and non-Indigenous angles. Chapter 3 focuses on five Māori plays, produced over a forty-year period, that explore the nineteenth-century New Zealand Wars between Māori and the British. The two dominant concepts that emerge from Harry Dansey's *Te Raukura* (1972), Theatre of the Eighth Day's *Ngati Pakeha: He Korero Whakapapa* (1985), Apirana Taylor's *Whaea Kairau* (1995), Witi Ihimaera's *Woman Far Walking* (2000), and David Geary's *Mark Twain and Me in Maoriland* (2010), Looser argues, are the distinctly Māori understanding of history as a spiral, moving forward both linearly and cyclically; and the commitment of all these works to "tino rangatiratanga" (sovereignty or self-determination) as a continuous political goal. In chapter 4, the author turns to three plays by one (arguably the best-known) Hawaiian playwright, Victoria Nalani Kneubuhl, that tackle different situations from Hawai'i's colonial legacy. With the examples of *The Conversion of Ka'ahumanu* (1981), *Emmalehua* (1986/1996), and *January, 1893* (1993), a site-specific living history pageant, Kneubuhl covers a wide area of historical conflict, from the contact between Native Hawaiians and American missionary women in the nineteenth century via the "Americanized" 1950s to the 1993 centennial commemoration of the overthrow of Hawai'i's monarchy. Chapter 5 then conclusively moves to Fiji in a comparative reading of three plays about the military *coup d'état* in 1987 by writers from three different ethnic groups: Rotuman playwright Vilsoni Hereniko's *The Monster* (1987), Fiji Indian playwright Sudesh Mishra's *Ferringhi* (1993), and Indigenous Fijian playwright Larry Thomas's *To Let You Know* (1997). Based on trauma theory (mainly by Dominick LaCapra), the chapter identifies various "configurations of allegory and testimony" (26) as strategies to work through recent traumatic events. In their focus on taking responsibility to effect social change, Looser argues, these plays have particular "contemporary relevance" (198), especially for Fiji's future political identity.

Programmatically opening and closing with an analysis of *Tatau: Rites of Passage*, a play co-produced by Zeal (an Australian theater company)

and Pacific Underground (a Samoan theater company in Christchurch) in New Zealand in 1996, *Remaking Pacific Pasts* breaks new ground as the first comprehensive study of Oceanic drama as “a highly intricate matrix of cultural circulation, interpenetration, and transition” (28). The incisive readings presented here bring into dialogue a wide variety of diverse and culturally distinct traditions while also demonstrating, as the author concludes, the manifold “shared modes of historical understanding and cultural expression that blend historiographic and mnemonic paradigms and manifestations with embodied immediacy: the complex relationality of Pacific genealogies as alternatives to Western history; tropes of storytelling; the nonlinear narrative structures that arise from the concept of a past that is in front of us; and shared rituals that carry historical information and represent historical practice, such as the kava ceremonies that animate performances from Hawai‘i and Fiji, and the widespread bodily inscriptions of *tatau* found in the example that began this book [*Tatau*]” (239). From the point of view of transnational Indigenous studies (or “trans-Indigenous” trajectories, as Chadwick Allen calls them), this book is also particularly intriguing for the parallels it suggests to other contemporary theatrical landscapes, such as Indigenous North American drama. In the U.S. and Canada, too, ancient Indigenous performance traditions continue to influence contemporary forms of expression; many groups and playwrights have to confront stereotypes or even the misinformed but widespread notion that “there is no indigenous Pacific [or North American] theater” (7); the previous lack of critical reception and scholarship on the topic cannot be justified by a lack of material, nor—in light of international tours and transnational networks—by spatial limitations; community theater—such as the influential Kumu Kahua Theatre in Honolulu—often works as a catalyst of social change; performative revisions of history often take a radically revisionist stance; while using European formats and conventions (often in the shape of what Christopher Balme has termed “syncretic theater”), both Pacific and North American Indigenous theaters are increasingly emancipatory in structure and form; and historically, both these trans-regional traditions gained particular momentum through the political movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

Against the potential pitfalls of such an enormous venture, Diana Looser maintains an admirable equilibrium between breadth of horizon and depth of detail, and between theoretical sophistication

and accessibility. Carefully taking into account the genre-specific differences between performance and scripted drama, and mixing widely acclaimed plays with lesser-known ones to avoid the traps of canonization, she skillfully—the metaphor be forgiven in this context—navigates the waters of Oceanic drama and theater amidst all kinds of regional, national, and historical lines of tension and debate. In terms of practical use, the highly informative historical overview is complemented by a list of plays and productions; and an index of names and subjects also allows for succinct uses of the book as a work of reference. As a highly readable work, *Remaking Pacific Pasts* is thus the perfect addition to the bookshelves of students, teachers, and researchers alike.

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Birgit Däwes, Kartsen Fitz, Sabine N. Meyer, eds. *Twenty-First Century Perspectives on Indigenous Studies: Native North America in (Trans)Motion*. New York and London: Routledge, 2015. Pp. 276. ISBN: 9781138860292.

As the first of a new series of Routledge books dedicated to cross-disciplinary Indigenous studies, *Native North America in (Trans)Motion* brings together a range of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and scholars in a challenging collection which expands the possibilities for Native American studies. The book begins with the editors' excellent summary of the history of Native American Studies with current debates within the field and their case for a transdisciplinary approach which allows for discussion of literature, filmmaking, theatre and visual arts alongside wider topics such as history, sports, law, environmentalism and religion.

The book divides into four parts, the first consisting of essays by renowned Native American artist/scholars—Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe), Diana Glancy (Cherokee) and Tomson Highway (Cree)—who emphasize the centrality of storytelling to the cultural survival of Indigenous peoples. Gerald Vizenor's concept of transmotion provides a theoretical touchstone for the volume as a whole, linking "a spiritual and visionary sense of natural motion and presence" (17) with Native cultural survivance and resistance. As the editors note in their introduction, transmotion "suggests a movement across, and a constant questioning of, boundaries—be they cultural, political, territorial or disciplinary" (4–5). Vizenor foregrounds Indigenous engagement with the natural environment and how that connects to arts and storytelling, which he sees as essential to cultural survivance. He writes beautifully in English while threading through inspirational ideas from Anishinaabe language. With clarity and vision he demonstrates how important Native arts are in revealing the presence of Indigenous peoples despite a history of suppression and exclusion of their art. Vizenor acknowledges the shamanic power of ancient cave artists, seeing these as "envisioned ancestors" (25) of contemporary work by modernist Native artists. His visionary essay ranges across the cosmototemic, the magical, the political and the pleasurable. He stresses the role of irony in Indigenous art, and this same sense of ironic juxtaposition and layering of meanings pervades this entire volume.

Diane Glancy takes a "creative non-fiction" approach, interweaving memories of a 1,500 mile road trip from California to Kansas with an

analysis of her play “The Bird House.” Glancy argues that storytelling was “root to Native survival” (32) prior to colonialism, and she drops in wry advice to the playwright: “Give your characters all the trouble they can handle.... Then give them a little more than they can handle. What arises thereafter is their character” (32). The characters in her play reside in a disused Texan church, surrounded by mining companies violently “fracking” the earth. The old church is a metaphor for the reservation, a means to reconsider relationships with the environment and with God, and a way to explore the losses that Native cultures have faced. Glancy draws parallels between the themes of “The Bird House” (which she didn’t want to look like a Native play (36)) and the development of Native theater. She searches for terms to define Native theater, opening up what she calls the “realized improbabilities” (39) of Indigenous performance, the notion of a journey where the “land can speak. The sky also” (39). Her metaphor of the bird house takes on multiple dimensions—from the traps and constrictions that Western culture has imposed on Native Americans, to the theatre stage itself.

Tomson Highway, who was born and raised in northern Canada, a vast land without borders, uses an autobiographical frame to draw together pre-colonial and post-colonial histories, encompassing Native connections with land, language, geography, spirituality and ecologies. Highway’s comparative analysis of Indigenous histories and European history draws attention to multiple ironies of the past that affect and inform contemporary Indigenous art. Highway illustrates the continuity between oral storytelling and Native literature, including the ironic strategies of the Trickster, or “cosmic clown” (53). He searches for the truths of history beyond the fabrications of the history books, thus providing a brilliant contextualization of Indigenous literature in Canada.

The second part deals with Native storytelling, particularly through the medium of contemporary literature. Billy J. Stratton writes about some of the challenges of teaching Native American literature, including breaking down the idea that Indigenous people are a “cultural monolith” (64), emphasizing the diversity of experiences and cosmologies of Indigenous peoples. Stratton proposes useful terms such as a “peoplehood matrix” through which Native texts can be analyzed and appreciated using a “heteroholistic” view. With reference to a range of writers including N. Scott Momaday and Frances Washburn, Stratton demonstrates how sacred knowledge is used in literary texts. He highlights the role that literature plays in challenging

negative stereotypes of Indigenous cultures, and argues convincingly that Native literary texts should be given the same respect as that granted to oral storytelling traditions. Helmbrecht Breinig builds on Stratton's overview of the field, examining novels by four leading Native authors in terms of how they represent acts of evil and sacrifice. In so doing, he examines the conflicting spaces in which Western and Native beliefs interact within both Indigenous and colonialist/settler communities. Breinig's lively analyses of stories and novels by Emily Pauline Johnson, N. Scott Momaday, Gerald Vizenor, and Louise Erdrich demonstrate the vitality and diversity of Native literature, even as he draws useful parallels between the texts. Thus he illustrates the strategies that Indigenous writers use to explore the liminal spaces between good and evil, between order and desire. Hans Bak considers the historical and contemporary role of sports in Native communities, analysing contemporary works of Native literature and film in terms of how they represent sports. He uses an historical perspective to show how some Native games evolved into contemporary sports such as baseball, and illustrates the "central function" that games played in tribal cultures (111). Bak argues that the sports field is a place where Indigenous "struggles of identity, assimilation, and cultural survival" are played out (101).

Bak's study marks the segue into the third part of the book, where the focus shifts to the law and Native ecologies. Chadwick Allen provides the framework for Part III by emphasizing the idea of "scripting"—writings that are imposed on Indigenous people by settler authorities. Allen proposes an alternative "re-scripting" where Indigenous people appropriate and re-write such scripts. He focuses on the extraordinary legacy of Native mounds and embankments such as the Newark Octagon, which illustrate Indigenous technologies and encode Indigenous knowledge. Allen argues that Native earthworks can be understood as Indigenous writings, using land itself as a creative medium. Like the creators of these earthworks, contemporary Indigenous artists react to a tragic post-colonial history by creating their own scripts as "narratives of survival, presence and renewal" (129). Sabine N. Meyer examines the influence of the language and institutions of Anglo-American law on Indigenous communities. Meyer analyses the critical engagement of Cherokee leaders with decisions on native land and sovereignty made by U.S. courts in the 1820s and '30s. In juxtaposing legal documents with written responses by Cherokee leaders, Meyer demonstrates how these men both engaged with and resisted the Eurocentric assumptions and prejudices

imposed through colonial law. Thus Meyer opens up new perspectives on the meeting of Native literature with colonial legal systems, demonstrating the ethical dilemmas faced by Native leaders attempting to negotiate with colonial power systems. Similarly, Maria Moss plunges into complex ethical territory by examining the debate within the Makah Indian Reservation about whether or not to continue the traditional practice of whale hunting in the face of contemporary environmental concerns. Her ironically titled essay “A ‘Whale’ of a Problem” uses ecocriticism and Animal Studies to open up fresh perspectives on the stereotype of the ecological Indian. By elaborating upon the battle lines of a controversial debate that still continues, Moss skillfully outlines the “catch-22” in which the twenty-first century ecological imperative to protect nature conflicts with the views of Makah whalers who see conservation and environmentalism as a new form of colonialism. In countering this view, Moss argues that all cultures are fluid and constantly transforming, that it is impossible to revive the past, and proposes a respectful and pragmatic solution—that the Makah should be given the right to hunt whales, but choose not to.

The fourth part focuses on revisionist histories. Sami Lakomäki returns to one of the central aims of this book by arguing that Native American history should be studied in relation to Indigenous cultures globally. Comparative Indigenous studies can escape from the limitations of nationalist narratives, advancing the common goals of Indigenous peoples, discovering productive connections between Native communities while avoiding the pitfalls of homogenization. Lakomäki demonstrates the potential for transnational Indigenous histories through comparison between the Shawnees (North America) and the Sámi (Scandinavia, Finland, and Northeastern Russia). He shows how Sámi and Native North Americans began to build productive allegiances, concluding that by the 1980s, “being united with other Indigenous peoples across the globe, had become an essential part of Sámi politics, identity and discourses” (199). Michael Draxlbauer examines the Catholic Church’s canonization of the Mohawk princess Catherine (Kateri) Tekakwitha (1656–1680) as the first Native American saint. This is both a study of the life of a remarkable young woman, and a critique of Jesuit missionaries and the Catholic hierarchy who used the “First Iroquois Virgin” Tekakwitha to validate the success of their colonizing project. Draxlbauer argues for an Indigenous re-evaluation of Tekakwitha’s life in order to question the cultural power of the Catholic symbolism and

to create a genuinely “bicultural biography” (215). Draxlbauer’s critique of Eurocentric constructions leads neatly to an essay by Hsinya Huang, who illustrates how Indigenous writers use literature both to remember and to begin to heal historical trauma. Huang advances her argument using the case study of Joseph Brucac’s 2001 historical fiction *The Journal of Jesse Smoke, a Cherokee Boy, the Trail of Tears, 1838*. The book tells the story of the forcible removal of Native Americans from their homelands by the U.S. government during the 1830s following the Louisiana Purchase. Huang’s close analysis of Brucac’s text illustrates the vital role that Indigenous “post-testimonial” literature plays in processes of remembering, testifying, cultural survival, and the re-forming of community and identity.

While this volume begins with powerful, personal and political essays by Indigenous writers, it ends with a contrasting contribution by a German scholar, Hartmut Lutz, a self-confessed “Indianthusiast.” Lutz reveals that he devoured stories about Native Americans as a child, fantasizing about tribes that he believed to be extinct or fully assimilated into American society. Lutz’s childhood passion evolved into a distinguished career in North American Studies. Using his personal experience as a starting point, Lutz persuasively illustrates how European constructions of Indianness were reliant on artistic representations and popular culture narratives. He connects German romanticisation of exotic cultures with the racism that fuelled the rise of the Nazis. Lutz explains how the exoticizing and “othering” of Indigenous peoples “tells us more about those who practice it than about those who are thus Othered” (240). Picking up on the famous concept “the Empire Writes Back”, from the book by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, he demonstrates how Native American artists “painted back” to Western art in the 1960s and ‘70s. Lutz’s analysis of various artworks, reproduced as illustrations in the text, shows the level of wit and irony Native artists use to deconstruct Western representations of Native peoples. Lutz’s essay is an excellent choice to close this volume, showing the editors’ ironic engagement with the complex interactions between local and global perspectives, from the borderless nomadism of Tomson Highway to Lutz’s initiation into “Indianthusiasm.”

Birgit Däwes, Karsten Fitz, and Sabine N. Meyer are to be congratulated on assembling a rich and varied selection of essays from leading voices in Native American Studies that demonstrate the multiple facets of Vizenor’s concept of transmotion. With freshness, clarity and cultural

sensitivity, the editors acknowledge the necessary interdisciplinarity of a field that encompasses so many diverse cultures and different ways of knowing. The book defines and questions theoretical ideas drawn from Indigenous epistemologies as well as Western critical theory, using these with multiple examples of texts and artworks to demonstrate the vitality of Indigenous survivance in the face of overwhelming odds. The four parts make a coherent whole, a web of ideas that intersect and speak to each other throughout the volume. *Native North America in (Trans)motion* merits reading and re-reading for its sophisticated insights not only into Native American studies, but also into how globalized, transnational Indigenous Studies can help to shape and lead the humanities in the future. This work will be invaluable to scholars, artists and students in disciplines far beyond the arbitrary borders that have ghettoized Indigenous Studies in the past.

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Maria Alonso Alonso. *Diasporic Marvellous Realism: History, Identity and Memory in Caribbean Fiction*. Leiden and Boston: Brill/Rodopi, 2015. Pp. 260. ISBN: 9789004301085.

In this book, María Alonso Alonso develops a fresh methodological approach to the works of immigrant and transnational writers, particularly those from the Caribbean. While this volume offers numerous insights into diaspora, identity, memory and trauma studies, Alonso's main contribution undoubtedly lies in her articulation of a non-Eurocentric world vision, indeed a "literary philosophy" as well as a narrative technique that she calls diasporic marvellous realism (16). This concept describes the new literary consciousness of the contemporary generation of diasporic writers seeking to reinterpret, through the rational terms of their host countries, the supernatural phenomena of their mother culture.

The introduction of this new term underscores the continuous relevance and flexibility of the concepts of magic and marvellous realism in current literary criticism. Moreover, by highlighting the undeniable

influences of globalisation and transnationalism on second-generation “immigrants,” the author also nuances our understanding of identity, memory, and diaspora in today’s world. Before defining diasporic marvellous realism, Alonso reminds us of the historical distinction between *lo real maravilloso americano* and *realismo mágico*, two literary terms whose dissimilarities should be emphasized. Although both terms allude to the intrusion of the supernatural and the presence of folklore in everyday life, they should not be regarded as synonymous. Alonso follows in the footsteps of Margaret Heady, who asserts that *lo real maravilloso* should primarily be perceived as a literary philosophy while *realismo mágico* could be described, at the outset, as a narrative technique (qtd. in Alonso 24). While both modes display supernatural elements, *lo real maravilloso* was first conceived as an *idea*, “a reformulation of realism, rather than a denial of it” (207) by “setting the European logos against the Amerindian imaginary” (207).

Diasporic marvellous realism, however, radically differs from these concepts. First, the authors writing in this mode live in a transterritorialised condition. For them, residency in the US or UK often alternates with regular visits to the Caribbean. Consequently, their “own culture of origin can also be exotic to [themselves]” (131). Because of this predicament, many of these diasporic writers seek to recapture the memories of their past and to suture the gaps of their origins in order to define their identity. Further implications of this condition impact the writers’ use of the marvellous in interpreting the supernatural and folklore. While drawing on the supernatural world of their roots, authors of diasporic marvellous-realist texts re-write elements from this ancestral culture through the lenses of the rational usually characterising their “host country.”¹ Regarded from a diasporic perspective, the supernatural is filtered through the sceptical angle of rationality. Thus, “the dominant culture model seems to prevail” (210). Therefore, the writings of these transnationalised authors are characterized by an aporetic mix of the mythical and the rational. In addition, their use of folklore often reveals some form of diasporic trauma, a feature not found in *lo real maravilloso americano*. While Carpentier alluded to folklore in order to celebrate the

1. The term “host country” is left in quotation marks to indicate debates surrounding the applicability of this label to the second generation of immigrants. This remark echoes Alonso’s questioning of the very notion of “second-generation immigrants.”

wealth of Latin American *mestizo* identity (211), diasporic marvellous-realist authors seek to come to terms with a haunting past through folklore. Indeed, Alonso argues that transterritorialised authors are doubly stigmatized: “on the one hand, they might never be fully accepted as part of the host country.... On the other, diasporic communities might also have a subordinate affiliation to the homeland, where they are considered ‘the bastard child of the nation’” (38–39). In order to further illustrate her point, Alonso skilfully examines works by, among others, Nalo Hopkinson, Cyril Dabydeen, Kei Miller, and David Chariandy.

Nalo Hopkinson’s *Salt Roads* revisits Caribbean spirituality and magic from a diasporic perspective. Born in Jamaica and raised in Guyana and Trinidad before moving to Canada at age 16, Hopkinson’s transnationality is underscored in her negotiations between myth and reason (47). In this novel, the sceptical view is paradoxically offered by a female shaman, who questions the nature of Mackandal’s fate: did he escape fire by becoming a butterfly or did he perish at the stake? *The New Moon’s Arms*, another novel by Hopkinson, alludes to the trauma of the middle passage. Slaves thrown overboard seem to have morphed into mermaids until, progressively, “everyone admits that mermaids might not only exist in fantasy but also in real life” (105). “[C]ustomarily perceived as the matter of legend or magic,” the mermaids, Hopkinson suggests, “are actually the result of biological evolution” (103). In this novel, scientific explanation supersedes magic. Similarly, rationality dominates in Cyril Dabydeen’s *Dark Swirl*, which recounts the story of a naturalist, a white man, in search of Guyana’s *massacouraman*, a terrifying aquatic creature. While the scientist regards the *massacouraman* as an exotic Guyanese myth, the villagers, ironically, feel more sceptical. As Alonso notes, in “this nuance resides the innovatory quality of the novella, a cultural inversion” (147). In Kei Miller’s *The Last Warner Woman*, Alonso remarks, Adamine is forced to renounce her shamanic powers in order to conform to the English world of reason. The novel highlights the link between trauma and the marvellous, as the sexual abuse Adamine experienced in England is recorded by her son. This results in a form of transgenerational trauma described by Whitehead as a “silent presence or ‘phantom’” (qtd. in Alonso 186). Finally, Alonso focuses on Chariandy’s *Soucouyant* in order to show how “the folkloric figure of the *soucouyant* is the catalyst for cultural haunting” (173). The *soucouyant*, a female vampire that transforms itself into a ball of fire, is

conflated with the figure of Adèle's dead mother, who, as a black Trinidadian in Canada, is considered as an Other. Adèle's "traumatic vision of her mother turning into a ball of fire was so extreme that the only way she could escape its reality was to turn her mother into something beyond that reality" (203). Negotiations between the rational and the supernatural are embodied in the figure of the *soucouyant*. Indeed, the latter can be decoded either as a real creature or as a psychic manifestation of Adèle's traumatic loss.

The nature of Alonso's corpus allows her to productively discuss issues of diaspora and identity. These new diasporic writers interpret their folklore and myths from the perspective of outsiders, which recalls the oscillation between routed/rooted identities already theorised by critics such as Clifford, Gilroy and Hall. Moreover, their predicament forces us to reconfigure our conception of the mother culture. While Carpentier's marvellous geographical referent was Africa, he felt firmly rooted in Cuba. On the contrary, for these artists the lost "homeland is ... the Caribbean" (63). Alonso therefore links the adjective "diasporic" to the concept of "marvellous realism" in order to describe "the literary production of those writers who are located in a country different from that in which they were born" (210).

In addition, the volume contributes significantly to current issues discussed in memory and trauma studies in at least two ways: first, Alonso applies trauma studies methodologies to the non-Eurocentric context of the Caribbean; second, she suggests that marvellous realism can be seen as an aesthetic response to trauma. In "The Generation of Postmemory," Hirsch uses the term Postmemory to describe "the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (103). This generation "recalls" these memories, not as lived recollections, but through photos, family stories, objects, "imaginative investment, projection and creation" (107). Such a generation, therefore, has grown up with narratives that shape, displace and even exceed the understanding of their own lives. Alonso expands this concept of postmemory, often used in the context of the second-generation Jewish diaspora, to include the (traumatic) memories of second-generation Caribbean authors. The latter have to use "imaginative investment" in order to understand their past. Further, Maria Alonso Alonso claims

that diaspora can serve “as an allegory for a past that haunts the characters” (214). Not only does transterritorialisation increase the fragmentation of historical memory (170), the causes of diaspora can often be linked to colonisation. Thus, “the elsewhere past of the Caribbean quite literally haunt[s] or shadow[s] the lives of those who were born elsewhere” (Chariandy qtd. in Alonso 205). Thus, Alonso’s analysis of the combined role of migration and colonisation in the transmissibility of trauma provides a welcome non-Western perspective. This perspective echoes the current postcolonial turn in trauma studies (Andermahr, Craps, and Herrera). This shift decentralises the Holocaust as a paradigm of trauma theory by considering other traumatic phenomena such as those resulting from colonialism, dictatorial regimes and climate disasters.

Deep trauma and victimhood, in the works analysed in this study, are literarily represented through marvellous realism, an aesthetic mode ideally suited to the expression of violence (Alonso 194). Admittedly, Jenni Adams’s *Magic Realism in Holocaust Literature: Troping the Traumatic Real* also fruitfully explores the correlation between magic realism and trauma. However, Alonso’s notion of diasporic marvellous realism further amplifies scholarly debates in this field. All in all, Alonso’s book offers a remarkable contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship on diaspora, trauma as well as magic and marvellous realism.

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Joel Kuortti, ed. *Transculturation and Aesthetics: Ambivalence, Power, and Literature*. Cross/Cultures 179. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2014. Pp. 220 + xxvi. ISBN: 9789042039155.

Falling into four parts, this volume edited by Joel Kuortti, a Finnish scholar who is acting Head of a School of Languages and Translation Studies at the University of Turku, is one of the last volumes of the Cross/Cultures series to be published solely by Rodopi, which has since then merged with Dutch leading publisher Brill. As part of this new publishing venture then, it is interesting to assess this Scandinavian re-turn to transculturation theory.

The eleven articles that make up the volume were gleaned from a Conference that took place in Bergen, Norway in 2012 and crowned a three-year project put together by the Nordic Network for Literary Transculturation Studies. Erik Falk from Uppsala University, a member of the Network's Swedish leg, joined Kuortti in writing the Introduction. The volume is therefore a quintessentially Nordic enterprise, adumbrated by Kuortti's Bergen colleagues, Anne Holden Rønning and Lene Johannesen in their *Readings of the Particular: The Postcolonial in the Postnational*, published in the same Cross/Cultures series in 2007. Already in that volume, the editors were wary of the "delimitations" of "postcolonial literary studies" (ix) and turned to "transculturation," a term which Mary Louise Pratt, in her *Imperial Eyes* (1992), translated from Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz's Spanish *transculturación* in his 1940 Havana study of tobacco and sugar in Latin America and the Caribbean. This volume can thus be at first apprehended as a transcultural North-South dialogue, except that Latin America is not featured.

The countries and chunks of territory represented through their literary avatars in this volume are Sri Lanka, Jamaica, Iraq (Gesa Mackenthun's study of archeological sites in three novels in chapter 1; India

(Kuortti on Salman Rushdie in chapter 2); Zimbabwe (Falk on Yvonne Vera's American publishing career in chapter 3); Taiwan (Chang on queer Asian diasporic subjects in chapter 4); post 7/7 "tribal" Britain (Ulla Rahbek on multicultural memoirs in chapter 5); Kenya (Dominica Dipio on Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Timothy Wangusa in chapter 6); South Africa (Vicki Manus Briault on the indigenization of English in post-Apartheid novels in chapter 7); Guyana (Željka Švrljuga on pornotroping slavery in Fred D'Aguiar's 2000 novel in verse *Bloodlines* in chapter 8); Australia (Danica Čerče and Oliver Haag on European translations of Aboriginal writing in chapter 9); the Sundarbans bordering India and Bangladesh (Arnaud Barras on the ecosystem in Amitav Ghosh's 2005 *The Hungry Tide* in chapter 10); and, last but not least, the United States of America with an incursion into Mexico (Michael J. Prince on post-war America in Jack Kerouac's *The Road* in chapter 11). We thus follow Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty in their lines of flight until they achieve "escape-velocity by crossing the physical border of Mexico" (192). We are thus returned through the United Mexican States to the other half of America and the original Cuban idea of *transculturación*: the return of the repressed, as it were.

This racy volume therefore offers a postcolonial tour of the use of such a traveling concept as "transculturation" by diverse authors hailing from various and oftentimes multiple, e.g. diasporic locations across the globe. The main thrust of the book is to highlight the inherent shakiness of "unstable postcolonialities" (xiv, quoting Medovarsky) to better *ground* the appropriateness of transculturation. Taking their cue from mainly Graham Huggan (as critiqued and nuanced by Sarah Brouillette), Arif Dirlik, and Neil Lazarus, Falk and Kuortti endorse these critics' turn to "the material and discursive conditions under which texts travel the world" (xvii). Such conditions are allegedly overlooked by a textually oriented research field such as postcolonial literary studies, which is also targeted as inadequate by World Literature studies traditionally heralded by David Damrosch, Pascale Casanova, and Franco Moretti.

Under attack from both sides—"book-historical projects" and "world-literary studies," the field of postcolonial literary studies is thus found to be unable "to see that literary peripheries and centers are joined in the same global literary system, and that authors are inevitably hybrid creatures shaped by a number of forces that exceed the national or formerly colonial frame" (xix). Kuortti here seems to be freezing postcolonial studies at a specific point in time and joining the horde of the field's

detractors who had sounded its death knell or pinpointed “the expiry date of the ‘postcolonial’ label,”¹ thereby ignoring the many regenerative ways in which postcolonial studies have been “rerouted” and generously provided with fresh “directions for the new millennium” (Janet Wilson, Cristina Şandru, and Sarah Lawson Welsh, 2010) and with a “future” as well (Zabus, *The Future of Postcolonial Studies*, 2015). Transculturation and the “transnation”² are indeed *part of* postcolonial studies; not separate from it, as Kuortti implies.

It is a matter of wonder for this reviewer that this Nordic team subjects the field of postcolonial literary studies to such segregationist scrutiny when in fact the first people who pioneered the field in Europe are from Northern Europe. One must remember that the ancestor to postcolonial literary studies, which was then called “Commonwealth Literature,” was inaugurated in 1967 at the University of Leeds, where ACLALS, the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, was also founded, in the aftermath of the independence of “third-world” nation-states while 1967 is also the year when “postcolonialism” enters the *MLA International Bibliography*. 1967 is also the seemingly innocuous date of Greta Hort’s death in Denmark. She first taught “Commonwealth Literature” in Aarhus and this Danish Dame was followed by Australian Anna Rutherford and Danish Kirsten Holst Petersen, and later by many scholars in the rest of Europe. The Nordic roots of the field cannot be denied and the Nordic Network for Literary Transculturation Studies simply cannot afford to ignore these inaugural beginnings on its own turf.³

Having said that, the effort to bring together “transculturation” and aesthetics” is laudable in the global academe where aesthetics and, generally, the Humanities are being sold for a mess of pottage to the Social Sciences and gauged by the standards of the “hard” sciences. Given the arduousness of the task, I wish some chapters had been more full-fledged and dug farther and deeper into: the first chapter on “Digging Far and Deep” by Mackenthun is disappointingly short (some 5000 words) and seems to synthesize the author’s previous findings on imperial archeology. Some other chapters boast short bibliographies, as

1. Rajeev Patke, *Postcolonial Poetry in English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 239.

2. Bill Ashcroft, “Transnation,” in *Rerouting the Postcolonial: New Directions for the New Millennium*, edited by Janet Wilson, Cristina Şandru, and Sarah Lawson Welsh (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 72–85.

3. See <http://www.nordforsk.org/en/programmes/projects/nordic-network-for-literary-transculturation-studies>. Accessed 27 Mar. 2016.

in Barras's otherwise worthwhile essay at the confluence of ecological and cultural phenomena on "The Aesthetics of the Tide." Also, I can see how Kuortti's very ludic essay on Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008) with its transcultural "jesture," as in making fun of colonial authority and thereby shifting power relations, illustrates his strong premise that hybridity implies mixing "but with a markedly unbalanced relationship" (16). But I fail to see how hybridity is redefined by such a "jesture" and how it contributes to "theorizing transculturation," which is the title of the admittedly thin First Part.

Of note in this transcultural endeavor are: the chapter, informed by Huggan's notion of the "postcolonial exotic," by Erik Falk on the marketing and reception of Zimbabwean Yvonne Vera on the US literary market, complete with an incisive look at European-style Art Nouveau book covers with butterflies and cornflowers which obviate the gendered violence of Vera's novels; the chapter by Fred Chih-Wei Chang on Taiwanese Chi-ang Hsun's *Yu ai shu: Xie gei Lys' M* (2000) translated as *Epistles of Eros: Letters to Ly's M* (2010) about male same-sex love at the junction of queer erotics (indigenized as *ku'er*) and diasporic travel; and Danica Čerče and Oliver Haag's dissection of felicitous to downright unsuccessful strategies of foreignization and domestication (after Lawrence Venuti's apt term) in German and Slovene translations of Indigenous Australian writing, i.e. *My Place* (1987) by Sally Morgan and *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996) by Doris Pilkington born Nugi Garimara. It is in such substantial approaches to the market and the interstitial spaces of diaspora that one can see how transculturation works.

Briault's discussion of "indigenization," as I used it in *The African Palimpsest* (2007), is commensurate with her 2011 fascinating study, *Emerging Traditions: Toward a Postcolonial Stylistics of Black South African Fiction in English*, from which some parts have been adapted. While both the West African authors which I examined in *The African Palimpsest* and the indigenous South African authors discussed in *Emerging Traditions* and in the present chapter meet half-way through similar techniques of contextualisation, cushioning, code-switching, and the use of pidgins, the tooling and honing of the English-language weapon to present an indigenous worldview is less sharp in South African than in Anglophone West African texts, presumably because none of the West African countries experienced the legal straightjacket that the Apartheid regime foisted upon the Black African population. If transculturation is taken to mean the "effects of cultural translations through processes of geographical migrations," as was Ortiz's intention, South Africa is an appropriate test-case for the construction of

“bridges between indigenous South African cultures existing side by side with the English and Afrikaans-based cultures of the former colonial powers” (114). Transculturation can thus operate in the “transnation” hosted within the nation-state and gives the lie to Pratt’s definition of “contact zones” as “an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures” (11, quoting Mackenthun).

Last, I would lament some omissions and provide one corrective: Mackenthun should have mentioned Jennifer Nesbitt’s work on Barry Unsworth; Chang on “The Erotics of Queer Diaspora” acknowledges the work of Megan Sinnott but should also have mentioned Howard Chiang’s *Transgender China* (2012) in relation to Asian queerness (including Taiwanese cross-dressing) and transmigration; Arnaud Barras fails to mention the numerous studies on ecocriticism (e.g. De Loughrey and Handley, 2011 but also Huggan and Tiffin’s *Postcolonial Ecocriticism*, 2009) that could have built the necessary dam to his aesthetic construction of tidal moments. I beg to differ on Dominica Dipio’s reference to Christian missionaries’ perception of “some of the traditions, especially circumcision, as incompatible with Christianity” (86) since in the Kenyan context of the 1930s, whereas young male converts were encouraged to undergo circumcision in Mission dispensaries, excision for girls (both practices are designated by the same Kikuyu word *irua*) was considered a brutal bodily mutilation. What is more, whereas in one CSM (Church of Scotland) station (Kigari in Embu District), there was an attempt to introduce a Christian circumcision ceremony, at the other (Kabore in the Kikuyu section), and at the same time, Christians were asked to openly disavow female excision on pain of excommunication. Transculturation is here inscribed differentially on the colonial body.

No strong definitional red thread for “transculturation” is followed through in the volume but the mutuality of cultural exchange is certainly emphasized if only unevenly. The present volume is however part of another ongoing project funded by the Academy of Finland, “Out of the Ordinary: Challenging Commonplace Concepts in Anglophone literature.” The editor is thus bent on a larger reassessment of “commonplace concepts” such as, one intuitively, “postcolonial literary studies.” Yet, the “common place” where the field was transculturated after the Leeds impetus was the University of Aarhus, Denmark: the Nordic matrix.

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Compte rendu de revues / Review of Journal Issues

Updating a Tradition: Comparative Literature Studies in Argentina

***Boletín de Literatura Comparada*. Centro de Literatura Comparada, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo (Mendoza, Argentina). Vols. XXXVIII (2013), pp. 198, and XXXIX (2014), pp. 215. ISSN: 0325-3775.**

FOUNDED BACK IN 1976 by the late Prof. Dr. Nicolás J. Dornheim, the first scholar who supported Comparative Literature in Argentina and a great specialist in travel literature, this journal published by the National University of Cuyo (Mendoza, Argentina) has appeared on an annual basis, expanding its length and scope with the help of local, regional, and international collaborators. Thanks to this academic journal (for it is a journal in its own right, despite its modest name, in full compliance with current indexing and quality standards), the discipline has gained prominence and recognition as a rich and well-established research field. This status must occasionally still be emphasized wherever the humanities are too deeply rooted in tradition—as tends to be the case in Latin America. Currently edited by Prof. Dr. Lila Bujaldón de Esteves, who is also the vice-president of the Argentinian Comparative Literature Association (AALC) and an active member of ICLA, the *Boletín de Literatura Comparada* covers virtually the full range of topics and concerns widely regarded as relevant for comparatists throughout the world, namely multi- and transmedial literature, travel writing, translation theory, history and discussion of literary genres, and analyses of all kinds of texts—fiction and nonfiction—dealing with foreign and lesser-known cultures.

The last two issues of this journal testify to this broad focus. Featuring articles, reports, reviews, and interviews, they both open with an introduction by the editor, Prof. Bujaldón de Esteves, in which specific contents and general purposes are set forth. These issues then divide into several main sections containing nearly a dozen original contributions by scholars from all over the world (translated into Spanish when necessary), including—in addition to members of the Comparative Literature Center of the National University of Cuyo and of other prestigious Argentinian colleges—internationally renowned scholars such as Jean-Marc Moura (Université de Paris Ouest, Institut Universitaire de France), Christoph Rodiek (Technische Universität Dresden), Javier Sánchez Zapatero and María Marcos Ramos (Universidad de Salamanca), and Manfred Beller (Università di Bergamo, Italia). Although these articles deal with a wide range of subjects extending from Japan to Patagonia, as it would be expected, travel writing and Holocaust film and literature are the main topics for each respective issue, with a focus on the significance of these issues for the southernmost part of Latin America. The reviewed issues also include an interview (2013), a special dossier (2014), and several book reviews on works especially relevant to the discipline. Since the middle section seems to be distinctive of each issue, it merits a separate description.

For the 2013 issue (volume XXXVIII), a member of the editorial committee interviewed a renowned Spanish scholar, Dr. José A. Pérez Bowie, who currently holds the chair of Theory of Literature and Comparative Literature at the University of Salamanca and specializes mainly in the complex relationships between film and literature (a field in which he is highly recognized and to which he has contributed many volumes). The edited transcription of the dialogue is direct and more than interesting for those scholars working in comparativism applied to the arts and literature. Because of his long career and his current academic position, Prof. Pérez Bowie's well documented insights into the negative impact of new educational policies in Europe are revealing. His opinions regarding the future of the discipline in this region of the world give cause for concern, if not alarm. Indeed, in his view, there has been a massive transfer of comparative literary studies to postgraduate courses, which drastically cuts back general budgets and teaching positions at the undergraduate level, posing a threat—as well as a challenge—to the profession.

The 2014 issue (volume XXXIX) features the announcement of a well-deserved tribute to Prof. Dornheim, the founder of the Center for Comparative Studies at the University of Cuyo, which houses the editorial office of the journal (incidentally, the Center has been officially named after its founder). This issue also contains a substantial dossier on the BIALICO project, an acronym that stands for “Bibliografía Argentina de Literatura Comparada” [Argentinian Comparative Literature Bibliography]. This program, launched by Prof. Dornheim himself, seeks to offer a full historical record of local production in the field, a goal difficult to achieve because of the very nature of the publications in which most of the research was originally released (indexation and registry are not yet routinely adopted in the Argentinian academy). By historicizing and locating the national research production throughout the last decades, BIALICO eventually points to the necessity of expanding and enriching the range of concerns traditionally regarded as established topics by European comparative studies. In doing so, it invites a broadening of analysis models and paradigms. Arduous as it may be, such an ongoing project should be considered an important example for a discipline that is still trying to clarify its own history and its present objectives outside continental Europe. The fact that *Weltliteratur* is a concept now increasingly superseded by its offspring, *Literaturen der Welt*, reflects the need to enlarge the picture and to unite efforts to understand literature from a genuinely worldwide perspective.

In the quest for a more inclusive approach—an epistemological tenet of comparative literature—the Spanish-language *Boletín de Literatura Comparada* provides hope and strength garnered over three decades of continued existence. Articles on pioneers of comparativism *avant la lettre*, such as the writer Esteban Echeverría, and detailed research on Mapuche bilingual literary production certainly rank among the remarkable local contributions—one could say revelations—of this international publication. All in all, the mandate of *Boletín de Literatura Comparada* lies in connecting different cultures and in disseminating literary works outside their narrow confines in space, time, medium, and language.

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In Memoriam John Neubauer: Eminent Scholar, Friend, and Co-Editor of the History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe

ON OCTOBER 4TH, 2015, I received a startling message from John Neubauer, my longtime friend and collaborator on several projects: “Dear old friend and ‘combat colleague’ we have been out of touch, on my side because in the last few months I have been fighting another losing battle, with the ALS (Lou Gehrig) disease....” The shocking revelation of my friend’s unforgiving illness was intensified by my understanding that his was in effect a farewell letter to me, that I was not going to meet John again the way I had so many times in past years.

Today, when his memory is deeply etched into my mind and the minds of so many of our colleagues, I am grateful to him for having left such an indelible mark on our memories and work. I was privileged to collaborate with him on a major publication project, the four-volume *History of Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2006–2010). As he emphasized in his presentation before the British Academy on December 17, 2010, this project took more than a decade to be developed after the first impetus received from Mario Valdés, Linda Hutcheon, and other colleagues in the 1996 University of Toronto meeting. Three years later, the core of contributors involved in this project benefited from a group fellowship at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study (NIAS), arranged by John Neubauer, where we developed fully the concept of a Comparative Literary History of East-Central Europe and secured a major publisher for the project, the John Benjamins Publishing Company.

During the strenuous process of commissioning articles from more than a hundred contributors, John and I had to confront a plethora of theoretical and practical problems that forced us to reconsider our general

concept at the start of each new volume. The initial idea of developing a single book-length work expanded later to four ample volumes, and the three years allotted originally to the project all but tripled. What looked like an impossible task for one editor became a welcome test for John and me. As John made clear in the December 17, 2010 presentation before the British Academy, “we stubbornly persisted in pursuing the project because we believed that all people in East-Central Europe—whatever their ethnicity, religion, language, or gender—had similar traumatic experiences, and that literature was a powerful means to deal with such memories.” What resulted was an ample four-volume work with some 150 contributors from Eastern and Western Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia, whose main effort was “to de-monumentalize, to disassemble petrified national myths and to question national memories that block the way towards transnational understanding.” As John argued further, “we do not inaugurate tonight a monument, but launch, instead, more fragile, more perishable books and ideas. We did not chisel our words into stone or etch them into metal, for we want to generate new books and new ideas that may, just may, continue to breathe new life into petrified literary and national traditions” (“Eurydice and the Sirens,” presentation before the British Academy, Dec. 17, 2010).

In 2010, John Neubauer and I completed the publication of the four-volume *History of the Literary Cultures of East Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004–2010), which explores East Central European literatures from a comparative-intercultural perspective. The four-volumes “scan” the history of the ECE literatures from five angles: 1) key political events, 2) literary periods and genres, 3) cities and regions, 4) literary institutions, and 5) real or imaginary figures.

Vol. I (published by John Benjamins in 2004) incorporates two of the five dimensions of the project: “(Literary) Nodes of Political Time” and “Histories of Literary Form.” The first, a politically informed literary history, is centered on key dates such as 1776/1789, 1848, 1867/1878/1881, 1918, 1945, 1948, 1956/1968, and 1989, arranged at John Neubauer’s advice in a reversed chronological order to avoid the impression that the region’s history was predictable and necessary. Each nodal date represents a “crossroad” at which the national narrative strands come together, shed light on each other, and relativize the national perspectives. The literary dimension of each temporal node has two aspects: the first deals with the

actual physical or literary participation of writers in the historical events, and the second with the literary remembering and transformation of these events in retrospect.

The second part of Vol. I, "Histories of Literary Form," reconsiders East-Central Europe's Western-inspired concepts of literary periods and genres. Such reconsideration is, in John's and my view, necessary for two main reasons. First, period and genre terms generally tend to function as straightjackets that simplify literary complexity. We try to mitigate the rigidity of these terms by focusing on their temporal shifts (hence our section titles, "Shifting Periods and Trends" and "Shifting Genres") and by foregrounding the specificity of the region's literary movements. Though we could not abandon the traditional terms, we have tried to minimize their use in our project: for example, we have replaced the usual Romanticism / Realism / Modernism / Postmodernism sequence with a flexible tripartite division of (1) National Awakening, (2) Modernism, and (3) Literature during the Soviet-controlled period. Most, if not all, national cultures in Eastern Europe went through these periods, though not always in synchrony with one another. A fourth, post-1989 transition period, with features still in flux, is treated in the Epilogue to vol. IV.

In considering genres, we have steered away from national or time-resistant notions (e.g., the "essence" of Polish poetry or of the Romanian novel), and focused instead on "boundary transgressions" that led to the emergence of such new (sub)genres as the reportage, the lyrical novel, fictionalized autobiography, parody, or literary theory. The same principle guided us in devoting a section to the medialization of literary culture in opera and film.

We have received a number of positive reviews of vol. I, including those published by Letitia Guran in *The Comparatist* 30 (2006): 129–36 (which discusses also vol. II); Andrew Wachtel in *The Slavonic and East European Review* 83.3 (1 July 2005): 522–23; Andrei Corbea in *Arcadia* 40.2 (January 2005): 479–81, and Dirk Uffelmann in *Kakanien* 1 (25 August 2005): 6 pages available at <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/rez/DUffelmann3.pdf>. Letitia Guran has devoted more than half of her article, "US-American Comparative Literature and the Study of East-Central European Culture and Literature" (*CLCWeb—Comparative Literature and Culture: A WWWeb Journal* 8.1 [2006]: 1–11) to a discussion of our ECE History. Andrew Baruch Wachtel has also made several references to our first volume in *Remaining Relevant after Communism. The Role of the*

Writer in Eastern Europe (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 7n, 30n, 38n, 143n. A review of vols. I-III, written by Florin Berindeanu was published in the *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 53 (2007): 227–32.

Volume II in the *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2006) focuses on topographic sites (cities, border areas, geocultural corridors, and sub-regions) with a multicultural and multiethnic history. In doing so, this volume intends to put into practice a new type of comparative study. Traditional comparative literary studies establish transnational comparisons and contrasts, but thereby reconfirm, perhaps inadvertently, the very national borders they try to deemphasize. This volume inverts the expansive move of comparative studies towards ever-broader regional, European, and world literary histories. While the general object of this volume is still the literary culture of East-Central Europe, the main focus is on foregrounded local traditions and on geographical nodal points. The literary histories of Riga, Plovdiv, Budapest and Timișoara, to name only a few, show how each of these cities was during the last two-hundred years also home for a variety of foreign or ethnic literary traditions next to the one now dominant within the national borders. By foregrounding these hybrid traditions, the editors call for a pluralization and, to a certain extent, “de-nationalization” of the national and local histories. A genuine comparatist revival of literary history will involve, in their view, the recognition that “treading on native grounds” means actually treading on grounds cultivated by diverse people (*History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe*, vol. II, 10).

The third volume (published in 2007) focuses on the making and remaking of those institutional structures that frame the creation, distribution, and reception of literature. We study here region-wide analogous processes that often ran asynchronously due to local conditions. The first part of the volume, “Publishing and Censorship,” includes its own, very thorough Introduction by John Neubauer (with Robert Pynsent, Vilmos Voigt, and Marcel Cornis-Pope) that focuses on national awakenings presented in the form of an extensive list of printers and publishers of newspapers, literary journals, and books going back as far as the sixteenth century. It then turns to the opening to modernist aesthetics (inspired in part by literary and artistic trends in France but acquiring a different orientation in East-Central Europe) that began in Poland with the Warsaw positivists and in Hungary. This trend became present in the 1890s

everywhere in the region. The region also saw the publication in 1877 of the world's first journal of comparative literature, the *Acta comparationis litterarum universarum* in Kolozsvár/Cluj (Transylvania).

The premise of vol. III is that, within East-Central Europe, the institutionalization of literature ran in tandem with the process of national awakening. Indeed, at the heart of a national awakening we find processes of institutionalizing and nationalizing literature: language renewal, the introduction of the vernacular and its literature in schools and universities, the building of an infrastructure for the publication of books and journals, the imposition of national and political censorship, the establishment of national academies, libraries, and theaters, the promotion of national folklore, and the writing of histories of the vernacular literature. Vol. III of our *History* focuses more specifically on four dimensions of literature's institutional history: (1) Publishing and Censorship, (2) Theater as a Literary Institution, (3) Forging Primal Pasts: The Uses of Folk Poetry, and (4) Literary Histories: Itineraries of National Self-Images. As the second phase in the region's literary history, Modernism reopened slightly the window to the world that nationalism had tended to narrow or close, and it added a few new literary forms and institutions (e.g., the cabaret), but it did not fundamentally change the institutional structures that came about during the period of nation forming. By contrast, the political systems introduced in the region after World War II repositioned virtually all literary institutions on an ideological basis that was itself subject to change over time.

One important area our four-volume literary history focuses on is the emergence of the region's independent nations, and on the literary dimensions of the modern ethnic-national conflicts that resulted from the rise of national movements. Conversely, our *History* also considers the alternative transnational trends that have animated both local sites and the larger ECE region, challenging narrow national and ethnic investments in literature. In our discussion we have tried to avoid both an assimilative notion of globalism that perceives an "unqualified multiplicity of cultures without positing ways for them to interact meaningfully" (Ellen E. Berry and Mikhail Epstein, *Transcultural Experiments: Russian and American Models of Creative Communication*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, 97) and a defensive localism or nationalism that unconditionally promotes one's own culture, ethnicity, and origin. The localist and globalist approaches resemble each other insofar as they

treat cultural difference in an essentialist way, as something fixed and unchanging. In contrast, we have emphasized with the very subtitle of our *History* the need “to rearticulate East-Central European literary history around a transnational approach that foregrounds *disjunctures* as much as *junctures* in the literatures of the area, emphasizing the interplay of specific regional features without dissolving them in a European or universal melting pot” (*History* vol. I, 34).

The fourth volume, focused on “Types and Stereotypes,” considers cultural “figures” rather than institutions, general policies, and trends. We have chosen the term figure precisely because of its multiple meanings. In a narrow sense, we use it to refer to actual historical figures and literary characters as types and stereotypes. But the term is also relevant to our project in the sense of linguistic “figure,” as a rhetorical transposition or transformation: national poets, glorified political leaders, legendary outlaws, and quasi-mythic figures like Dracula and the golem are such transformations, fashioned at times by historical individuals, but more often and more powerfully, by the popular, social, or national collective imagination. In a yet broader sense, we regard figures as personifications of abstract notions such as nation, freedom, nature, or slavery. The subtitle of the fourth volume, “Types and Stereotypes,” indicates the two directions from which we treat figures. A type, in one of the meanings listed in the OED, is “a person or a thing that exhibits the characteristic qualities of a class; a representative specimen; a typical example or instance.” Though we have become very much aware of the pitfalls of representing classes of things by means of a single term, type thus defined still differs from stereotype, which foregrounds categorizations from a distorted, individual or collective, subjective perspective.

After discussions with John Neubauer, we chose from a range of possibilities seven categories of “figures” for vol. IV: “Figures of National Poets,” “Figurations of the Family,” “Figures of Female Identity,” “Figures of the Other,” “Figures of Outlaws,” “Figures of Trauma,” and “Figures of Mediation.” Since we have briefly characterized each category in the introduction to the respective Section, we want to add here only that we do not regard figures as static but as subjects that enter, grow, decline, and vanish from the literary realm through canonization, suppression, and mediatic transformation. Given their plural regional positioning they represent dynamic, even “nomadic” subjects, i.e., subjects that have undergone territorial and cultural displacements and repositioning, have

historically been challenged by hegemonic groups, or have been excluded, as in the case of the Roma, from existing territorial hierarchies through a process of othering. Questioning the identity politics of traditional national histories, our fourth volume, much like the previous three, redefines the East-Central European subjects and their cultural institutions as dialogical, a product of *regional interaction*.

Volume IV ends with an Epilogue that follows the region's history beyond 1989, the final nodal point of our project. The section includes analyses by Boyko Penchev and Alexander Kyossev on Bulgarian literature, John Neubauer and Mihaly Szegedy-Maszák on Hungarian literature, Dagmar Roberts on Slovak literature, Karl Jirgens on Latvian literature, Arturas Tereskinas on Lithuanian literature, Andaluna Borcilā and Marta Bladek on narratives of post-1989 returns, among others. The narrative embedded in the Epilogue, much like the story preceding it, is a divided one. On the one hand, the collapse of the Iron Curtain freed East-Central European writers from the traditional censorship and allowed them to enter into closer contact with the larger European and world literary circuits. Writers could now travel more or less freely. But, as John and I argue in the General Introduction to vol. IV, vanishing state subsidies, the introduction of unrestrained commercialism, and the generally diminished interest in literature have thrown theaters, publishers, journals, and educational institutions into crisis. For some writers, this meant straddling languages, cultural experiences, and geographic boundaries, in order to promote what Franca Sinopoli calls a "poetics of intercultural translation" ("Migrazione/letteratura: due proposte di indagine critica," <http://ww3.comune.fe.it/vocidalsilenzio/sinopoli.htm>).

The four volumes of the ECE History offer new conceptual and methodological approaches that have inspired other multinational historical projects emerging during the last decade. One particular area that the editors and contributors have focused on is women's literature and media studies. A whole section in vol. IV focuses on "Figures of Female Identity," emphasizing, in my own introduction to the section, the important role played by women writers in the redefinition of the national and regional canon. Latvian poetic drama, for example, is circumscribed by the work of two women writers, Aspazija (pseudonym of Elza Rozenberga) at the beginning of the twentieth century, and Māra Zālīte towards the end of it (see Banuta Rubess, "Kicking with Poetry: Female Trailblazers on the Latvian Stage" in our *History* vol. III, 211–13).

Likewise, Natalia Dumitrescu, Saloméja Nėris, Margit Kaffka, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, and others played an important role also in the twentieth-century modernist movement and the interwar avant-garde. Women also challenged the dogmatic culture of the Stalinist and post-Stalinist period, adopting the role of “internal emigrants,” as in the case of Hana Ponická and Ana Blandiana, who were able to publish for a while only in samizdat. Other women writers contributed significantly to the development of an alternative feminist literary canon. An important narrative revision of the patriarchal foundations of communist culture can be found in the late twentieth-century fiction of Gabriela Adameșteanu, Krystyna Kofta, and Liudmila Petrushevskaja, but their work breaks away from all grand narratives, including those of nationalism still important to Aspazija, to accommodate a stronger focus on female experience. Adameșteanu’s *Dimineața pierdută* (Wasted Morning; Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1983), for example, responded to the deterioration of Romanian social life and discourse under Ceaușescu with a complex interplay of narrative perspectives that attempted to recover areas of reality overlooked by official discourse. This recovery was to a great extent “female,” attentive to details of life and emphasizing oral narration, a diary approach, or subjective monologue.

John Neubauer and I were happy to read that in Wlad Godzich’s view our fourth volume “breaks new ground in the field of literary history by addressing topics that are frequently left out of such endeavors” and that “the volume more than lives up to the expectations its announcement had aroused” (Reader’s Report, April 2, 2010). Earlier in his review of the third volume of the ECE project in *Rampike* 16, no. 2 (2008): 78–79, Fausto Bedoya emphasized the fact that in his view

this scholarly compendium assembles cutting-edge knowledge by some of the foremost experts in the field. What is particularly remarkable about this Volume is the inter-connectedness and breadth of scholarship assembled around the key or ‘nodal’ points of culture, a departure from more traditional, linear-minded and individualistic modes of scholarship. The scholarly research in this compendium is meticulous, detailed and accurate, a testament not only to the collaborating authors but to the editing skills of John Neubauer and Marcel Cornis-Pope. (78)

In his later review of vol. IV of the project, Fausto Bedoya underscored the remarkable insights of the scholars involved in this project “into the extraordinary deprivations and remarkable achievements of this region”

(*Rampike* 20, no. 2 [2010]: 79). In his own review published in *Akcent* (Lublin), pp. 146–48, Marek Paryz argues that the ECE Literary History is, in more ways than one, “an exceptional publication. The project’s range and the diversity of the topics covered are impressive. The informative value of the articles collected therein is immense. The authors of the essays remind us of the role of the East-Central European writers in the world literary canon. Lastly, the *History of the Literary Cultures* may well turn out to be a priceless scholarly inspiration, proving the nearly limitless possibilities of comparative criticism” (148).

For Monika Baár, who reviewed our ECE *History* in *Comparative Critical Studies* 4, no. 3 (2007): 467–68, this work is

a significant and monumental venture.... Authored by a team of international experts, it aims to offer a new direction in the study of East-Central European literature over the last two hundred years. The project attempts to re-conceptualize literary traditions in the region by deconstructing national myths and focusing on common themes, thereby opening up perspectives which are routinely overlooked in traditional national literary histories.... Apart from the novelty and sheer richness of material, along with the impressive expertise of its authors, another virtue of *History* is that literary cultures in the region are analysed on their own terms, rather than in a purely derivative way, as determined by their relationship to the mainstream European canon.... Given the ambitious scope and large number of contributors, some discontinuity is inevitable. Nevertheless, the richness of the material makes up for occasional unevenness, and such shortcomings do not spoil the fact that *History* is a trendsetter and launches a novel route into the subject, one which scholars will want to follow and explore in the future.

Finally here is a quote from Vladímir Biti’s review published in *Knjižna republika* (Zagreb) 5–7 (2008): 317–23:

With the special praise for the conceptualization of cultural borders as lines that both connect and divide, the conclusion forces itself upon us that the breakup of identities— which this project on East-Central Europe has partly aimed at—has far-reaching consequences for just about all key concepts of traditional literary-history writing: transnational and national identity, literature, culture, and history.... [I]n spite of its understandable imbalance between the various segments, [this project] raises important questions concerning the writing of literary and cultural history today, and it deserves therefore unusually serious attention.

Clearly, as these reviews of John Neubauer's work and mine suggest, the *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* contributes to literary studies as, a) an experiment in writing new kinds of literary histories; b) as a pioneering effort to conceptualize the possibilities and problems of regional literary histories; and, c) as the first transnational literary history of East-Central Europe. As John Neubauer was fond to say, our project responds to previous types of literary history, especially the organicist narratives of the romantic tradition which encouraged unified, consistent, and reliable narrators and narratives. By contrast, we have emphasized the dialogic nature of literary history, replacing traditional "grand narratives" with multi-perspectival narratives that often emphasize parallel stories. In many of these parallel stories John Neubauer features as our dear friend, collaborator and mentor, a brilliant mind that we need to celebrate by keeping his work alive.

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Rapports de colloques / Conference Reports

Comparativism, a True Jesuit and the Spread of Literary Thought: Belletristic Translation as a Means of Cultural-Spiritual Dialogue

Eleventh International Conference of the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature

September 27 – September 29, 2015

The international conference entitled “Belletristic Translation: A Means of Cultural-Spiritual Dialogue or a Tool of Acculturation?” was hosted by the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature (EACL) in cooperation with The University of Tartu from September 27–29, 2015. The biannual conferences of EACL are organised by a team led by Jüri Talvet, Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Tartu, who introduced and firmly established comparative literary studies as a field of research and teaching in Estonia. The 2015 conference was meant to celebrate Professor Jüri Talvet’s seventieth birthday. First as a young lecturer and subsequently as a Professor of World Literature (since 1992), Talvet always was a strong advocate for the teaching and studying of Estonian literature in the wider framework of world literary studies. It would be difficult to underestimate Talvet’s contribution in transforming a static and history-oriented field called “foreign literature” during the Soviet period into a forward-looking and successful discipline characterized by its focus on comparativism. The central theme of the 2015 conference, translation, i.e. the dialogues as well as monologues between cultures and literatures created by means of translation, was by no means an arbitrary choice. First and foremost, translational activity has been of pivotal importance

to Talvet's pilgrimage as a cultural ambassador, a scholar, and a poet. His missionary work, which sought to introduce Estonian culture to literary masterpieces of the Spanish-speaking world (Calderón, Tirso de Molina, Gracián, Quevedo, and Vargas Llosa among many others) can indeed be compared to the work of a good Jesuit—the propagation of his literary faith by any means possible. The same can be said for Talvet's deep and abiding interest in translating Estonian poetry into different languages, his current project focusing on researching and translating, with the help of various researchers and translators, the works of the most well-known early Estonian poet Juhan Liiv. No less importantly, translational activity is a major activating force in the cultural life of a small country such as Estonia. We borrow, adapt, and accommodate with an aim to build something new and unique.

In an increasingly global context, the term *world literature* always implicitly involves translation in multiple ways. Firstly, the term as such is a translation of J. W. Goethe's *Weltliteratur*, and secondly, the literature of the world reaches most readers through translations. In this sense, the importance of studying translational activities in the context of the spread and development of the field of world literature can hardly be underestimated. The travelling of texts, cultural exchanges and the dissemination of ideas, concepts and ideologies takes place by means of translation, described either in terms of Roman Jakobson's (1959) tertiary division of interlingual (translation proper), intralingual (rewording), or intersemiotic (translation from one sign system to another) or understood as a form of interpretation, as Umberto Eco suggests (2003). In his *What Is World Literature?* (2003), David Damrosch aptly argues that world literature has more to do with the circulation and reception of works in our constantly changing world than about national or international canons. The 2015 conference focused precisely on this notion of translation as a vehicle for such a circulation between source and receiving cultures. This form of exchange often leaves visible traces of imbalanced power relations, cultural hegemony and political or personal agendas.

Professor Dorothy Figueira's keynote address "Doing God's Work: The Missionary Task of the Translator or Who Makes the Best Jesuits: Comparatists, World Literature Scholars or Real Jesuits?" set the stage for the entire conference. It provided all participants with a powerful image of a translator-Jesuit who engages in the missionary work of spreading the Word by using any means and resources available and adapting

to various environments and circumstances. Yet, this often ends up in a delicate situation because of the inadequacy of translation practices. There is, however, a thin borderline between the genuine wish to enrich a culture, thereby providing variety and helping to create uniqueness, and cultural colonisation. A good Jesuit always maintains a critical distance towards his practices, thus holding a balance between the local and the global, the original and the imported.

The first plenary session following the keynote address was devoted to a major on-going project—the compilation of an *Estonian Translation History Reader*. This project brings together different Estonian translation studies scholars. It is spurred by the need to research and map aspects of Estonian literary translation history through texts concerned with the practice of translation into Estonian as it evolved throughout history. The presentations of the panel explored the different topics of the *Reader*. Katiliina Gielen, the initiator of the project, introduced the general theoretical concepts of compiling a history through texts as well as the practical problems of the project against the backdrop of other national histories of translation. Referring to Estonian translators, Elin Sütiste's paper concentrated on a fraught issue throughout Estonian (or any other) translation history, i.e. what translators should or should not do. Maria-Kristiina Lotman presented her research into Estonian poetry translation norms. She examined the change of such norms on the basis of translation criticism. Klaarika Kaldjärv analyzed the relation between translation theory and the antagonism to theory manifest in texts in which Estonian practicing translators expressed their views at different points in time.

The conference then proceeded with two different panel sessions. It is worth mentioning that EACL conferences always comprise different language sessions, French, Spanish, and German being the official languages beside English. On this occasion, the Spanish section was presided by a Spanish poet and literary scholar, Professor Jenaro Talens (Université de Genève, Universitat de València) who dealt with translational issues concerning *El Dragón de Gales* series. The German language section was represented by Terje Loogus (University of Tartu) with a presentation entitled “Was ist eine Munterkanne oder was macht einen guten Literaturübersetzer aus?” Such multiplicity of languages of is also a characteristic of *Interlitteraria*, the peer-reviewed journal of the Estonian Association for Comparative Literature, published at the University of Tartu.

The Baltic countries were represented by two Lithuanian scholars, Gintar Bernotien and Asta Vaškėlien, both from the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore, and by Pauls Daija from Riga at the University of Latvia. G. Bernotien focused on the manipulation of translation during the Soviet period, choosing as an example the Lithuanian modernist poet Judita Vaiškaitė. Asta Vaškėlien, a classical scholar, addressed the issue of occasional poetry in Latin in eighteenth-century Lithuania. Pauls Daija's examined popular and elitist trends in the history of Latvian translations during the early nineteenth century. Historical topics were also foregrounded in a talk by Professor Anne-Marie Baillif (Université Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée), who fruitfully reflected on the position of the translator in French culture, connecting the often anonymous medieval translational practices to a very contemporary question about the agency of translation. Comparing the translator's position to that of an interpreter of a musical composition, Baillif asked whether the translator is appreciated in the same way.

The conference also brought together various Estonian scholars from different research institutions. Marin Laak, (Estonian Museum of Literature) discussed the translation of the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg* by Estonians in exile, referring to the practice of translation as a tool against acculturation. Rutt Hinrikus, a well-known Estonian scholar of life writing, delivered an insightful paper entitled "A Journey toward the Ideal Library"; Anneli Kõvamees (Tallinn University) concentrated on the reception of a contemporary Estonian Russian novelist, Andrei Ivanov, whose Russian-language Estonian prose has moved from the periphery to a central position in the Estonian literary landscape. In addition, the University of Tartu, the host institution, was well represented. Raili Marling, working in the field of discourse analysis and American literature, presented a paper on the translation of Hemingway into Estonian. Eva Rein read a paper entitled "The Reception of Asian Canadian Writing in Estonian Translation." Katre Talviste presented an interesting case study on the translation as well as the rise and decline of the popularity of Diderot in Estonian. Silke Pasewalk analysed the connection between the visibility of the literary translator and the economic conditions of translating.

The conference culminated in a panel gathering three poet-translator-scholars: Harvey L. Hix (University of Wyoming, US), Miriam Anne McIlpatrick-Ksenofontov (Tallinn University, Estonia) and, the organiser

of the conference, Professor Jüri Talvet himself. The topics of this panel turned the general focus of the conference, i.e. translating into a target culture, to translating from a small source culture without any specific target in mind. M. A. McIlfatrick-Ksenofontov, a prolific translator of Estonian poetry into English, talked about agency, intentionality and creativity in the poetry of Ciarán Carson and its translations. Harvey L. Hix, on the other hand, presented a very philosophical paper about the role of translation in expanding the collective sense of the concept of possibility. According to Hix, the medium of economic exchange, presupposing a world-view in which everything has an equivalent, homogenizes and distorts value. He contrasted it to the medium of cultural exchange. The latter, as it occurs through language, embraces value in its full variety and preserves particularity. In his presentation, Jüri Talvet followed in the wake of Hix by expressing the necessity for a poetic resistance of minority cultures, giving as examples his translations of minor Chinese poets into Estonian using an intermediary English, or his projects of translating the works of the Estonian writer Juhan Liiv into the contemporary *lingua franca*—English.

The Eleventh International EACL conference was successful on many different levels. First and foremost, it enabled its participants to return to the basics of the concept of world literature and comparatism. It favoured a re-examination of the means enabling cultural dialogues (translation), of the texts travelling across linguistic borders (specific translations), and, most importantly, of the people behind these exchanges (translators). Moreover, it valorized translation, more often than not considered as an ancillary activity, and firmly placed it at the center of scholarly debates. The conference acknowledged the role of translation as a separate form of writing, not exempt from manipulation through personal agendas. It also concluded that translators are sometimes unable to step out of their immediate cultural contexts. These considerations will help us keep a critical perspective on our practices and behaviour as translators and consumers of translations. Finally, the 2015 EACL conference brought together colleagues and friends from different parts of the world to honour our true Jesuit—Professor Jüri Talvet.

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Report from the Beat Frontlines

Fourth Annual Meeting of the European Beat Studies Network, Université Libre de Bruxelles

October 28–31, 2015

Despite vastly different models of reception from one country to the next, European critics and academics tended to appreciate much earlier than their North American counterparts the countercultural lifestyle and poetic experimentalism of the Beat Generation. Besides feeling that their existential and aesthetic quest post WWII was often celebrated more in Europe than on their home ground, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs, Gregory Corso, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti also actively visited and revisited the European continent, drawing sustenance in both life and writing from its Romantic heritage and that of the various historical avant-gardes.

Unsurprisingly therefore, it is in Europe too that one of the most vibrant networks devoted to the understanding of the Beat Generation and its legacy actually saw the day in 2010. Since then, the European Beat Studies Network, founded by Oliver Harris (U of Keele) and Polina MacKay (U of Cyprus), has continued to grow, attracting scholars and artists from both sides of the Atlantic. Having previously congregated in Middelburg (The Netherlands, 2012), Aalborg (Denmark, 2013) and Tangiers (Morocco, 2014), the EBSN chose Brussels, Belgium for the fourth edition of its Annual Meeting. From October 28–31, 2015, more than 65 presenters and attendees gathered at the Université Libre de Bruxelles to engage and exchange over four days of presentations, performances and film screenings. Speakers came from countries as diverse as the UK, France, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Mexico, India, Canada, and the US.

As usual, the programme featured a variety of approaches representative of the diversity within the EBSN. However, since the Brussels meeting shortly followed the sixtieth anniversary of the landmark public reading of the first section of “Howl” at the Six Gallery on October 13, 1955, several panels celebrated and re-assessed the combined energies unleashed by the figure of Allen Ginsberg and by the alternative spirit of San Francisco, driving forces that ensured the enduring cultural impact of the Beat Generation today.

The two keynote speakers inspiring and dynamizing the debate were American poet and performer Anne Waldman, author of over forty books of poetry, and the American, but British-based scholar Daniel Kane (U of Sussex). With Ginsberg, who referred to her as his “spiritual wife,” Waldman co-founded and co-directed the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University. Though her poetry fuses several of the major experimental strands within contemporary American poetics, Waldman crucially stands in the lineage of the Beats for her explorations of states of consciousness and her attention to the wild ground of the mind, as well as for her development of a Buddhist, ecological, and spoken word poetics. As a specialist of the American poetic avant-garde, including its continued dialogue with popular music, Daniel Kane is the author of the seminal “*All Poets Welcome*”: *The Lower East Side Poetry Scene in the 1960s* (The U of California P, 2003).

Carried by the energies of these two keynotes, many contributors decoded the Beat past or offered contemporary responses to the Beats by privileging comparative perspectives, focusing either on the interactions between Europe and the US in the unfolding and reception of Beat creativity, or on the complex cross-fertilizations between East and West in Beat spiritual and aesthetic experimentation.

In the field of comparative poetics, several papers highlighted the national reception of the Beats, explaining how their particularly American style of cultural and compositional subversion was appropriated and transformed in various European countries/regions like Portugal (paper by Nuno Miguel Neves), Turkey (Cansu Soyupak), the Netherlands (Jaap Van der Bent), Flemish-speaking Belgium (Gregory Watson), Poland (Anna Wyrwik), the Czech Republic (Petra James-Krivankova) and Finland (Harri Veivo).

Conversely, a number of contributions shed new light on the debts of the Beats to European writers and figures, a research area that is actually anything but exhausted: Franca Bellarsi showed the need to re-assess afresh the Beats’ connection to Francophone literature, their ongoing, mutual nurturing remaining much misunderstood in the Anglophone world; Lisa Stein Haven developed Ginsberg’s Chaplin fetish; Thom Robinson explored Burroughs’s debts to English writer and painter Denton Welch; Diana Schreier analysed how *On the Road* was influenced by the French picaresque novel; Bent Sørensen examined the connections between Burroughs and Freud; and Hassan Melehy read the Beat Generation through the filter of Gilles Deleuze.

On the more provocative side, a handful of papers re-evaluated Beat writings from a more postcolonial perspective: Alexander Greiffenstern compared and contrasted Kerouac's *On the Road* with Jacques Poulin's Canadian road narrative *Volkswagen Blues* and with Oscar Acosta's Chicano one, *Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo*. James MacKay concentrated on Leslie Marmon Silko's attack on Gary Snyder in what turned out to be a highly challenging (and hotly debated) paper presenting Beat writing as another form of "settler colonial literature"; and Ben Heal looked at the Beat's anti-imperialist sensibilities and how they manifest in Burroughs's subversion of stereotypical constructions of Chinese identities.

Another important comparative trend within Beat studies is the one of intermediality studies, with Beat literature being brought in dialogue with music, on the one hand, and the visual arts, on the other. As a topic that never ceases to fascinate, the Ginsberg-Blake connection still continues to undergo refinement and revision: Bruno Fontes delved further into the matrix of complex links that exist between Blake's own illuminations of his poetry and Ginsberg's very personal tuning of *Songs of Innocence and Experience*. Other papers developed more contemporary takes on the Beats and the sonic arts, the cross-fertilization between Beat texts and rock lyrics (Peggy Pacini, Simon Warner) proving a much expanding area of study at the moment.

A still different type of cross-pollination, the one between Beat texts and Oriental philosophies, featured in a series of truly groundbreaking papers at the intersection between literature and religious studies. Luke Walker highlighted Ginsberg's genuinely advanced, if much underrated, understanding of Gnosticism, while Geetanjali Mishra presented the influence of the Aghori ascetic cult on Ginsberg, a little known facet of the latter's stay in India. West Coast poet Paul Nelson approached the Beats through two other unusual Asian reading grids, the ones of Hua-yen Buddhism and Indonesian Latihan spirituality. Last but not least, Ewan Clark foregrounded the often marginalized figure of Lew Welch and interpreted his poetry of reclusion through the prism of the Oriental Hermitic tradition.

Two Canadian film makers also vitally contributed to the comparative vigour of the EBSN proceedings. Skyping into the conference, Robert McTavish commented on his documentary, *The Line Has Shattered: Vancouver's Landmark 1963 Poetry Conference*, a screening which revealed the extent to which Ginsberg and other US poets helped Canadian verse unshackle itself and create its own experimental space from the sixties onwards. The second film projection premiered Trevor Carolan's

documentary *Powerground*, a film bringing writers from the Cascadia region into the limelight as well as showing the impact that Ginsberg and Gary Snyder have had on the development of a local environmental consciousness and activism. Carolan's film also extended the paper that he had earlier given on the cross-pollination between Asian Wisdom traditions and Ginsberg's ecological poetics.

Taken together, these extremely diverse contributions all highlight the importance of comparative literature and studies in helping Beat scholarship break new and deeper ground. Research on the Beat Generation may appear at first to be a very specialized niche; however, it turns out to be anything but a closed and parochial one thanks to the new perspectives which increasingly globalized and internationalist approaches have been bringing to the field in recent years.

Interestingly too, the comparative dimension and the ongoing fertility of the US-Europe-Asia interrelated trails were far from absent from the more purely creative contributions that punctuated the conference. As part of the poetry and music evening on Thursday night, Anne Waldman gave a mesmerizing solo performance which once more foregrounded the fusion between East and West in a form of poetry that has become a Tantric exercise and ritual in its own right. In addition, she also engaged in a bilingual tandem reading with her French translator Vincent Broqua. Another performer was David Giannoni, founder of the Brussels-based Maelström company, and who in recent years has played a pivotal role in bringing international Beat voices to the Belgian capital. Adding to the still dynamic connection between Europe and the Beats, the Chicago-based performance group, The Muttering Sickness, had Davis Schneiderman and Joshua Corey enacting their own response to Ginsberg's "Kaddish" in a new piece that directly came out of the visit they had made to Auschwitz in the days prior to the conference. Closing the fourth Annual Meeting of the EBSN on Saturday with a verse sequence especially commissioned for it, "Ever Feral and Chiral: the Howl," American poet Arpine Konyalian Grenier offered another contemporary, highly personal response to Ginsberg, the fluid hybridity of her verbal tapestry interweaving scientific and poetic discourse with the fractured quests and ever unstable identities forged in the crucible of her joint Armenian, American and Jewish experiences.

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Cosmopolis and Beyond: Literary Cosmopolitanism after the Republic of Letters

A conference organized by Stefano Evangelista (Trinity College) with the assistance of Clément Dessy (English Faculty) held at Trinity College, Oxford University

March 18–19, 2016

This recent international conference, which gathered more than thirty contributors from seven different countries, was the conclusion of an important AHRC-funded project *The Love of Strangers: Literary Cosmopolitanism in the English Fin de Siècle*, led by Stefano Evangelista (Trinity College, Oxford University). Embracing the widest definition of literary cosmopolitanism and observing its different possible applications in a global context, the event aimed to go beyond the borders of the English-speaking area and the Fin de Siècle. Two graduate workshops explored some related concepts in preparation for the conference: “Literary Cosmopolitanism: Theory and Practice,” coorganised with Ana Parejo Vadillo at Birkbeck College, and “World Literature: Towards Cosmopolitan Literary Studies,” coorganised with Emily Eells at the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense. Several selected doctoral students participating in these workshops were given an opportunity to present their own research at the conference.

From two different perspectives—from the point of view of migration studies and the translation market—the invited keynote speakers Emily Apter (New York University) and Gisèle Sapiro (EHESS, Paris) gave very inspiring and wide-ranging lectures dealing with the concept of transnationalism and its limits through the vehicles of languages and translations. Ten sessions focused on both case studies and theoretical definitions in an area encompassing several continents and in a period spanning from the nineteenth century to nowadays. By examining very rich and diverse examples, most of the thirty speakers showed the invigorating strength of the concept of cosmopolitanism in literary studies. However, they also foregrounded its ambiguous status due to its complex relationship with the concept of nationalism.

Most sessions focused on the ways, indeed one might say the “tools,” used by writers to move beyond their national borders or to develop their cosmopolitan ideas. These tools can rely on concrete material like international networks or periodicals (“Cultural Translations,” “Cosmopolitan Literary Exchange in the Transnational Press,” “Networks, Systems, Connections”), on intellectual exchanges through overarching scientific or political discourses (“Science Across Borders,” “Politics and Society,” “Colonialism/Postcolonialism”) or even on a sense of cultural community and identity (“The Metropolis and its Others,” “Different Hybridities,” “Bodies and Social Spaces” and “Decadent Cosmopolitanism and Sexual Dissidence in the Early Twentieth Century”). These sessions also showed how strategies and exclusions, specific orientations and ideologies, are often implicitly hidden behind public claims of openness to foreign cultures and literatures. The two-day conference ended with a roundtable discussion placing in conversation Emily Apter, Elleke Boehmer, Richard Hibbitt, and Galin Tihanov. The theoretical debates of this roundtable session brought all contributions to the conference into a form of collective conclusion.

The conference papers were recorded and they are now made accessible on the podcasts website of the University of Oxford.¹ You can also find the link to these podcasts as well as the complete programme by browsing the conference website: cosmopolisandbeyond.wordpress.com. The organisers, Stefano Evangelista and his assistant Clément Dessy, are very keen to develop further their research on literary cosmopolitanism and they warmly invite any interested person to contact them.

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1. See <https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/cosmopolis-and-beyond-literary-cosmopolitanism-after-republic-letters>.

A Cosmopolitan Conference

Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association

March 17–20, 2016

The Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association was held on March 17–20, 2016 at Harvard University. While the meeting is traditionally well-attended, this particular event provided a notable demonstration as to the continued support for the comparative fields: the conference was attended by a record number of scholars who gathered from over sixty countries in order to meet, discuss, and connect. Karen L. Thornber (Harvard University, US), the 2016 ACLA Conference Chair, noted that in addition to the wide variety of innovative fields represented at this year's conference, the meeting also garnered the largest number of seminar applications. The increasing globalization of the ACLA meeting thus appears to be finding an appreciative scholarly audience, something that bespeaks the overall importance of globalized comparativism. It is no surprise, then, that at such a meeting, the ICLA membership would have multiple opportunities to connect with and participate in ICLA-affiliated meetings and seminars.

The full program for the meeting—complete with its 322 seminars!—is archived online in a readily accessible PDF at the following web address: http://acla.org/sites/default/files/files/Full_Program_Guide_2016.pdf. I provide this here so that those interested in determining the details of a particular person, group, or topic can easily access a searchable version of the program. And while it is very tempting to delve into the various topics available (a wealth of interesting seminars filled with intriguing papers), for our purposes here I will constrain myself to covering just a few conference highlights, focusing on those items of particular interest to the ICLA.

The meeting began with a number of pre-conference workshops, several of which were focused around questions regarding the current and future aspects of the comparative literature field. That evening featured a keynote address by the engaging Ursula Heise (University of California, Los Angeles, US), who titled her address “Species Fictions.” In it, Prof. Heise focused on the relationship between comparative literature and the challenge of the non-human, the anthropocene and the

species question, local and global species stories, ultimately making the argument that there are other models besides the anthropocene available today that could be employed with greater theoretical deft. According to Prof. Heise, the anthropocene model's focus on the human as actor smooths over the more complex nature of relationship between the human and the world; her use of the work of the American novelist Lydia Millet to develop and explore the literary flattening of the human and non-human was particularly useful.

A second plenary panel was held on the third day of the conference, this time featuring Sandra Bermann (Princeton University, US), Stephen Owen (Harvard University, US), with David Damrosch (Harvard University, US) as moderator. Prof. Owen's remarks, titled "Don't Look Back," discussed the changing role of technology within the university setting and the ways in which technologies can be used to open up (and keep up with) the continual change that structures modernity's reality. The past, he argues, is translated into the present experience through the advent of technologies of representation in a continual process of reintegration. Prof. Bermann, speaking on "Poetry, Translation, Memory," chose to address the ways in which we integrate the past into the present study of literatures today. She advocated for an understanding of the importance of the realities of migration and their effect, both literary and lived, on the texture of modernity, and for the need to recognize the role of translation in this modernity. Prof. Damrosch then guided an engaging discussion in which both panelists further addressed the need to continue to keep integration, migration, and translation at the forefront of the continued conversations on the increasingly global nature of the comparative fields.

Several meetings were held which were of particular significance to the ICLA. The ICLA Research Committee on Religion, Ethics, and Literature as well as the ICLA Research Committee on Translation each held a business meeting during the lunch portion of the second day of the conference. Each committee chair extended an open invitation for interested parties to join the research committee, which received an enthusiastic response from the numerous attendees. It was readily apparent that the research committees had attracted the attention of scholars at all points in their academic careers, and it is anticipated that the growth of each will continue as the committees refine their focus and plan their upcoming projects. Each will have participants at the 2016 ICLA Congress in Vienna.

The research committees also sponsored corresponding ACLA seminar sessions. “Religion, Ethics, and Literature I: Secular Redemptions” produced a number of interesting submissions, such as “Fear and Trembling: Defining Genre, Defining Faith” by Rosemary Demos (The Graduate Center, City University of New York, US) and “An Ethics for Missing Persons” by committee chair Kitty Millet (San Francisco State University, US). The discussions here brought up questions of the immanence of grace as well as whether the ethical can also be seen as having a communal focus in addition to the normative individual focus. The Religion, Ethics, and Literature research committee also sponsored a second seminar, “Religion, Ethics, and Literature II: Performance, Politics, Aesthetics.” This seminar attracted number of submissions on Sanskrit drama, including former ICLA president Dorothy Figueira’s (University of Georgia, US) “Emotion in Greek and Sanskrit Drama,” which examined the way in which Indian dramatists minimized their use of fear as part of an aesthetic expression focused on moving the viewer away from the personal in order to experience the liberation of the universal.

The chair of the Translation research committee, Sandra Bermann (Princeton University, US), also chaired a seminar: “Engaging Publics In and Through Translation.” Here, it was interesting to note the particularly globalized nature of the papers given. For example, topics ranged from the translingual practice of Lydia Lui (Chen Wang [University of Minnesota, US]) to a performance art approach to Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Isabel Gómez [University of California, Los Angeles, US]) to issues surrounding the translation of a public contemporary Hebrew poem into a private network (Adriana Jacobs [University of Oxford, UK]) to translation as activism (Marlene Esplin [Brigham Young University, US]). The discussions proved both theoretically rich as well as practically applicable, aptly demonstrating the benefits of a global comparativism when addressing the complex networks, nodes, and narrators involved in translation studies. Prof. Bermann also reiterated her invitation to those interested in joining the work of the committee.

Having the ICLA so well represented throughout conference makes an important point regarding the relationship between the ICLA and the independent national organizations: connections between such organizations are mutually beneficial. Comparativism flourishes when people are given the chance to connect with those whom they would otherwise potentially never meet. Just as the ACLA meeting here provided fertile

ground for the comparative work of the ICLA, so too the work of the ICLA research committees gave ACLA participants a chance to converse and connect. In my opinion, it is worth seeking out such opportunities, mindful of the overlapping roles (and organizations) we may move in in order to aid both our own scholarship as well as strengthen the continued relevance of the exercise of comparative literature itself.

The experience of the ACLA annual meeting was, as always, both incredibly invigorating as well as potentially overwhelming. The number of participants provides ample means for connection and conversation, and the wide variety of seminars and events ensures that anyone in attendance is sure to find pertinent and engaging discussions. The danger, of course, is that it is also easy to attend such events while skimming the surface. I hope that as a scholarly community we can continue to work for connection over convenience. As was made clear at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, comparativism works best on the macro and the micro scale simultaneously: a wealth of both topics and people when taken as a whole, and a refreshing wellspring when seen individually.

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Nouvelles des comités de recherche / News from the Research Committees

Co-Ordinating Committee of the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages (CHLEL)

As of the Paris 2014 ICLA General Assembly the composition of the Co-ordinating Committee responsible for CHLEL was as follows:

OFFICERS

President: Professor **Marcel Cornis-Pope**, English Department, Virginia Commonwealth University, US, mcornis@vcu.edu

Vice-President: Professor **Theo D'haen**, English & Comparative Literature, Leuven University, Belgium, theo.dhaen@kuleuven.be

Secretary: Professor **César Domínguez**, Dept. of Spanish Literature, Theory of Literature and Language, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Spain, cesar.dominguez@usc.es

Treasurer: Professor **Vivian Liska**, Dept. of Literature and Philosophy, University of Antwerp, Belgium, vivian.liska@uantwerpen.be

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Robert K. Weninger, Professor of German, King’s College London, Great Britain, robert.weninger@kcl.ac.uk

Owing to illness, the President, Marcel Cornis-Pope, resigned over the summer of 2015. The Vice-President, Theo D’haen, stood in as Acting President until a new President should be appointed. After consultation with the ICLA President Hans Bertens and the Executive Council of ICLA it was decided to use this opportunity to bring forward the elections of the composition of the Co-Ordinating Committee for the period 2016–2019, effective as of March 1, 2016. Svend-Erik Larsen, a former Secretary to the Committee, accepted the task of organizing

these elections. As a result the new Committee in place as of March 1, 2016 now looks as follows:

OFFICERS (AS OF MARCH 2016)

President: Ass. Professor **Karen-Margrethe Lindskov Simonsen**, Aarhus University, litkms@dac.au.dk

Vice-President: Professor **Mark Bennion Sandberg**, Department of Scandinavian and Department of Film and Media, University of California, Berkeley, sandberg@berkeley.edu

Secretary: Ass. Professor **César Domínguez**, Comparative Literature, Jean Monnet Chair, University of Santiago de Compostela, cesar.dominguez@usc.es

Treasurer: Professor **Vivian Liska**, Department of Literature, Director of the Institute of Jewish Studies, University of Antwerp, Belgium, vivian.liska@uantwerpen.be

COMMITTEE MEMBERS (AS OF MARCH 2016)

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Prof. Dr **Dirk Götttsche**, Professor of German, Nottingham University, dirk.goettsche@nottingham.ac.uk

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Prof. Emer. **Robert Weninger**, German and Comparative Literature, King's College London, Robert.weninger@kcl.ac.uk

PROJECT DIRECTORS AND ASSOCIATED EDITORS

EUROPEAN LITERATURE/S, **Vivian Liska**, Dept. of Literature and Philosophy, University of Antwerp, Belgium, vivian.liska@uantwerpen.be; **Thomas Nolden**, Comparative Literature, Wellesley College, US, tnolden@wellesley.edu

IBERIA (*A Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula*), **César Domínguez**, Literary Theory and Comparative Literature, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, cesar.dominguez@usc.es; **Anxo Abuín González**, Dept. of Spanish and Theory of Literature, University of Santiago de Compostela, anxo.abuin@usc.es; and **Ellen Sapega**, Dept. of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Wisconsin/Madison, US, ewsapega@wisc.edu

MEDIEVAL LITERATURES (*Latin Literatures in Medieval and Early Modern Times inside and outside Europe. A millennium history*), **Francesco Stella**, Università degli Studi di Siena, Dipartimento di Filologia e Critica delle letterature antiche e moderne, Via Roma 56, 53100 Siena - Italy, Tel. 0577 234855 (int. 4855), Fax 0577 234839

MIGRANT LITERATURES (*Migration and Literature in Europe in the second half of the Twentieth Century*), **Fridrun Rinner**, Comparative Literature, Université de Provence, Aix-Marseille I, France, rinner@up.univ-aix.fr; **Franca**

Sinopoli, Dipartimento di Italianistica e Spettacolo, “La Sapienza” University of Rome, Italy, franca.sinopoli@uniroma1.it

NORDIC LITERATURES, **Steven Sondrup**, Dept. of Comparative Literature, Brigham Young University, US, sondrup@byu.edu, steven.sondrup@gmail.com; **Mark Sandberg**, Film Studies, University of California, Berkeley, US, sandberg@berkeley.edu

ORALITY PROJECT, **David F. Chamberlain**, Dept. of Spanish and Italian, Queen’s University, Canada, chamberl@queensu.ca; **J. Edward Chamberlin**, New College, University of Toronto, Canada, ted.speakeasy@utoronto.ca

RENAISSANCE II: LA NOUVELLE CULTURE: 1480–1520, **Eva Kushner**, Center for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto, Canada, eva.kushner@utoronto.ca

TRANSATLANTIC LITERATURES, **Jean-Marc Moura**, Université Paris Ouest, Nanterre La Défense, France, jean-marc.moura@u-paris10.fr

LANDSCAPES OF REALISM, **Dirk Götttsche**, University of Nottingham, dirk.goetttsche@nottingham.ac.uk

Of the projects under way at the Paris ICLA General Assembly, have been completed and published:

New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression: Crossing Borders: Crossing Genres. Ed. **Marcel Cornis-Pope**. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2014. 456 pp. Vol. XXVII of the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages (CHLEL) sponsored by the International Comparative Literature Association. ISBN: 9789027234636.

Are in the final stages of completion and expected to be published in 2016 or 2017:

Iberia: A Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula, Vol II. Editors: **César Domínguez Prieto** (project director, cesar.dominguez@usc.es), **Anxo Abuín González** (anxo.abuin@usc.es), and **Ellen Sapega** (ewsapega@wisc.edu).

Nordic Literatures: A Comparative History of Nordic Literary Cultures, Vol II. Directors: **Steven P. Sondrup** (steven.sondrup@gmail.com, sondrup@comcast.net, or sondrup@byu.edu) and **Mark Sandberg** (sandberg@berkeley.edu).

Orality Project. Directors: **Daniel Chamberlain** (chamberl@queensu.ca) and *J. Edward Chamberlin* (ted.speakeasy@utoronto.ca)

Renaissance II: La nouvelle culture: 1480–1520. Directors: **Eva Kushner** (eva.kushner@utoronto.ca)

The other projects listed on the University of Antwerp website for CHLEL are making steady progress but it is too early to forecast a definitive date of publication.

The General Assembly of the UAI (Union académique internationale) decided on May 28th, 2015 to award a grant of 1.500 euros for the year 2016 and a grant of 1.500 euros for the year 2017 to the Committee of the project 66: *Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* to aid in the publication of the next volumes in the series.

THEO D'HAEN, VICE PRESIDENT
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ICLA Research Committee on Literary Theory

1. ANNUAL WORKSHOP : VIENNA, JULY 25–27, 2016

The year's workshop will take place under the umbrella of the Vienna ICLA Congress. The topic is "Prismatic Translation." All speakers were invited to examine the varied relationship between "original" and "copy" and to re-think standard translation ideas on "equivalence" and "fidelity." Fifteen papers—ten by current members, two by Honorary Presidents, one by an ex-member, one by a nominated candidate and one by the special Guest Lecturer—will all address the question of what purchase the "prismatic" gives us on theories of translation. The committee thanks the Executive Council and UK AHRC for their generous support of this workshop.

2. FUTURE MEETING: BERLIN, JUNE 2017

Following the decision made at the 2015 annual workshop in Pécs, the 2017 meeting will be held in late June in Berlin hosted by Stefan Willer at ZFL.

3. PUBLICATIONS

Eight papers from the 2015 workshop, “Realities of Fiction; Fictions of Reality,” will be published in a special issue of *Neohelicon* in November 2016. It is titled “Fact and Fiction” and is edited by Yvonne Howell and Françoise Lavocat.

Papers from the 2014 Osaka workshop, “Literature and Policing,” have been edited by Takayuki Yokota-Murakami and Calin Mihailescu and are in progress to appear as a book. The editors are in negotiations with Brill.

4. NEW WEBSITE

Jernej Habjan constructed and currently manages our new digital platform: <http://iclatheory.org>. A link to the ICLA website has been requested. The history of our committee has been partially completed, and we would welcome any further information from our former members. The committee would like to express thank the Executive Council for helping to make the website possible.

5. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE (AS OF APRIL 23, 2016):

Our current membership is twelve, listed below. There is one nominated candidate up for election this year. We are aiming to continue to elect new members till we reach a maximum size of twenty.

PRESIDENT: Sowon S. Park (US) (first term: 2014–2017)

SECRETARY: Walid Hamarneh (US) (second term: 2015–2018)

REGULAR MEMBERS:

Michel Chaouli, US

Jernej Habjan, Slovenia

Eva Horn, Austria

Yvonne H. Howell, US

Françoise Lavocat, France

Kyohei Norimatsu, Japan

Matthew Reynolds, UK

Monika Schmitz-Emans, Germany

Stefan Willer, Germany

Robert Young, US

HONORARY PRESIDENTS:

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SOWON S. PARK, CHAIR

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University of California Santa Barbara (US)

ICLA Research Committee on Comparative Gender Studies

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Comparative Gender Studies Committee welcomes anyone with a scholarly interest in comparative gender and/or comparative queer studies, including the gender and queer politics of translation. Please feel free to attend our seminars at the upcoming ICLA Congress in Vienna in July (see below) and to attend our annual business meeting. Graduate students and academics at any stage of their career are most welcome; there are no application procedures or annual fees to join the Committee as we strive to be as open and inclusive as possible. Our statement of purpose that defines our work is printed below:

The Comparative Gender Studies Committee works to further the comparative study of gender and sexuality through organising innovative seminar programmes at the ICLA and at other conferences, such as the ACLA. The Committee supports 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 as they intersect with race, class, ethnicity, national and religious affiliation, and other sites of difference. We also support research on the gender and queer politics of textual and/or cultural translation in all historical periods. The work from our seminars is published in international peer-reviewed journals and in edited collections with major academic presses. Anyone with a scholarly interest in comparative gender/queer studies is invited to join the Committee, and we especially welcome graduate students.

1. ACLA 2016 HARVARD UNIVERSITY 2016

The Committee sponsored a three-day seminar at the ACLA annual conference in Cambridge, MA, at Harvard University in 2016. The seminar was entitled “Technologies of Gender and Sexuality,” spread over three days with ten speakers. The seminar was organised by Jordana Greenblatt, University of Toronto, and Drew Danielle Belsky, York University. The seminars were very well attended and addressed the intersections of technology with sex, gender, and sexuality as sites for gender/sexual expression, resistance, and regulation, as well as the fraught intersections of sexuality and gender with the internet and digital culture.

2. COMPARATIVE GENDER STUDIES COMMITTEE IN CANADA 2016

The Committee sponsored a one-day seminar at the Canadian Comparative Literature Association/Association Canadienne de Littérature Comparée, on May 29, 2016 at the University of Calgary, Alberta. The seminar was organised by Tegan Zimmerman, a Committee member, and was entitled “Communities: LGBTQI Lives and Voices/Communautés: Vies et Voix LGBTQI.” The Committee will continue to have a guaranteed seminar on the programme at CCLA/ACLC each year at its annual conference.

3. ICLA WORLD CONGRESS IN VIENNA 2016

The Committee will be sponsoring a five-day seminar on the topic of “(Queer) Relationality: Gender and Queer Comparatists at Work” for the ICLA World Congress in Vienna from July 21–27. The seminar will feature twenty speakers on the topic. A summary introduction to the seminar appears below and everyone is welcome to attend.

(Queer) Relationality: Gender and Queer Comparatists at Work. Sponsored by the ICLA Comparative Gender Studies Committee

Because the comparative examines literary and cultural texts relationally rather than what is assumed to be ontologically given, how might we theorise the ways in which genders, sexualities, languages, temporalities, identities, and cultural spaces touch? How might we examine spatial and cultural notions of physical proximity in comparative gender and queer studies frameworks? Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick observes in *Touching Feeling* that the term 'beside' is generative because 'it comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivalling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations' (8). What is crucial to queer relationality is not only the act of comparison, but a critical examination of the space 'in between,' which is not a space separating discrete categories, bodies, or languages, but binds, transforms, and translates them quite queerly. How might an emphasis on relationality demonstrate, in new ways, the multiplicity of inflections and intersections between gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, national and religious affiliation, and disability? Finally, what are some of the political stakes of a relational analysis, when we consider, for example, relations of language and violence and other power relations? To what extent can the relational, the trans, the liminal, the mediating space 'in between' operate as a potential site of rupture, of epistemological or social transformation?

The papers in the seminar will be grouped according to the following sub-themes for each of the five seminars:

- Seminar I: Gender Relationality and the Spaces Between
- Seminar II: Translation and Crossing Languages Queerly
- Seminar III: Cultural/Spatial Relationalities
- Seminar IV: Gender/Sexual Relations of Power
- Seminar V: Intertextual and Generic Relationalities

4. OPEN BUSINESS MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE AT ICLA 2016 IN VIENNA

The Committee will hold its annual business meeting during the ICLA World Congress in Vienna on Tuesday, July 26 at 9:00 am (please check the conference programme for details on the venue). Committee mem-

bers and those interested in our work are invited to attend this open meeting. We will be discussing publication possibilities of our recent seminars, including the ones held at ACLA in Seattle in 2015 and at Harvard this year, possible publication of the papers from CCLA/ACLA in Canada, and the publication of this year's ICLA seminar papers. We will also discuss possible seminar topics the Committee will sponsor for the ACLA conference for 2017 to be held in Utrecht, The Netherlands, in July. The Committee will be holding elections in Vienna for two of its officers whose terms expire in 2016, including the Chair and one member of our Executive Committee. The Vice-President has a choice of serving a second and final term as do our two other Executive Committee members.

5. STATUS OF THE COMMITTEE AS A STANDING COMMITTEE AT ICLA

The ICLA Executive Council in Beijing in September 2014 granted the Committee permanent status as a research committee of the ICLA given its record of accomplishment over ten years since its inception at the Hong Kong ICLA congress in 2004, given its membership of over 70 members located on all six continents, given the new membership it has brought into the ICLA (especially graduate students, whose research is reshaping the contours of comparative studies), and given its productive record of seminars at ACLA and ICLA, its involvement in Canada and in South Africa, and its productive publication record. The study of gender and sexuality as sites of comparative enquiry will continue to make important interventions to the field of comparative literature for many years to come, and the Committee plans to remain active within the Association and internationally within the discipline and within the broader academic context. The Committee is grateful for the support it has received from the ICLA Executive Council.

6. PUBLICATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee has published special issues in such journals as *Comparative Critical Studies* (on "Gender and Literary Studies" in 2009); *Comparative Literature Studies* (on "The Gender and Queer Politics of Translation: Literary, Historical, and Cultural Approaches" in 2014); and in *Intertexts* (on "Comparatively Speaking: Gender and Rhetoric" in 2014). Additionally, the Committee has published edited volumes, such as *Translating Women* (ed. Luise von Flotow, 2010); and *Comparatively*

Queer: Interrogating Identities across Time and Cultures (eds. Jarrod Hayes, Margaret Higonnet, and William J. Spurlin, 2010). All of these works have made important interventions in the field, and the Committee has several other projects in line for publication.

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ICLA Research Committee on Literary and Cultural Interrelationships between India, Its Neighboring Countries and the World

The following list of papers for presentation in a special Group Section at the ICLA International Congress, University of Vienna, July 19–27, 2016, focus on the subject of the Research Committee.

DIALECTICS OF HISTORY: SOUTH ASIAN NARRATIVES

Jasbir Jain, “Dialectics of History: Sub-continental Narratives of Participation in the Empire’s Wars”

Sieghild Bogumil, “Daimon, Genius, Duende, Jibandebata—One History or Histories of One’s Own?”

E. V. Ramakrishnan, “Religion, Ritual, Identity: Gender and Power in South Asian Fiction”

Manorama Trikha, “Rewriting the Nation: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh”

Urmil Talwar, “Languages of Resistance in Rahman’s *The Unfinished Memories* and Bhutto’s *Daughter of the East*”
 Asha Sundaram, “Myths of Redemption Across Faith and Culture: Sri Lanka and Pakistan”

Tutun Mukherjee, “Exploring Multiple Realities of South-Asian Life through Cinema”

Ameena K. Ansari, “Political Rhetoric of Nation(s) before the “Midnight Hour,” August 1947”

Ranjamrittika Bhowmik, “The Culture of Rice in South Asia”

CREATIVITY IN THE SUBCONTINENT:
RELIGION, GENDER, AND POLITICS

Bandana Chakrabarty, "The Confines of Creativity in the Subcontinent: Religion, Culture and Respectability" Mythili P. Rao, "Caught in the Cross-fire: Armed Conflicts and Women of South Asia"

Supriya Agarwal, "Aestheticized Politics and Gender in the Memories of Sara Suleri and Nayantara Sahgal"

Mashrur S. Hussain, "The One, the One, The Ones: A Critical Comparative Study of South Asian Poetics"

TRIBAL NARRATIVES IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND IDEA OF ONE
CRITICAL FRAMEWORK

Ashraf Uddin Kazi, "Monster in the Pastoral: Reading Eco-Subaltern Narrative in South Asian Literature" Chandra Mohan, "Positions of "Dissent" in the Tribal Narratives of North Eastern India and the North Western Pakistan"

Chandra Mohan, "Positions of Dissent in the Tribal Narratives of North Eastern India and the North Western Pakistan"

WOMEN POETS OF SOUTH ASIA: RESISTANCE AND ALTERITIES

Rachel Bari, "Re-Contextualizing Self and Language: Women Poets of South Asia"

Devika Narula, "Resistance and Resilience in the Novels of South Asian Women Writers"

Kumar S. Satish, "Comparing Gendered Alterities: Locating the Feminine Post-colonial Subject in South Asia and Africa"

SUFI POETICS, BUDDHISM, AND TRAVELOGUES

K. G. Sharma, "Bulleh Shah and Kabir: Sufi and Bhakti Movements in Socio-Historical Contexts"

Neekee Chaturvedi, "South Asian Politics and Tibetan Buddhism: Changing Perceptions and Global Ramifications"

Abhimanyu Singh Arha, "The Outsider's Eye: The Travelogues of Pietro Della Valle and Mountstuart Elphinstone"

GRAPHIC AND COMPETING NARRATIVES OF PARTITION

Sayantana Dasgupta, "Reconstructing Partition: A Study of Graphic Narratives from South Asia"

Sangeeta Sharma, "Competing Narratives of Partition: Voices from India and Pakistan"

CRITIQUES OF GENDER

Soma Marik, "Critiques of Nation and Gender in South Asia: Akhtaruzzaman Elias' Khwabnama and Savitri Roy's Trisrota and Swaralipi"

Aratrika Ganguly, "A Study of the Position of the Women of the Antahpur of South Asian Royalty Ranging from the Earlier Times Till this Date"

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FORM OF LECTURES/ ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT VARIOUS ACADEMIC EVENTS, RELATED TO THE THEME OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Kapila Vatsayayan delivered the keynote address on "Cultural Foundation of South Asia" at CLAI International Conference on Culture and Socio-Political Movements held at University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, March 1-4, 2015.

Jasbir Jain: "The Travels of Maoism : Ideology, Ethics and Violence (China, Tibet, Nepal and India)," paper presented at the XII International Conference of Comparative literature Association of India Conference in March, 2015, Jaipur

Jasbir Jain: "The Legitimacy of Literature as an Artefact of History in the Subcontinental Context," presented in a History Conference, University of Rajasthan, January, 2016

Jasbir Jain: "Historicity, Contexts and Timelessness: The Aesthetics of Translation" (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), presented at a Conference on Translation, Department of English, Veer Narmad University, Surat, February 9, 2016

Rachel Bari: Plenary address, "Negotiating Boundaries: South Asian Women Writing," National Conference on "Multiplicity of Cultures in South Asian Literatures," Tumkur University

Anisur Rahman: Valedictory address, "Literature Today: Writing, Teaching, Pedagogy in the subcontinent" at a Seminar on "Trends in Contemporary Literature: Issues and Perspective," Sikkim University, Gangtok

Chandra Mohan: Keynote address, "Cross-cultural and Literary Interactions in the South Asian Subcontinent" at the conference on "Comparative Literature: Expanding Horizons," V.N.S.G University, Surat, February 13–14, 2016

Rizio Yohannan Raj: "Antara Lila: The Tantric Play of Internal Difference in the Sub-Continental Context," Global Workshop on Trans-Cultural Encounters, organized by FIND, the European Foundation for New Dialogues and Zagarolo, Italy, November 8–15, 2015

T.S. Satyanath: "Literary History: Spatio-temporality of Sectarian Texts in South and South-East Asia," CLAI Conference, March 1–4, 2015, Rajasthan University, Jaipur

INTRODUCTION OF ACADEMIC COURSES RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE PROJECT

Mythili Rao, Chair, Centre of Language and Literature, Jain University Bangalore, is to introduce a post graduate diploma in Comparative Studies with a sub-continental literary interrelationship focus and a Short Term Certificate and Diploma Program in Indian Languages in a comparative context. The latter can be offered to foreign scholars too.

Literatures of South Asia and Literatures of Bangladesh were introduced as optional courses in a Comparative Literature MA course being taught under the auspices of the Centre for Comparative Literature, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal. The Centre also offers courses in Cross-Cultural Literary Relations, and Literatures of Asia.

The Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, currently offers a course in "Comparative Cultural Studies" which focuses on exploring the cultural and literary interfaces between and among the SAARC countries.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH
COMMITTEE PROJECT

Jasbir Jain, *The Diaspora Writes Home: Subcontinental Narratives* (Jaipur: Rawat, 2015).

Jasbir Jain, *Forgiveness: Between Memory and History* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 2016).

Jasbir Jain, "Lost Homes: Shifting Borders and the Search for Belonging," (forthcoming in a volume on the Partition being published in the US).

Kavita A. Sharma, *The Sages and Teachers in Mahabharata: Subcontinental Perceptions* (forthcoming, 2016).

Rachel Bari (co-ed), *Remembering to Forget: South Asian Women Writing* (forthcoming volume on sectarian violence in South Asia, 2016).

E. V. Ramakrishnan, "Habitations of Resistance: Role of Translation in the Creation of Literary Public Sphere in South Asia," in *Translation and Global Asia: Relocating Networks of Cultural Product*, edited by Lawrence Wong and Uganda Szepul. Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.

Ipshita Chanda, "BonobibirJohuranama: A Method for Reading Plural Cultures," forthcoming in the *Delhi University Journal of the Humanities and the Social Sciences 2* (2015).

Sayantana Dasgupta and Shradhanjali Tamangeds, *TamangSelo: Annotated Text and English Translation* (Jadavpur University Press in collaboration with Centre for Translation of Indian literatures, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 2015). This is a collection of Indian Nepali-language TamangSelo songs in a bilingual edition.

Mashrur Shahid Hussain, "Women Against Violence: Mahashweta Devi's Dopdi and the Subversion of Masculinist Victim Discourse" (co-author: Sharmin Afroz hantu), *Chaos 3*, no.1 (Spring 2015), Department of English, Independent University, Bangladesh.

Ashraf Uddin Kazi, "Voicing Draupadi: (Re)Constructing the Female Archetype." This essay identified the creative potentials of South Asian female writing. Another paper by the same colleague was titled "Swinging between 'Ratan' and 'Ratna': Gender Ambiguity in Anan Zaman's Shikhandi Katha."

Soma Mukherjee, “Ramifications of the Ramayana in India, Indonesia and Thailand: A Comparative Study” in *Comparative Literature as a Critical Approach*, edited by Anne Tomiche (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2016).

Nilanjana Bhattacharya, “‘Thou Maiden of the Strange Land’: Ocampo and Rabindranath,” *Apperception* 7 (July 2015).

Sayantan Dasgupta and Kavita Lama, eds., *Call of the Hills: Indian Nepali Short Stories in English Translation*, revised and enlarged second edition (Jadavpur University Press in collaboration with Centre for Translation of Indian Literatures and CAS in Comparative Literature Phase 2, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, 2016).

T. S. Satyanath “Understanding South Asia-South-East Asia Cultural Contacts: An Alternative Perspective,” *Mekong-Ganga Axis*, edited by Pankaj Mittal, Ravi Bhushan, and D. K. Daisy (Delhi: Printworld, 2016).

RESEARCH ACCOMPLISHED

The following MPhil and PhD dissertations related to the research committee project were undertaken and completed under the supervision of Prof. Anisur Rahman:

Representations of Society, Culture, Gender: Reading Elect Memoirs by Pakistani Women, 2014. (M. Phil degree awarded to Kanika Gandhi.)

Pakistani Women Poets: Literary Representation and the Dynamics of Religion, Politics, and Society, 2014. (PhD degree awarded to Urvashi Sabu.)

Indian English Literature: A Critical Inquiry into Reading Strategies and Pedagogy, 2015. (PhD degree awarded to Shatarupa Sinha.)

CHANDRA MOHAN, CHAIR
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Research Committee on “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature”

From July 2015 up to now, the Research Committee on “Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Literature” has conducted the following activities to

promote the spirit of and discourse on Scriptural Reasoning (SR) among Chinese scholars.

From July 6–9, 2015, the Committee organized the Eleventh “Theology and Humanities” Summer Institute with a focus on “Confronting Contemporary Crises.” We invited ten keynote speakers and forty young scholars from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, the UK, and the US to present papers and hold panel discussions at Anyang Institute of Technology, Henan Province. This was the first time we invited Buddhist scholars and extended the range of topics to other disciplines such as psychology. As an ancient city of profound cultural and historical significance and rich in archeological artifacts, Anyang provided an excellent setting for vivid dialogue and discussion.

From October 19–20, 2015, we held a conference entitled “Sinology in the Twenty-first Century,” which gathered fifteen Executive Council members of the World Conference on Sinology and provided a platform for scholars of varied disciplines to discuss their understanding and hopes for the development of “sinology” in the present century.

In November 2015, we held a small seminar for the President of Yale Divinity School, Professor Gregory E. Sterling, on the topic of “the Limits of Virtue.” Professor Yao Xinzhong, an expert on Chinese traditional Confucian ethics, hosted the seminar and led the conversation.

From April 22–23, 2016, we helped organize an international conference on Marxist studies in China, entitled “The International Horizon of Chinese Marxist Discourse: Perspectives from Literature and Philosophy.” The international academic world knows little about Marxist study and practice in China after the 1980s. This was a chance for scholars in China and other parts of the world to exchange ideas and communicate at a deeper level.

Apart from these conferences and symposia, we oversaw the successful publication of several works. With the help of Baylor University Press, the papers presented at the conference in April 2014 were collected in a book entitled *The Poetics of Translation Between Chinese and English Literature*, which came out in February 2016. The *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* has upheld the spirit of Scriptural Reasoning in its choice of themes and articles. Issue 34 (published in November 2015), on the theme “The Significance of Hope,” reflects upon the current social and religious challenges on the basis of Jürgen Moltmann’s dialogues with Chinese scholars. Key terms such as “just

war,” “just peace,” or “universal values” were discussed from different cultural and social perspectives. In such face-to-face dialogue, we were able to stimulate each other’s thinking, an interchange deeply rooted in the spirit of the Scriptural Reasoning movement. Issue 35 (published in May 2016) will focus on the theme of “Post-modern Theology” and surprise readers with the title of the editorial foreword, “Nonreligious Christianity and Atheist Religion.” This issue will feature translations of four post-modern thinkers’ articles: G. Vattimo’s “Toward a Nonreligious Christianity,” J. D. Caputo’s “The Rose is Without Why: An Interpretation of the Later Heidegger,” Mark Taylor’s “Networking Religion,” and Graham Ward’s “Bodies: The Displaced Bodies of Jesus Christ.” Echoing these featured articles, some Chinese young scholars’ studies on post-modern thinkers such as Slavoj Žižek and Giorgio Agamben have been chosen to demonstrate the sophistication and originality of reflection upon these ideas within the Chinese context.

The Committee will keep promoting inter-disciplinary, inter-religious and inter-cultural studies in the future. In the next academic year, the committee will host at least three major conferences. From July 10–14, 2016 the Committee will hold the twelfth Summer Institute, focusing on discussions of “Universalism” or “Universality,” a topic once discarded by leading scholarship but persistently resurfacing in philosophy and literature. In October or November 2016, the committee will help organize the fifth World Conference on Sinology on the theme: “Sinologies in Comparative Context: Tradition and Innovation.” As for publications, Issues 36 and 37 of the *Journal for the Study of Christian Culture* will focus on the following two topics: “Does *Tian* (Heaven) Speak?” and “‘Ethics of Ultimate Ends’ and ‘Ethics of Responsibility.’” The Committee will start a new project in 2016 in collaboration with Brill and the editors of *T’oung Pao*, one of the three leading academic journals on sinology worldwide. This project will involve translating the best articles published in the past century into Chinese. In three-year’s time, the project plans to publish seven volumes in all, aiming to provide some fundamental research materials for Chinese scholars so that dialogue and intellectual exchanges between Chinese and Western scholars may reach a deeper level.

LIST OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

YANG Huilin, Renmin University of China, Chair

ZHANG Jing (Cathy), Renmin University of China, Secretary

David Ford, Cambridge University, member
 GENG Youzhuang, Renmin University of China, member
 Andrew Hass, Stirling University, member
 John LAI, Chinese University of Hong Kong, member
 Li Bingquan, Renmin University of China, member
 LIU Yunhua, Shanghai Normal University, member
 David Jasper, Glasgow University, member
 David Jeffrey, Baylor University, member
 Peter Ochs, Virginia University, member
 Chlœe Starr, Yale University, member
 WANG HAI, Renmin University of China, member
 ZHANG Hui, Peking University, member
 ZHANG Hua, Beijing Language and Culture University, member
 ZHANG Longxi, Hong Kong City University, member
 Eric Ziolkowski, Lafayette College, member

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ICLA Research Committee of Literature and Neuroscience

My research committee program this year has been concerned with two projects: the creation of an interdisciplinary volume on creativity for Oxford University Press, to be published in 2017, and the organization of a Group Section on Cultural Memory for the forthcoming ICLA Congress in Vienna 2016.

First, as editor of the forthcoming Oxford University Press volume *Secrets of Creativity: What Neuroscience, Humanities and Our Minds Reveal*, I've been assigning , gradually collecting, and editing the twenty

chapters for this book. This volume is due to the Press next January 2017. As mentioned before, this volume grew out of a symposium I directed at Cold Spring Harbor Lab in the fall of 2014. I selected some participants from that interdisciplinary group and added more contributors—a combination of comparatists and neuroscientists. The line-up is a strong one, including the celebrated neuroscientist Antonio Damasio and the “neuro” novelist Richard Powers. This volume aims to bring together diverse voices from both the arts and sciences, offering a comparative mode of analysis that will open future pathways for the study of this intricate topic and enrich research methodologies across the disciplinary borders.

As with the previous work of this interdisciplinary committee, the exchange between the arts and sciences provides a unique approach, one that has not yet been taken in the many books on creativity in recent times. In this book, the neuroscientists will describe the functioning of the brain in creative acts of scientific discovery or aesthetic production. The humanists in the interrelated fields of comparative literature, music and art will describe the workings of creativity that they analyze in the composition of literary works, the visual arts, and music.

Secondly, I’ve turned to a new area of inquiry for our committee—that of cultural memory, which is the topic for a Group Section (#17691) of three sessions at the 2016 ICLA Vienna Congress and especially germane to the site of our Congress. There are nine speakers on the program for this event, including Peter Hanenberg (one of our hosts at the Catholic University of Portugal for last year’s ICLA meeting), Sirkka Knuuttila from the University of Helsinki and Donald Wehrs (a permanent member of the committee). It is interesting to recall that the topic of cultural memory was discussed by the ICLA some nineteen years ago at the 1997 Leiden Congress. However, in those days, neuroscience was not in the picture, and thus was not included in that Congress’s section on “Methods for the Study of Literature as Cultural Memory.” In our new context, as we revisit this topic, the recent research in cultural neuroscience will be shown to shed significant light on an interdisciplinary understanding of the creation and retention of cultural memory in terms of gene/culture coevolution. The three sessions are organized according to the following topics : 1) Formations and Re-formations of Cultural Memory; 2) Epigenetics vs. Genetics of Cultural Memory; 3) Documentation of Cultural Memory. The ongoing subject of one of the 1997 Leiden

sessions, “Colonizer and Colonized,” will be reconsidered in the first 2016 Vienna session with respect to the reshaping of cultural memory in light of trauma. A historical approach will also be taken (especially in the discussion of the last session) to consider how specific nations or groups are influenced by their vantage points, raising the issue of objectivity with respect to collective memory. A major goal of our 2016 sessions is to explore gene/culture coevolution in the formation of cultural memory, a topic which is in its infancy in the field of science and which is intriguing for humanists to view through the literary lens.

With these projects, this research committee has maintained its ongoing dialogue between comparatists and neuroscientists, which can nurture further interdisciplinary research.

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ICLA Research Committee on Literary and Cultural History of the Dream

The dream as a basic anthropological phenomenon has fascinated and puzzled people in all cultures and ages. This has led to a multitude of theoretical writings trying to explain the origin and functions of dreams and to decipher their meaning (“dream-discourse”) and to factual and fictional representations of dreams in literature and many other media.

Our Research Committee is trying to study this phenomenon in as many cultures and periods as possible. In September 2015, we convened a symposium in Mulhouse on “Theorizing the Dream / Savoirs et théories du rêve,” and we have prepared a workshop for the Vienna ICLA congress on “Historizing the Dream / Le rêve du point de vue historique.” For details cf. our homepage: www.dreamcultures.org, which also includes a rapidly growing, fully searchable database of dream researchers and publications on the dream. If you have been active in this field please enter your personal data and publications (-> Research / -> Submit).

We are still looking for committee members with a special competence for dream-discourse and literary dreams in Eastern Europe, South America, Africa, and Australia.

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ICLA Research Committee on Religion, Ethics, and Literature

Our committee began with the interrogation of a premise: many Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thinkers, notably Hegel and Marx, imagined that, with the dominance of reason in the modern age, humankind had entered a final, religion-free era, a secular age; the passions of religion were no longer a threat. However, many now find themselves living in a post-secular age in which poverty, violence, terror, and war have prompted not only a “return to religion,” but also the realization that in some parts of the world, modernity did not, after all, entail a wholesale rejection of religion, with its replacement, a secular solution.

Literature has been particularly efficacious in tracing the edges of this “reality”; thus the research committee thought it beneficial to question how the current overarching discourse of religion and society signified a change resulting from a particular historical conjuncture in the “west.” However, the committee does not seek to limit itself to a “western” view of the three main nodes, i.e., religion, ethics, and literature. Therefore, in the interests of a “multi”-cultural committee, we seek a more speculative rather than epistemological view of these three areas.

The research committee investigates, therefore, the philosophical and theoretical role of religion and ethics in literature, as well as explores the fraught relationship between secularism and post-secularism. It examines global literary phenomena as instances of subject

formation in order to think new relationships between religion, ethics, and literature. We are particularly concerned with the modern displacement of religion, modernity's epistemological, and conceptual underpinnings that suggest modern judgments about the world, culture, and its relationship to a religious past. While the examination of religious imagery, symbolism and the role of myth will not be the purview of this committee, religious signifiers in as much as they motivate "an ethical turn" in the text is a key concern. With the work of this committee, we seek to address the significant lack of work done on the ethical dimension to be found in theory and literature itself.

As a result, the committee has a wide-ranging concern with the interstitial space that literature makes visible, a space that is not reducible to the literary, religious, or ethical, and yet is all of these. In other words, we are most interested in questioning the epistemologies and categories that have served as foundational to the ways that religion, literature, and ethics coalesce around the aesthetic object.

Our committee came into existence in 2014 through an inaugural conference at San Francisco State University in California and was certified with ICLA shortly thereafter. Since its certification, the committee has recruited prospective members from the related disciplines of religion, ethics, inside and outside of comparative literature. We identified figures in affiliated departments internationally whose initial training was in comparative literature and have reestablished a connection with them. Consequently, the research committee on Religion, Ethics, and Literature, experienced a growth spurt in both 2015 and 2016. We are now a cohort of forty members, and we have a global membership in the Middle East, Europe, India, Africa, the UK, the US, and East Asia, i.e., fifty percent of the committee have positions at institutions outside of the U.S.

Our members are at every level of the profession, 50 percent are faculty and 50 percent are graduate students. The institutional diversity of this cohort underscores the committee's ability to demonstrate relevance to new PhDs in the field as well as across the disciplines and to foster collaboration between these emerging scholars and established comparatists within the organization.

With two seminars sponsored at ACLA 2016, and three streams at the ICLA Congress in Vienna, our committee continues to conduct a robust research agenda through international conferences. These panels developed themes presented by the committee's panels at CLAI in

Rajasthan (2015) and at the inaugural Fault Lines conference in San Francisco (2014). To that end, we have contracted with Bloomsbury on a text promoting the committee's research. The committee website has been actively utilized since the group's inception. Its contribution to our visibility has meant scholars curious about our activities can always find us. It holds a copy of our quarterly reports, lists our sponsored panels, provides a list of our members, updates our publications progress, and offers instructions for membership, (<http://online.sfsu.edu/kmillet1/faultlinesgrp.html>). We will also have a business meeting for prospective and current members at the ICLA Congress in Vienna this year. If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Professor Kitty Millet (kmillet1@sfsu.edu). Full instructions for membership are available at the above website.

KITTY MILLET, CHAIR

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San Francisco State University (US)

ICLA Research Committee on Translation

The ICLA Committee on Translation had another successful year. It generated new members, new ideas, and two excellent conference panels—one for the ACLA and another for the ICLA, both on the topic of “Engaging Publics in and through Translation.” The seminar for the March, 2016 ACLA at Harvard offered a stimulating set of papers exploring issues of the translator’s relationship to audiences he or she seeks to engage or that he or she in some way reaches (at times unintentionally). Such spheres of reception might be defined by citizenship, language fluencies, and geographic region, but also by access to different media, or by various cultural, ethnic, and institutional affiliations. Throughout the two day discussion, scholars reflected, in a variety of ways, on translation’s changing place in the global public sphere.

During our annual Committee meeting, also held at Harvard, old and new members discussed our seminar theme for ACLA 2017 (our sessions will focus on the topic of “Translation networks”) as well as some innovative ideas for interacting with our own academic communities. Among these ideas is a special “Translation Get-together” that

we will propose for next year in addition to our regular seminars and annual Committee meeting.

I list below the fine set of papers presented at ACLA 2016, followed by those scheduled for the July ICLA conference in Vienna.

PAPERS GIVEN AT ACLA 2016

Stream C: March 18, 2016

Chen Wang, U Minnesota, “Translingual Practices of the Translingual Practice”

Isabel Gómez, U California, Los Angeles, “Bringing Classics to Reluctant 21st Century Publics: Monolingual, Anti-Intellectual, and Performative Readings of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz”

Adriana Jacobs, Oxford U, “The Status of Translation”

Stream C: March 19, 2016

Marlene Esplin, Brigham Young U, “Approaching Translation Activism”

Yumiao Bao, Edinburgh U, “Power in/through Translation in the May Fourth Discursive Arenas”

Jordan Smith, Josai International U, “Fiat Lux, Fiat Translation: An Ethics for Engineering in Translationscapes”

Inci Sariz-Bilge, U Massachusetts, Amherst, “Transgression of the Sayable: Narrative Communities of Translation during the Gezi Resistance”

THE COMMITTEE’S PROGRAM FOR THE VIENNA CONFERENCE: ICLA PANEL 17336 “ENGAGING PUBLICS IN AND THROUGH TRANSLATION”

Slot #1: Translation’s Global Publics

Assumpta Camps, U Barcelona, “The Challenges of Legal Translation in Multicultural Societies”

Marlene Esplin, Brigham Young U, “Climate Activism and Translation”

Angela Kölling, U Gothenburg, “The Visible Translator—Engaging the Public at International Book Fairs”

Chip Rossetti, Library of Arabic Literature, "Classical Arabic Literature for a 21st-Century English Readership: The Experience of the Library of Arabic Literature"

Slot #2: Translation and the Creation of Reading Publics

Alexandra Lopes, U Católica Portuguesa, "Growing Up Cosmopolitan: Imagining the World through Translation in Childhood"

Spencer Scoville, Brigham Young U, "Creating New Reading Publics through Translation"

Isabel Gómez, U California, Los Angeles, "Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and her Reluctant 21st Century Publics: Monolingual, Anti-Intellectual, and Performative Readings"

Spencer Hawkins, Bilkent U, "How to Reach the Public: Editorial Visions for Retranslation Projects"

Slot #3: Transforming Texts and Contexts

Emron Esplin, Brigham Young U, "Martí Evermore: José Martí as Reader and Translator of Edgar Allan Poe"

Nirmala Menon, Indian Institute of Technology, "Translating Silence(s) in Mahashweta Devi's Imaginary Maps translated by Gayatri Spivak"

Katharine Streip, Concordia U, "Roberto Bolaño and the Precarious Space of Literature"

Jayshree Singh, Bhupal Nobles' Post-Graduate College, "Translation: A Social Fact and Practice"

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Notes biographiques / Notes on Contributors

KARINE ALAVERDIAN est Professeur de littérature russe à l'Université Libre de Bruxelles, où elle a défendu une thèse de doctorat intitulée *La «petite prose» de V. Šukšin* (1991). Elle est l'auteur de deux monographies : *Le labyrinthe de connexions. Le problème de la formulation de la pensée par les mots dans l'œuvre de L. Tolstoï* (en russe, Saint-Petersbourg, 2012) et *Les récits de V. Šukšin. Monographie* (en russe, traduit du français par L. Rappoport, Barnaoul, 2010). Elle a également publié une soixantaine d'articles scientifiques sur la littérature russe (en russe et en français).

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FRANCA BELLARSI devoted her PhD to Allen Ginsberg as a poet of the “Buddhist Void” and is Associate Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB). She is especially working on the Beats’ Western Buddhism, Neo-Romanticism, and ecopoetic practice. In October 2015, she was the local convener for the 4th Annual Meeting of the EBSN in Brussels. Next to the Beat Generation, ecocriticism is her other main field of research, with an emphasis on experimental ecopoetics. As an ecocritic, she will host the 7th Biennial Meeting of the EASLCE in October 2016.

HANS BERTENS is Distinguished Professor of the Humanities at Utrecht University, The Netherlands. He has published mainly on American literature, postmodernism and literary theory. His more recent books

include *The Idea of the Postmodern: A History* (Routledge, 1995), *Contemporary American Crime Fiction* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001; with Theo D'haen), *Literary Theory: The Basics* (Routledge, 3rd revised edition 2013) and *American Literature: A History* (Routledge, 2013; again with Theo D'haen), in which he covers the periods 1585–1861 and 1945–1980.

JEAN BESSIÈRE, Professeur émérite de Littérature comparée de l'Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, a été Président de l'AILC de 1997 à 2000. Il a récemment publié *Le Roman ou la problématique du monde* (2010), *Questionner le roman* (2012), *Inactualité et originalité de la littérature française contemporaine* (2014), et coédité avec G. Gillespie, *Contextualizing World Literature* (2015).

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MARCEL CORNIS-POPE is Professor of English and Media Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, US. His publications include *Anatomy of the White Whale: A Poetics of the American Symbolic Romance* (1982), *Hermetic Desire and Critical Rewriting: Narrative Interpretation in the Wake of Poststructuralism* (1992), *The Unfinished Battles: Romanian Postmodernism before and after 1989* (1996), and *Narrative Innovation and Cultural Rewriting in the Cold War Era and After* (2001). In 2010 he completed with John Neubauer the editing of a four-volume *History of the Literary Cultures of East Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Century*, and at the end of 2014, he published an edited international collection of essays on *New Literary Hybrids in the Age of Multimedia Expression*. As a translator, he has published book-length translations into Romanian of Ken Kesey, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Wolfe.

SAYANTAN DASGUPTA teaches Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University and is Coordinator of the Centre for Translation of Indian Literatures at this Institution. He is the secretary of the Comparative Literature Association of India.

BIRGIT DÄWES is Professor and Chair of American Studies at the University of Flensburg, Germany. Her works include two award-winning monograph studies, *Native North American Theater in a Global Age* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2007) and *Ground Zero Fiction: History, Memory, and Representation in the American 9/11 Novel* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2011), as well as *Indigenous North American Drama: A Multivocal History* (ed., Albany: SUNY Press, 2013), and she is founder and co-editor of the Routledge Book Series *Transnational Indigenous Perspectives*.

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THEO D'HAEN is Emeritus Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Leuven University, and earlier taught at Leiden and Utrecht Universities. He has published widely on (post)modernism, (post)colonialism, and world literature. He has been a board member of ICLA, chair of various ICLA committees, and President of FILLM. Recent publications comprise *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature*, *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* (with David Damrosch and Djelal Kadir), *World Literature: A Reader* (with Cesar Dominguez and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen), and *American Literature: A History* (with Hans Bertens).

CÉSAR DOMÍNGUEZ is senior lecturer in comparative literature at the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela. His teaching and research focus on world literature, cosmopolitanism, literary history, translation, and transatlantic studies. His last books are *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications* (Routledge, 2015, co-authored with Haun Saussy and Darío Villanueva), which has just been published in Spanish translation (Taurus, 2016), and *Cosmopolitanism and the Postnational: Literature and the New Europe* (Brill/Rodopi, 2015, co-edited with Theo D'haen).

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AUDREY LOUCKX obtained her PhD in Languages and Literatures from the Université Libre de Bruxelles in 2014. She is now teaching English language, culture and institutions, semantics and critical discourse analysis in the English Department of the Faculty of Translation and Interpretation at the Université de Mons, Belgium. As a member of the university's American Studies Center, her research interests center on contemporary testimonial studies in American Culture and have recently expanded to include animated documentaries. She has recently worked on the Voice of Witness Series and the StoryCorps project.

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KITTY MILLET is Professor of Comparative Jewish Literatures and Holocaust Studies at San Francisco State University. Tenured in Jewish Studies, she is also appointed to Comparative Literature. Her publications usually concern Holocaust Narrative and Jewish Literatures of the Americas and Europe. Her most recent articles include studies on Dr. Who and Jewish Time Lords (2017), Sabbateanism and Jewish Messianism (2016), on H.G. Adler (2013), on Jean Améry (2012), as well as an analysis of German Colonial Theory and the Holocaust (2011). Her book, *A Comparative History of Persecution and Victim Experience: Slavery, Colonization, and the Holocaust* (Bloomsbury, 2016) analyzes the constitutive side of

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DAVID O'DONNELL is an Associate Professor in Theatre at Victoria University, Wellington, Aotearoa/ New Zealand. He has directed many premieres of New Zealand plays and published widely on theatre from New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific. With Marc Maufort, he co-edited the book *Performing Aotearoa* (2007) and has been editor of the Playmarket New Zealand Play Series since 2010.

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FABRICE PREYAT est Chercheur qualifié honoraire auprès du Fonds National de la Recherche scientifique (frs-fnrs) et Professeur à l'Université libre de Bruxelles où il enseigne l'histoire de la littérature française. Ses recherches, en histoire littéraire et en sociologie de la littérature, concernent les rapports entre mécénat, littérature, histoire et théologie aux xvii^e et xviii^e siècles. Après une thèse consacrée au *Petit Concile de Bossuet et la christianisation des mœurs et des pratiques littéraires sous Louis xiv* (2007), il a notamment dirigé *La Croix et la bannière. L'écrivain catholique en francophonie (xviii^e-xxi^e siècles)* (en coll. avec F. Gugelot et C. Vanderpelen, 2007). Ses travaux consacrés à la littérature apologétique, au mouvement des anti-Lumières et à la problématique du genre ont donné naissance à deux volumes collectifs : *L'apologétique littéraire et les anti-Lumières féminines (Œuvres et critiques, 2013)* et *Femmes des anti-Lumières, femmes apologistes (Etudes sur le xviii^e siècle, 2016)*. Il étudie également l'histoire des littératures graphiques (roman graphique, bande dessinée). Il a notamment publié dans ce domaine : *La bande dessinée contemporaine* (2010, en coll. Avec B.-O. Dozo) et *Bande dessinée et engagement* (à paraître en 2016).

MONIKA SCHMITZ-EMANS has been Professor of Comparative Literature at Ruhr-Universität Bochum since 1995. She wrote her dissertation and habilitation in German Literature Studies. Her research fields include the European Literature of the eighteenth to the twenty-first century, with a special focus on text-image relations and the history of poetics.

MONICA SPIRIDON (Université de Bucarest, Roumanie) est spécialiste de littérature comparée, des études des medias, et de la culture européenne du vingtième siècle. Elle a publié plusieurs ouvrages ayant trait à la littérature comparée et l'histoire intellectuelle du vingtième siècle en Europe centrale et de l'Est ainsi que de nombreux articles dans des revues scientifiques internationales. Elle est également l'auteur de plus de vingt chapitres de livres publiés en Europe, au Canada et aux Etats-Unis. Elle a été vice-présidente de l'AILC (2010–2016) et présidente du comité de recherche sur l'Europe de l'Est et du Sud-Est de l'AILC (2000–2009). Elle a fondé le Réseau eu-

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ASHA SUNDARAM, Senior Lecturer in English working in Government College, Tonk (Rajasthan), India, has over twenty-five years of teaching experience. She has participated and presented papers at International and national conferences including the 2013 AILC/ICLA Paris congress. Her articles have been published in different volumes. Her areas of interest include comparative literature, Indian writing in English and film studies. She is a life member of the ICLA.

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JENNY WEBB lives in Huntsville, Alabama where she works as an editor and production manager for *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. She has contributed chapters to *Perspectives on Mormon Theology: Scriptural Theology*; *An Experiment on the Word: Reading Alma 32*; and *Reading Nephi Reading Isaiah: Reading 2 Nephi 26–27*, which she co-edited along with Joseph M. Spencer. Her work has also appeared in *The Comparatist*, *Scandinavian Studies*, and the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*. She is the current president of Mormon Scholars in the Humanities and also serves on the Executive Board for the Mormon Theology Seminar.

CHANTAL ZABUS holds the "Institut universitaire de France" (IUF) Chair of Comparative Postcolonial Literatures and Gender Studies at the University Paris 13-Sorbonne Paris Cité. She was trained in Europe, Canada and the United States. Her most recent books include *Out in Africa: Same-Sex*

Desire in Sub-Saharan Literatures and Cultures (2014); she has recently edited *Transgender Experience: Place, Ethnicity, and Visibility* (with David Coad) (2014); and *The Future of Postcolonial Studies* (2015). She is the Editor-in-Chief of *Postcolonial Text* (www.postcolonial.org).

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En tant que publication de l'Association internationale de littérature comparée, *Recherche littéraire / Literary Research* a pour but de faire connaître aux comparatistes du monde entier les développements récents de la discipline. Dans ce but, la revue publie des comptes rendus de livres significatifs sur des sujets comparatistes, des rapports concernant des congrès professionnels et d'autres événements d'importance pour les membres de l'Association ainsi qu'occasionnellement, des prises de position sur des thématiques relatives à la discipline. *RL/LR* ne publie pas de recherche littéraire comparée.

Les comptes rendus sont écrits en français ou en anglais, les deux langues officielles de l'AILC. Un compte rendu proprement dit comptera entre 1.500 et 2.000 mots. Un essai sur l'état de l'art, sur un ensemble d'ouvrages ou sur un livre ambitieux pourra dépasser 3.500 mots. Des ouvrages collectifs et des numéros de revues spécialisées pourront également faire l'objet d'un compte rendu.

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 comparative literature conferences and events of major significance for comparatists, as well as 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 written in French or English, the two official languages of the ICLA. Book reviews should be between 1,500 to 2,000 words. Review essays about the state of the art, about several related books, or about a work of major significance for the field will be allowed to exceed 3,500 words. Edited volumes and issues of specialized journals will also be considered for review.

Renseignez-vous auprès de / address inquiries to:

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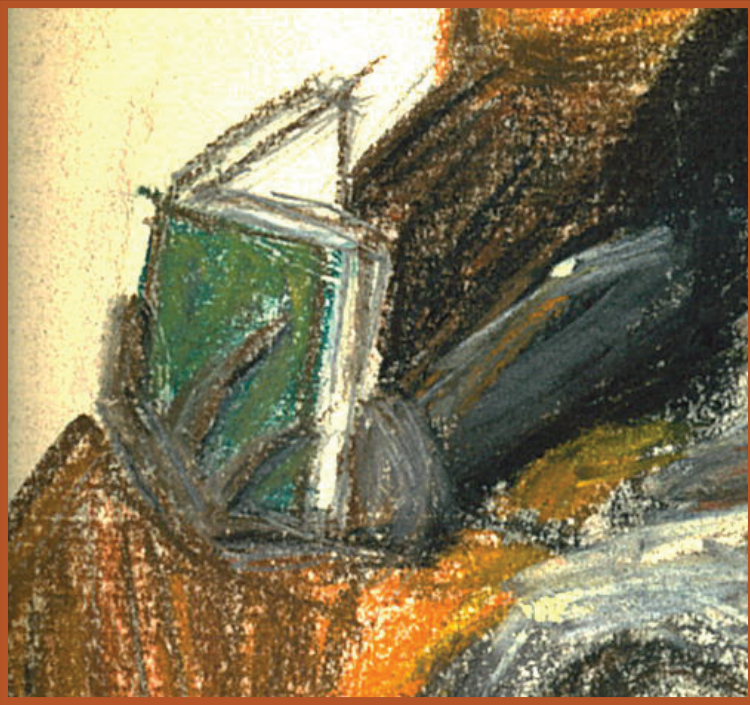
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