The Languages of World Literature

The Many Languages of Comparative Literature / La littérature comparée: multiples langues, multiples langages / Die vielen Sprachen der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft

Collected Papers of the 21st Congress of the ICLA

Edited by
Achim Hölter

Volume 1

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1 Introduction

Achim Hölter

Introduction

1 Preliminary remarks

1.1 Kurze Vorbemerkung

Als ich 2013 gefragt wurde, ob die Abteilung für Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft an der Universität Wien bereit wäre, den XXI. Weltkongress der AILC/ICLA auszurichten, war meine Präsentation beim Pariser Kongress von dem Bewusstsein begleitet, dass uns nur relativ wenig Zeit und vor allem geringe personelle Ressourcen zur Verfügung stehen würden. Die intensive Anbahnung des Kongresses selbst und auch seine Durchführung gelangen jedoch erfreulich gut. Eine Art zu bezahlender Preis war der, dass für die sich üblicherweise anschließende Publikation der proceedings, die bisher fast immer eine längere Zeit beanspruchte, eine Reihe von Problemen auftraten. Zunächst erwies es sich wegen der großen Zahl an Teilnehmer:innen sinnvoll, die Organisatoren von Workshops zum Publizieren separater, thematisch schwerpunkthafter Sammelbände zu ermutigen, die deshalb auch rascher fertig vorliegen konnten. Umgekehrt führte dies freilich dazu, dass der Verbleib jener Papiere, die es zu einer druckreifen Version brachten, schwer zu überblicken war, von der Implementierung des peer review-Verfahrens abgesehen. Dennoch gelang dies, wenn auch in einer längeren Frist, wofür ich allen Kolleg:innen, die dabei halfen, herzlich danken möchte. Für die Publikation jener Papiere, die von den vielen vorgetragenen bei uns eingereicht wurden, konnten wir den De Gruyter Verlag gewinnen, der sowohl eine online-Version im Open-Access-Modus als auch eine fünfbändige Printversion hergestellt hat. Die Distribution auf fünf Teile machte es möglich, dass meine Kolleg:innen Norbert Bachleitner (inzwischen im Ruhestand), Paul Ferstl, Daniel Syrovy und Gianna Zocco (inzwischen in Berlin) jeweils einen Band herausgeben konnten. Ich selbst behielt die Verantwortung für den Band 1, der das Korpus nun – nachdem wir generell deutlich länger benötigt hatten als geplant – noch einmal mit einem etwas schmerzlichen Zeitabstand einleitet und zugleich abschließt. Ohne zu sehr in Details zu gehen, seien die Ursachen für die unbeabsichtigte Verzögerung mit den Stichworten genannt: Finanzen natürlich, Lehr- und Verwaltungslast, Personalwechsel- und ausfälle, Krankheit, was alles ich nur erwähne, um eindeutig zu machen, dass weder der Verlag noch die Autor:innen, die teilweise seit einigen Jahren auf die Drucklegung ihres Beitrags warten, eine Schuld trifft. Ich bitte sehr herzlich um Verständnis, freue mich aber umso mehr, dass die Vielstimmigkeit der Komparatistik, die auf

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dem Wiener AILC/ICLA-Kongress zu hören war, nun wenigstens in einer repräsentativen Auswahl nachlesbar ist.

Wien, Frühjahr 2023

1.2 Brief preliminary remark

When I was asked in 2013 whether the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna would be prepared to host the XXI World Congress of the AILC/ICLA, my presentation at the Paris Congress was accompanied by the awareness that we would have relatively little time and, above all, few human resources at our disposal. However, the intensive preparation of the congress itself and also its realisation worked out exceedingly well. The price to be paid was that a number of problems arose surrounding the subsequent publication of the proceedings, which also previously had almost always been a longer process. First of all, because of the large number of participants, it made sense to encourage the organisers of workshops to publish separate, thematically focused volumes, which could therefore be completed more quickly. Conversely, this meant that it was difficult to keep track of the whereabouts of those papers that made it to a print-ready version, apart from the implementation of the peer review process. Nevertheless, this was achieved, albeit over a longer period of time, for which I would like to thank all the colleagues who helped. For the publication of those papers that were submitted to us out of the many that were presented, we were able to win De Gruyter, who produced both an online version in open access mode and a five-volume print version. The distribution into five parts made it possible for my colleagues Norbert Bachleitner (now emeritus), Paul Ferstl, Daniel Syrovy and Gianna Zocco (now in Berlin) to publish one volume each. I myself retained responsibility for volume 1, which now – after we had generally taken considerably longer than planned – introduces and at the same time concludes the corpus with a somewhat painful time gap. Without going into too much detail, the reasons for the unintentional delay are outlined in the following key words: finance, of course, teaching and administrative overload, staff changes and absences, illness, all of which I mention only to make it clear that neither the publisher nor the authors, some of whom have been waiting for several years for their contributions to be printed, are to blame. I sincerely ask for their understanding, but I am all the more pleased that the polyphony of comparative literature heard at the Vienna AILC/ICLA Congress can eventually be read in a representative selection.

Vienna, spring 2023

1.3 Petite remarque préliminaire

Lorsque l'on m'a demandé en 2013 si le département de Littérature comparée de l'Université de Vienne était prêt à accueillir le XXI[e] Congrès mondial de l'AILC/ICLA, ma présentation au Congrès de Paris était accompagnée de la conscience que nous ne disposerions que de relativement peu de temps et surtout de peu de ressources en personnel. Cependant, la préparation intensive du congrès lui-même et sa réalisation se sont bien déroulées. Une forme de prix à payer a été le délai de la publication des actes; si, comme c'était jusqu'à présent presque la norme, elle a pris beaucoup de temps, elle a été en outre confrontée à une série de problèmes. Tout d'abord, en raison du grand nombre de participante·s, il s'est avéré judicieux d'encourager les organisateurs/organisatrices d'ateliers à publier des recueils séparés, axés sur des thèmes précis, qui pouvaient donc être achevés plus rapidement. Inversement, il était difficile de dépister et obtenir les documents qui étaient prêts à être publiés, en dehors de la mise en œuvre de la procédure d'évaluation par les pairs. Néanmoins, nous y sommes parvenus, bien que dans un délai plus long, et je tiens à remercier tou·te·s les collègues qui nous ont aidés. Pour la publication des articles qui nous ont été soumis, nous avons pu compter sur la maison d'édition De Gruyter, qui a produit à la fois une version en ligne en accès libre et une version imprimée en cinq volumes. La répartition en cinq parties a permis à mes collègues Norbert Bachleitner (désormais émérite), Paul Ferstl, Daniel Syrovy et Gianna Zocco (entre-temps à Berlin) d'éditer chacun·e un volume. J'ai moi-même conservé la responsabilité du tome 1 qui, après avoir pris beaucoup plus de temps que prévu, ouvre et clôt le corpus avec un décalage un peu douloureux. Sans trop entrer dans les détails, les causes de ce retard involontaire sont les suivantes: les finances, bien sûr, surcharge d'enseignement et de tâches administratives, rotation et absences du personnel, maladie, facteurs, que je mentionne uniquement pour bien montrer que ni la maison d'édition ni les auteurs, dont certain·e·s attendent depuis plusieurs années l'impression de leur contribution, n'en sont responsables. Je les remercie de leur compréhension, mais je me réjouis encore davantage que la polyphonie de la littérature comparée, qui a été entendue lors du congrès AILC/ICLA de Vienne, puisse finalement être lue dans une sélection représentative.

Vienne, printemps 2023

2 Thematic introduction

Literature consists of language, written or spoken, and of languages. The double aspect of language as a communication system, in the case of fiction additionally defined by an aesthetic component, and as an idiom, of which there are an esti-

mated 7,000 worldwide, shapes the activity of comparative literature in particular. One could explain that, within the broad field of national and international literary studies, it is precisely comparative literature, which is principally and habitually concerned with the multilingualism of the world. The name of the subject "Comparative Literature" can easily be found in 50 different languages and 50 (very roughly estimated; sometimes this value is undercut, not infrequently it rises to over 100) seems to approximately correspond to the number of languages that actively produce literature in a more emphatic sense and on an international scale. Such an approach, then, still excludes so-called 'small languages', endangered languages, emergent literary languages and those in which orality plays a traditional and major role. In short: the subject area of our discipline is potentially multilingual, and is necessarily so as soon as one dedicates oneself to the field of literary translation. At the same time, however, science is dependent on communication, which must guarantee understanding in several senses: not only through the transfer of texts between languages, but also insofar as the possibility of intersubjectively comprehensible hypothesis formation, discussion and securing of results is concerned. Moreover, in regards to working on the text before speaking of interlingual translation, there is already the confrontation with language as material, with its structures, its semantics, its metaphorics and the fact that all processes of interpretation are already intrinsic translations.

The brief preliminary remarks have been written and discarded at least ten times in the past years. It seems that since 2016, the summer of which saw the 21st AICL/ICLA Congress, the time gap has grown almost exponentially. The Covid pandemic and, since 2022, the ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine are just two eventful, long-lasting caesurae that separate us from a seemingly more carefree time. In addition, there have been, and still are, worrying political polarisations in many states, regardless of their constitution or legislative periods that were or are far from enabling internal and external détente. This global climate has, it can be regrettably observed, not only impaired the organisation of international literary studies as far as the physical meeting is concerned, but has also led to an antagonism between states and, subsidiarily, their cultural systems, which is bringing about the opposite of what worldwide organisations aim to achieve. Traditional factors of tension such as the in-/exclusion of states or ethnic groups that are not generally recognised are the order of the day and also affect the possibilities of cooperation. Beyond these recent deteriorations in the conditions for a comparative literature that is thinking of the future, however, one must concede that even in the last ten to twenty years, an initially subliminal, but now clearly discernible, division of the world into blocs has become noticeable in the humanities. The participation of colleagues from the so-called Global South in congresses in the Northern Hemisphere has always been a financial problem, but not only financial. The

theoretical premises and thematic priorities are by no means always the same in South America, Africa and South Asia as in the so-called Western world. And the fact that fundamental cultural differences, which are precisely the motive for the committed work of a comparative literature aimed at mutual understanding, exist between the West and the Islamic cultural sphere or also a large part of the East Asian domain, is not a new experience. In the meantime, however, an alienation is also becoming visible between the Eastern European sphere, mainly represented by Russia as an important traditional location of literary studies, and the Western sphere of discourse, which is conflated with the academic world of the USA. Whilst the status quo is regrettably shifting from silently working side by side to intentional non-communication, central Europe may undergo some intrinsic tension. This is why literary studies takes a constructive approach to the problem, where, for example, the field of discourse of "Mitteleuropa" (stretching from the domain of the German language across the Baltic and Western Slavonic countries to the Balkans) is activated openly and respectfully, incidentally also under linguistic aspects. The community of the world's comparatists, as they gathered in 2016, could at least claim to have invited people to the University of Vienna in the spirit of maximum tolerance.

The AILC/ICLA is officially and intentionally bilingual. Nevertheless, it turned out that the overwhelming majority of contributions in Vienna were in English, followed by the national language German, and French. On the subsequent occasion of a middle-sized conference in Vienna (cf. *Begegnungen zentraleuropäischer Literaturwissenschaft*, ed. Achim Hölter, Stephan-Immanuel Teichgräber, Paul Ferstl, Berlin 2021) we also experimented with the option of having presentations given live in many European languages, which requires preparatory translation and makes discussions complex. Nevertheless, in a subject that counts linguistic diversity among its contents, the signal was a deliberate one, to not simply contribute to the reduction of the languages in the sciences. On the other hand, this does not change the fact that English dominates in a still growing part of the global scientific world, which is also the case in this volume. The call for papers was published in the three languages mentioned above and is reproduced here verbatim in order to reflect the scope of the framework topic very briefly.

2.1 Die vielen Sprachen der Literaturwissenschaft

Der Ursprung der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft liegt im Vergleich literarischer Texte aus verschiedenen Sprachkulturen. Auch heute noch, nach zahlreichen Wandlungen des komparatistischen Paradigmas und Erweiterungen des

Arbeitsgebietes der Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, ist die Überquerung von Sprachgrenzen eine essentielle Operation des Faches.

Erstmals soll ein Kongress der International Comparative Literature Association nun unter das Leitthema „Sprache“ gestellt werden. Dabei wird die „Sprache“ in vielfältigen Zusammenhängen und Bedeutungen in den Vordergrund treten: als „nationales“ Idiom, in dem ein literarischer Text zunächst verfasst wird, als Ausgangs- bzw. Zielsprache im Prozess der literarischen Übersetzung, als Menge all jener Sprachen, deren literarische Manifestation in der Summe die „Weltliteratur“ bilden, aber auch als Kanon jener Sprachen, auf den sich der gegenwärtige Markt der Weltliteratur real konzentriert. Sprache, ob mündlich oder schriftlich, ist aber nicht nur das selbstverständliche Medium aller Objekte der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, sondern ebenso auch die notwendige Metasprache des wissenschaftlichen Diskurses, der poetologischen Terminologie. Die Vielsprachigkeit der Komparatistik selbst ist dabei zugleich Chance und Problem, eine Chance, insofern die Buntheit und Vielgestaltigkeit der Weltliteratur seit ihren antiken Anfängen stets auch den Reiz und Mehrwert komparatistischer Lektüre ausgemacht hat, ein Problem, insofern die vergleichsweise geringe Sprachauswahl, die auch den polyglottesten Komparatisten zu Gebote steht, den Diskurs stärker bestimmt, als im Alltag einer zunehmend englischsprachigen Wissenskultur bewusst wird.

Sprache wird für diesen Kongress auch im weiteren Sinn betrachtet: als Sprachverwendung sozialer oder ethnischer Trägergruppen der Literatur, als Sprache von Themen und Diskursen und als eigenes Sujet der Literatur, als Ausdruck zentraler Probleme und Ideen, die in den Literaturen der Welt auf vergleichbare Weise verhandelt werden, schließlich auch metaphorisch, als Sprache der Stile und Formen, so dass der unendliche, stets neu zu entziffernde Code, das internationale Zeichensystem der Literatur einerseits immer wieder den Mythos der babylonischen Sprachverwirrung reproduziert, andererseits einer vielsprachlich verfassten Menschheit, ihrer Literatur und der Wissenschaft von dieser Literatur eine dauerhafte Aufgabe stellt.

KONGRESS-SEKTIONEN MIT THEMENVORSCHLÄGEN

A. Die Künste als universeller Code
Sprachen von Form und Genre
Stilsprachen
Sprachen der Metaebene – Zitat, Intertextualität und Metareferenz
Vergleich der Künste: Kunst als universelle Sprache
Sprache und Literatur – allgemeine Semiotik
Verschiedene Medien, verschiedene Ausdrucksformen

B. Sprache – Essenz der Weltliteratur
Der Turm von Babel: Mythen über die Sprache

Sprachen als Thema der Literatur
Sprachen der Welt – Sprachen der Weltliteratur – Weltsprache?
Nation und Sprache
„Translationale“ Literatur
Große Sprachen, kleine Sprachen
Vergleich der Sprachen – ein historischer Impuls der Komparatistik
Sprache und Regionalismus
Sprache der Macht – Sprache des Widerstands
Literarische Übersetzung – Geschichte, Methoden, Märkte

C. Vielfalt der Kulturen, Vielfalt der Idiome
Sprache und Kultur
Kulturelle Bilder und ihre sprachliche Darstellung
Die Sprachen der „Anderen“
Sprache und Identität
Mehrsprachigkeit als traditionelles Phänomen
Mehrsprachigkeit als zeitgenössisches Phänomen
Mehrsprachigkeit als Problem oder Chance
Wer spricht? Komparatistik und die Sozialwissenschaften
Hybridität und Komparatistik
Kulturelle Grenzen überschreiten

D. Die Sprache der Thematologie
Terminologie und Methodologie der Thematologie
Bedeutung – Textinterpretation im komparatistischen Zusammenhang
Renaissance der Metaphorologie
Sprache der Geschlechter – Sprache der Gender
Sprachen der Emotion
Engagierte Sprache – internationale Ökokritik

E. Komparatist(inn)en bei der Arbeit – professionelle Kommunikation
Die Codes der Literaturwissenschaft
Bewertung der Literatur – Sprache der Literaturkritik
Komparatistik als Sprechakt
Verhandlungssache: Der Metadiskurs der Literaturgeschichtsschreibung
Digital humanities
Analytische Philosophie und Logik im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs
Mündlicher und schriftlicher Diskurs
Die vielsprachige Bibliothek der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft
Das Wörterbuch der Komparatistik: Internationale Terminologie

2.2 The Many Languages of Comparative Literature

The comparison of literary texts from different cultural spheres and in different languages was at the origin of comparative literature. Even as comparatist paradigms have changed and developed, and as comparative criticism has expanded considerably, the crossing of borders between languages has remained essential to the discipline.

For the first time, the theme of a congress organised by the International Comparative Literature Association will be "language" – language in all its meanings and various contexts: as a "national" idiom, the basis of literary texts, as source-language and target-language in literary translation, as the set of languages forming "world literature" in its literary manifestation (and as the canon of languages "world literature" is actually concentrating on). Language – both written and spoken – is not just the self-evident medium of all objects of comparative literature, but also the indispensable meta-language of scientific discourse and poetological terminology. The multilingualism of Comparative Literature is both a challenge and an opportunity: from its beginnings, the polymorph diversity of world literature has constituted the attraction and value of comparatist reading; on the other hand, even the most accomplished polyglot comparatist can master only a relatively small range of languages. This fact conditions the discourse more than might be apparent in a culture of knowledge increasingly influenced by the English language.

The congress will also focus on language in its broadest sense: the usage of language by social and ethnic groups as vectors of literature, the language of themes and discourses, language as a literary subject, language as the expression of central problems and ideas negotiated in the various literatures of the world, and even in its metaphorical sense, as "languages" of styles and forms. As an infinite code with constant need for decryption, the international sign system of literature perpetually reproduces the myth of the confusion of tongues and sets new tasks for a multilingual humanity: its literature and its criticism.

CONGRESS SECTIONS WITH SUGGESTED TOPICS

A. The arts as universal code
Languages of form and genre
Languages of style
Language in the second degree – quotation, intertextuality and metareference
Comparing the arts: art as a universal language
Language and literature – general semiotics
Different media, different expressions

B. Language – The essence of world literature
The Tower of Babel: myths about language

Languages as a literary topic
Languages of the world – languages of world literature – world language?
Nation and language
'Translational' literature
'Major' vs. 'minor' languages
The comparison of languages – one origin of literary comparatism
Expressing regionalism
The language of power – the language of resistance
Literary translation: histories, methods, markets

C. Many cultures, many idioms
Language and culture
Cultural images and their linguistic representation
The language of the 'others'
Language and identity
Multilingualism as a traditional phenomenon
Multilingualism as a contemporary phenomenon
Multilingualism – problem or opportunity
Who is speaking? Comparatism and the social sciences
Hybridity and comparatism
Crossing cultural borders

D. The language of thematics
How to speak about themes? Terminology of thematics
Meaning – interpreting texts in a comparatist framework
The renaissance of metaphor studies
Language of the sexes – languages of gender
The languages of emotion
The language of concern – international ecocriticism

E. Comparatists at work – professional communication
The knowledge of literary criticism and its various codes
The evaluation of literature – the language of criticism
Comparatism as a verbal procedure – how to compare with words?
Speaking about: The meta discourse of literary historiography
Digital humanities
Analytical philosophy and logics in the critical discourse
Spoken and written discourse
The multilingual library of comparative literature
The comparatist's dictionary: International terminology

2.3 La littérature comparée : multiples langues, multiples langages

La comparaison des textes littéraires de différentes cultures et diverses langues est sans nul doute l'origine de la littérature comparée, s'affirmant comme discipline universitaire à part entière. Même si l'on a connu de nombreuses mutations du paradigme comparatiste, même si le travail sur le texte littéraire s'est souvent et profondément transformé, il n'en demeure pas moins que la traversée des frontières reste l'une des opérations magistrales et essentielles du comparatisme.

Pour la première fois, les langues et les langages constituent le thème central du congrès de l'Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée, en entendant les langues/les langages dans les sens les plus divers de ces deux mots et en les replaçant dans les contextes les plus variés : par exemple en tant que langues « nationales », utilisées lors de la rédaction originale des textes littéraires ; en les considérant comme langues sources et langues cibles dans l'opération de la traduction littéraire ; en les regardant en tant que somme ou bouquet des langues dont les diverses concrétisations littéraires constituent la « littérature mondiale », et enfin en les embrassant comme « canon de langues », qui reflète le « marché » réel de la littérature mondiale. Du même coup, l'ensemble des langues et des langages – écrit(e)s ou parlé(e)s – n'apparaît pas seulement comme le médium évident de tous les objets d'étude du comparatisme ; cet ensemble représente aussi l'indispensable métalangage du discours critique et de la terminologie poétologique. Le multilinguisme de notre discipline pose sans doute un problème, mais en même temps, il offre également une chance. Une chance, parce que la diversité de la littérature mondiale a toujours été un aspect riche et satisfaisant de l'acte de lecture, et ceci de l'Antiquité jusqu'à nos jours. Un problème sans doute aussi, du fait que le comparatiste le plus brillant et le plus polyglotte ne maîtrise tout de même qu'un nombre d'idiomes plutôt limité. Voilà qui caractérise au plus haut point le discours courant, même si le phénomène est peut-être obscurci par le fait que l'anglais est devenu la lingua franca de toutes les cultures, de toutes les connaissances, dans le monde d'aujourd'hui.

L'intention qui sous-tend la piste ici proposée est aussi de thématiser les langues et les langages dans un sens plus vaste : Entendons par là la pratique linguistique des groupes sociaux ou ethniques variés : quelle est leur langue? Entendons encore par là les langages des thèmes et des discours : comment se disent-ils et se parlent-ils? Entendons toujours par là la langue comme sujet propre de la littérature : le mode d'expression des idées et des problèmes centraux que traitent les littératures diverses. S'y ajouterait aussi, entendu métaphoriquement, la question du langage des styles et des formes littéraires, dont le code perpétuel doit

être toujours déchiffré à nouveau, et ceci alors même que la littérature internationale reproduit sans cesse le mythe – babélien – de la confusion des langages. Pourtant ce défi représente en même temps l'objectif le plus élevé de la littérature, de son analyse critique : comprendre l'humanité, embrasser l'humain dans la multiplicité de ses langages.

SECTIONS DU CONGRÈS AVEC DES SUGGESTIONS THÉMATIQUES

A. Les arts comme code universel
Les langages des formes et des genres
Le langage du style
Le langage au second degré : citation, intertextualité et métaréférence
Les arts comparés : l'art comme langage universel
Langage et littérature – la sémiotique en général
Différences des médias, différences des expressions

B. Langue et langage – l'essence de la littérature mondiale
La Tour de Babel : des mythes métalinguistiques
Langues et langages comme sujets littéraires
Les langues du monde, les langages du monde littéraire, une langue mondiale
Nation et langue
La littérature « translationale »
Langues « majeures », langues « mineures »
Comparaison des langues – une origine de la littérature comparée
L'expression du régionalisme
Langue/langage du pouvoir – langue/langage de la résistance
La traduction littéraire : histoire, méthodes, marchés

C. Plusieurs cultures, plusieurs idiomes
Langue et culture
Les images des cultures et leur représentation linguistique
La langue/ le langage des « autres »
Langage et identité
Le multilinguisme : phénomène historique/traditionnel
Le multilinguisme contemporain
Le multilinguisme : problème ou chance ?
Qui parle ? Comparatisme et sciences sociales
L'hybridité et le comparatisme
Franchir les frontières culturelles

D. Le langage de la thématique
Comment parler de la thématique ? Terminologie des études thématologiques

Texte et signification – l'interprétation dans le contexte comparatiste
La renaissance de la métaphorologie
Langage du sexe – langage du genre
Les langages de l'émotion
Le langage engagé – l'éco-critique internationale/les humanités environnementales

E. Les comparatistes au travail – la communication professionnelle
Les codes divers de la critique littéraire
L'évaluation de la littérature – le langage de la critique littéraire
Le comparatisme parlé – comment comparer avec des mots ?
‹ À propos de ›: le métadiscours de l'historiographie littéraire
Les humanités numériques
La philosophie analytique et la logique dans le discours critique
Discours oral et discours écrit
La bibliothèque polyglotte de la littérature comparée
Le dictionnaire comparatiste : terminologies internationales

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Of course, not all aspects of the call were taken up equally. Nevertheless, as expected, it turned out that the field of literary translation in particular and that of translation phenomena in general are being dealt with intensively, as is multilingualism as a topic of literary studies, for example in the form of plurilingual texts (with a possible special case for the topic of linguistic geniuses, which appears again and again in texts, more often, by the way, than real persons mastering dozens of idioms in our discipline's reality), admittedly less so as a problem. In this context, it is recognisable that both the question of the conception of scientific language per se and that of the concrete idiom – one might also say: the question of the hegemony of English – will be a decisive topic for future debates. This issue is reflected in the discourse on world literature, which for some is a phenomenon fulfilled in the concert of many different voices, but for others is a canon of texts whose cultural background is multicultural, but which only find a hearing through the filter of a powerful world language and its literary market. The observation of international exchange in the form of translations is an urgent desideratum, for mercantile conditions are changing rapidly. Future conferences may look at other aspects of linguistic transfer in literature or in literary adaptations: the transfer of opera libretti or comics, the dubbing and subtitling of films, even through to sign language as a transfer medium for texts, all in international comparison, and certainly the growing possibilities of automated literary translation and its consequences.

This volume also focuses on lexicography and how many languages comparative studies can count among the active ones. What cannot yet be determined

through the indexing of real existing books, and possibly also web pages, is how formalistic terminology will develop in the coming decades, whether it will be reduced, whether it will become more transparent thanks to universally available IT and AI solutions, how precision can prevail, or even whether or not a more culturally diverse, quasi fairer multiplicity will emerge – perhaps only, but certainly at the very least in the field of ethnogeographically typical terms and genres. World literature actually also implies world languages – how will the canon of the most widely spoken languages develop globally and how will literary markets possibly coalesce? The fact that literary studies also speaks different languages, regardless of national idioms, is closely linked to the methodological landscape. Here, in the idiosyncratic language use of some approaches, there is also a tendency towards exclusivity as well as exclusion. The humanities have almost never subordinated their use of language to the postulate of global comprehensibility; the language of literary studies strives far more often for elegance, playfulness and impression-making than for accuracy, which can often only be achieved at the price of sobriety, even monotony. A literary science based on analytical philosophy would plead for the greatest possible neutrality, a position that tends not to be shared by the majority of the participants in the discourse.

One aspect that still played a subordinate role at the time of the congress has rapidly come to the fore in the very last few years, namely the use of language from the point of view of critical race theory and gender theory. Whether, and how, ethnic criteria or gender issues are spoken and written about in academic discourse, orally or in writing, situationally or systematically, is the subject of lively debate in many countries. There is no question that these open disputes are also reflected in literary texts that have recently been created or are in the process of being created. And not only there, but also, more recently, in the field of translation, as the handling of details that are today understood as linguistic taboos, but are integral parts of textual originals, does not seem to have been clarified at all in editing and publishing. This, then, poses a difficulty regarding how translators should currently behave towards older texts that do not everywhere conform to the written or supposed norms of the present, not to mention the latest contemporary texts on which comprehensive expectations of the language use of today's authors rest. One last point should be mentioned in this context: thematology. Since narratives, poetry, drama and all other forms of literature reflect reality in some way, literary studies with an interest in thematology and/or cultural studies must capture in language the content of all cultural representations, be they texts, graphic novels, films or otherwise. It follows that a plethora of linguistic conventions of earlier epochs or other cultures must be treated with philological or humane respect on the one hand, but that on the other hand a correct, as well as sensitive, handling of the texts is called for whenever and wherever

general categories are mentioned, particularly those comprising human beings. This means that presumably lexicographical and lexicological work on ethnic, professional or personal categories, just like images, clichés and prejudices, will be given great weight in the discourse on materials, motifs and topoi. Will keywords be renamed, will they be relativised in inverted commas; how far does the social debate about fair language penetrate? If this topic had been so flagrant a few years ago, we would probably have devoted a lively section to it in Vienna.

3 Conference Report

On the occasion of its Paris meeting in 2013, the general assembly of the ICLA decided that the next congress was to take place at the University of Vienna, Austria.[1] Among the local researchers and teachers in the field of comparatism, an organisational team was created with Achim Hermann Hölter as chair and Norbert Bachleitner and Christine Ivanovic as vice-chairs. Paul Ferstl, who also coordinated the programme, and Constanze Prasek acted as senior assistants. Naturally, the organising committee has to thank many other colleagues and helpers for their passionate support. The XXIst Congress of the ICLA took place from 21 to 27 July 2016 at Vienna University. More than 1,500 international participants engaged with the main topic, "The many languages of comparative literature / La littérature comparée – multiples langues, multiples langages / Die vielen Sprachen der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft," in numerous workshops and lectures. Due to then-current political developments, some Turkish colleagues were unable to attend. The ICLA presidency delivered a note of protest to the Turkish ambassador in Vienna. For the first time, the theme of a congress organised by the International Comparative Literature Association involved "language" in all its meanings, embedded in various contexts: as a "national" idiom forming the basis of a literary text, as source and target language in literary translation, as the set of languages forming "world literature" in its literary manifestation, as the canon of languages "world literature" is actually concentrating on, and finally as terminology – a transnational tool-kit more vital than ever to a multilingual scientific community. Paradoxically enough, the ever-growing dominance of English made itself felt even in the AILC/ICLA biotope. Among the 383 single papers presented at the congress, forty-nine were delivered in German, sixty-four in French, and 271 in English. The congress also focused on language in its broadest sense: the language usage of social and ethnic groups as vectors of liter-

1 As published in: *Recherche littéraire – Literary Research* 33, 2017, 255–260.

ature, the language of themes and discourses, language as a literary subject, language as the expression of central problems and ideas negotiated in various literatures of the world, and even language in its metaphorical sense, as "languages" of styles and forms.

The opening ceremony was held on 21 July, with words of greetings offered by Heinz W. Engl (Rector of the University of Vienna), Achim Hermann Hölter (Chair of the Organising Committee of ICLA 2016), Hans Bertens (President of the ICLA), Matthias Meyer (Dean of the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies, University of Vienna), Antje Wischmann (Deputy Head of the Department of European and Comparative Literature and Language Studies, University of Vienna), and Frank La Rue (UNESCO Assistant Director General, Head of the Communication and Information sector). The latter presented the Memory of the World Programme (MoW) and suggested a possible collaboration between ICLA and UNESCO MoW. These aspects were discussed further during the special panel entitled "How Can Comparative Literature and the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme Cooperate?" (26 July). During this session, statements were made by Hans W. Bertens (President, ICLA), Lothar Jordan (Vice-President, Memory of the World International Advisory Committee; Chair of the MoW Sub-Committee on Education and Research), Dietrich Schuller (Austrian National Commission for UNESCO, Chair of the Austrian MoW Committee, Member of the MoW International Advisory Committee), David Sutton (Reading, UK), Galina Alexeeva (Leo Tolstoy Museum Estate Yasnaya Polyana, Russian Federation; Chair of the ICLM [International Committee for Literary Museums] in ICOM), Achim Hermann Hölter (University of Vienna, Austria), and Jan Bos (National Library, The Hague, Netherlands; Chair of the MoW Register Sub-Committee). An address was subsequently delivered by Abdulla El Reyes (Abu Dhabi, UAE, President of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme). It was followed by a concluding panel discussion with Hans W. Bertens, Achim Hermann Hölter, Abdulla El Reyes, Jan Bos, and Lothar Jordan.

As the general theme allowed for a broad variety of approaches, participants could take part in one (or several) of a total of 125 group sections in the form of seminars and round tables, or choose to present their paper in one of the five major streams of the overall "language" topic. As had to be expected with this relatively novel approach, the praxeological section "Comparatists at Work/Professional Communication" was, with eighteen papers, the least frequented. The "Language of Thematics" section, which doubtlessly foregrounded one of the traditional strongholds of comparatism, comprised fourty-nine papers. The "Arts as Universal Code" section, quite astonishingly, gathered no less than eighty-seven scholars, who explored questions related to Comparative Arts/Interart Studies, intermediality, and adjacent subjects. The two groups dealing with language itself ("Language – The Essence of World Literature") and the interconnection between

multilingualism and multiculturalism ("Many Cultures, Many Idioms") each attracted more than a hundred contributors (112 and 117 papers, respectively).

Five round table discussions further elaborated on particular topics from the five main panels. The underlying aim of the organisers was to make these five axes clearly visible and productive throughout the congress. Haun Saussy, Christine A. Knoop, Achim Hermann Hölter, and Marc-Mathieu Münch contributed to the discussion on "The Current Interest in Comparative Arts/Interart Studies" (Panel A: The Arts as Universal Code), which was hosted by Gerald Gillespie on 26 July. Hans W. Bertens, Ipshita Chanda, Adams Bodomo, Sandra Bermann, and Achim Hermann Hölter (discussion leader) exchanged their views in the panel entitled "On Terminology, Dictionaries, and the Languages of Comparatism" (Panel B: Language–the Essence of World Literature) on 23 July. Dorothy Figueira on 22 July moderated a debate on the question "Has Comparatism Turned into World Wide Cultural Studies?" (Panel C: Many Cultures, Many Idioms), in which Isabel Capeloa Gil and Zhang Longxi participated. Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, Achim Hermann Hölter, and Gianna Zocco exchanged views on "Current Trends in Thematic Studies" (Panel D: The Language of Thematics) in a session led by Hendrik Birus on 25 July. Finally, Steven Sondrup and Cho Sung-Won shared their thoughts on "Comparative Literature and the 'Practice Turn'" (Panel E: Comparatists at Work) with Achim Hermann Hölter on 26 July.

All in all, the 125 group sections focused on a wide range of topics examined in some 1,063 papers. Each of the five largest seminars deserving particular mention hosted between nineteen and twenty-five lectures and contributions, namely "Productivity of Plagiarism" presented by Larissa Polubojarinova, Charlotte Krauss, and Christine Baron; "Comparison and Intermediality" organised by Massimo Fusillo and Marina Grishakova; "Sprache der Migration. Migration der Sprache" devised by Sandro M. Moraldo and William Franke; "Interferenzen" prepared by Sebastian Donat, Martin Sexl, Monika Raic, and Martin Fritz; and lastly "South Asian Pathways" organised by Chandra Mohan for the Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI).

The first keynote lecture was delivered by Dame Marina Warner (Birkbeck, University of London, UK) on 21 July, as part of the opening ceremony with the introduction and chair by Sowon Park (University of California Santa Barbara, CA/US). It focused on "Magical Writing: Oracles, Curses, & Further Preventive Measures." Marina Warner also offered a workshop on "Orienting Wonder" on 22 July. On 22 July, Joep Leerssen (Academy Professor of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences) was invited by the Austrian Academy of Sciences (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften) to present a keynote lecture entitled "Behind Gutenberg's Back: World Literature beyond Print Culture." This event took place in the ceremonial hall of the Academy. Leerssen was welcomed

and introduced on behalf of the Academy by Waldemar Zacharasiewicz (University of Vienna, Austria). A panel discussion on 23 July, "Theory, World Literature and the Politics of Translation," placed in conversation Emily Apter (New York University, NY, US) and David Damrosch (Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, US). This session, introduced by Christian Moser (University of Bonn, Germany), was organised and hosted by the German Comparative Literature Association in collaboration with the Swiss Comparative Literature Association. Christian Moser chaired this keynote presentation together with Markus Winkler (Université de Genève, Switzerland). Further, two distinguished literary guests presented their work during plenary sessions. On 25 July, the famous Austrian author Christoph Ransmayr, who was decorated with both the "Prix Jean Monnet de littérature européenne" and the "Prix du meilleur livre étranger" in 2015, read from the English translation of his "Atlas of an Anxious Man" (Simon Pare). On 26 July, in a session entitled "In jeder Sprache sitzen andere Augen," Nobel prize laureate Herta Müller, who had already been invited to the Seoul ICLA congress in 2010, talked about language with journalist Angelika Klammer. This conversation included readings from her novel *Atemschaukel* and a presentation of hitherto unpublished poetic collages. Herta Müller's talk was translated live by Caterina Grasl from the Department of English, University of Vienna.

Further distinguished lectures were given by the following: Waldemar Zacharasiewicz (University of Vienna, Austria), "The Confluence of Ethnic Voices in Urban America: John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* and Henry Roth, *Call It Sleep*"; E.V. Ramakrishnan (Comparative Literature Association of India, Kolkata, India), "From Reception to Resistance: The Many Languages of Indian Modernism"; Vladimir Biti (University of Vienna, Austria), Past Empire(s), Post-Empire(s), and the Narratives of Disaster: Joseph Roth's *The Radetzky March* and Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge over the Drina*"; Isabel Capeloa Gil (Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Lisbon, Portugal), "From peripheral to alternative and back: Contemporary meanings of modernity"; Hendrik Birus (Jacobs University Bremen, Germany), "Zur Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen"; and finally, Peter V. Zima (Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, Austria), "Krise und Kritik der Sprache in vielen Sprachen" (replaced in this volume by: "Ähnlichkeit und Differenz in der Komparatistik. Der Vergleich als Begriffsbestimmung"). An exhibition by publishers and service providers who specialised in literary studies was also held in conjunction with the congress. Organised in the courtyard of the main university building, this event sought to promote the exchange of information on recent publications in the field of comparative literature. Another exhibition in Vienna University Library displayed dictionaries of critical terminology in dozens of languages, translations of Thomas Mann's novel *Der Zauberberg* in numerous world languages, publications by the members of the Viennese Department of Comparative Literature, selected copies and a complete list of PhD

and MA theses by local students, and, last but not least, almost all of the published proceedings of previous ICLA congresses.

Throughout the whole week of the conference, the "ICLA on stage" initiative – organised by members of the Department of Comparative Literature at the University of Vienna – enabled participants to read and listen to texts written in the many languages of literature in the courtyard of the main building of the university.

The numerous events and lectures of this congress could not have been put together without the financial support of a number of generous sponsors, nor without the devoted and indefatigable help of eighty student volunteers from the Comparative Literature BA and MA Course of Studies.

The closing ceremony, which took place on 27 July, included a farewell speech by the outgoing president Hans Bertens and words of welcome by the new president Zhang Longxi. Looking ahead to future developments, a Chinese delegation took this opportunity to introduce the city of Shenzhen, which was to host the XXIInd Congress of the ICLA in 2019.

4 Languages of World Literature

Regarding the compilation of the contributions in this 1st volume, it should be noted that they represent an attempt to approximately map the thematic affinities in five groups, with "Towards a New World Literature" corresponding to a workshop organised by Gisela Brinker-Gabler (†). All sections are simply arranged alphabetically in themselves, except the keynotes, which begin with Marina Warner's opening lecture, and Mária Bátorová's section, whose papers are arranged in the order chosen by the organiser.

The vast field of "Languages and World Literature" is surrounded by six cornerstones in the form of substantial keynotes, and looks into the act of writing and the various functions of speech acts, how literary language can deal with fate, danger and trauma both past and present, and how the many voices and languages of multi-lingual modern societies shape the literatures of the world. What are the limits and possibilities of literary translation, how does literature speak the many languages of today, and how can we reconsider "modernism" and literary history in a changing world? Going back to the very roots of literature, into the depths of ancient myths, spells, prophecies and curses, Marina Warner looks into the functions and the reception of magical writing, spanning an arc into contemporary literature and the literary use of these speech acts by writers of today, in order to comment on the present world. "What's in a name?" could have been an alternative titles to Hendrik Birus' keynote on the translatability of literary names. Proper nouns,

though untranslatable by definition, are often highly suggestive, carrying a certain sound, hidden resonances and allusions as well as actual meanings for the respective native reader. By differentiating between embodied names, talking names (abundant especially in Shakespeare's comedies and always a welcome challenge for translators) and suggestive names, Birus shows the whole range of the possibilities and limits of translatability. The headline "Languages and World Literature" indicates the constant struggle to find a language for a changing world, for things falling apart and the breakup of alleged certainties. Vladimir Biti looks into these "narratives of disaster" with the example of two substantial novels from East-Central Europe: Joseph Roth's *Radetzkymarsch* and Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge over the Drina*, both dealing with historical turning points, the disintegration of Empires and families, trying to provide answers to collective as well as personal trauma. Isabel Capeloa Gil discusses various contemporary meanings and attempts of (re-)definifing modernity, arguing in favour of the "peripheral" view of questioning supposed certainties from a shifting standpoint, illustrated by examples from modern Iberian literature (Fernando Pessoa and Amadeo Souza Cardoso). The Eurocentric definition of modernity gives way to a moving peripheral view that can reflect the heterogeneity and polyphony of the world. Scholars of comparative literature are used to the question "What do you compare?" Joep Leersen reminds us that literature does not always have to come in the form of printed texts, and encourages the comparatists of today to broaden their horizon by taking non-printed and non-written forms into account. To think outside the box here means to think outside the book. E.V. Ramakrishnan uses examples from four of the many literary languages of India to explain how, in the course of British colonisation, the contact with Western literary criticism and its assimilation into the existing Indian traditions led to the development of new literary genres and new scientific terms in India, redefining the view of Indian authors on literature, and shaping modernist Indian literature up to the present day. The background of many works of North-American literature in the first decades of the twentieth century is formed by immigration, migration, the co-existence and melting of diverse ethnic voices. Waldemar Zacharasiewicz takes the example of two modernist New York novels, John Dos Passos' great panorama *Manhattan Transfer* and Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep*, set in the Lower East Side, to demonstrate the literary strategies, which make audible the many different human voices of New York in literature. Finally, Peter V. Zima looks into the potential of "comparison" itself and the theoretical significance of comparative literature, showing comparison as a tool to develop and refine definitions of literary, philosophical and linguistical phenomena and terms in an intercultural context.

Both the single and workshop papers are briefly characterised following the arrangement explained above: How can a new, global literature reflect new,

global forms of war? How do new military technologies, long-distance warfare and especially the drone's "view from above" influence the technologies of writing and the writer's view? On the example of Thomas Lehr's *September*, Kevin Powers' *The Yellow Birds* and David Mitchell's *The Bone Clocks*, Dana Bönisch discusses the poetics of war. A changing world demands new theoretical approaches to scientific literary description and analysis. Gisela Brinker-Gabler (†) develops "translocal constellation" as a tool to analyse mobility and migration in contemporary literature, exemplified by Emine Sevgi Özdamar's story *The Courtyard in the Mirror* and Teju Cole's novel *Open City*. On the way "towards a new world literature", writers reflect migration, the melting of voices and the search for an appropriate language. These challenges on the larger scale go hand in hand with an increasing interest for the individual roots and the reaffirmation of identity. Italy with its many diverse regions offers particularly good examples of strong local cultural identities. Giovanni Dettori analyses the Sardinian novel *Bellas Mariposas* by Sergio Atzeni as one of these individual voices in modern Italian literature. The literatures of migration from modern East-Central Europe are still very much influenced by the epochal turn caused by the end of socialism, leading to shattered identities and hybrid, displaced existences. On the basis of three texts, *Why is the Child Cooking in the Polenta?* by Aglaja Veteranyi, *The Black Madonna of Derby* and *Sweetest Enemy* by Joanna Czechowska, Cristina Şandru explores the nuances between exile writing and diasporic writing. Elke Segelcke examines the literary and essayistic work of the Turkish-German author Zafer Şenocak and his poetics, focusing on the problems of literary and cultural translatability in texts that do not respond to traditional literary interpretations based on the categories of national/world literature. She concludes on the ongoing importance of cultural communication and mediation in the face of "negative hermeneutics".

Mária Bátorová contributed two essays. Her first text focuses on the author as a creating individual, defining the parameters of authorship as a category, in contrast to the postmodern 'disappearance' of the author. In her second essay, she discusses intertextual relations between Norwegian art (Edvard Munch) and Slovak literature (Jozef Cíger Hronský), introducing the latter to the critical discourse on modernity. What is next in line after modernism and postmodernism? Krištof Anetta shares his thoughts on new paradigms in literary theory and presents the American "New Sincerity" as a possible way to return from the ironic distance of postmodernism to an engagement with the realities of existence. Are we back on the road to a realistic literature? And how could literary theory and literary education benefit from a "neo-sincere" approach that brings literature back into the public sphere? The categories of author, text and reader come together in the work of the prominent Hungarian author Péter Esterházy, which Lívia Paszmár shows to be of genuine intertextuality, a literary trait that

made his work interesting and accessible for reception in other languages. With the example of Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Museum Of Innocence*, Monika Schmitz-Emans illuminates the cultural and literary interdependencies between the concepts of 'author' and 'collector', how storytelling can be seen as collecting, and collecting as a creative act with an inner poetics of its own, both serving the process of remembrance. Using the prose works of Schnitzler and Zweig, Katarína Zechelová explores the overlapping boundaries between communication and "non-communication", between speech act and silence on the theoretical basis of studies by Dionýz Ďurišin und Mária Bátorová. Tibor Žilka follows the traces of different forms of metafictional writing in Slovak Prose from the end of the 1990s to the present, giving an overview on (post)modern literature in Slovakia with a special focus on examples from Alexandra Salmela and Pavel Vilikovský.

John M. Kopper focuses on the "conundrum of temporal and spatial displacement" in emigrant literature, using the example of two texts on Russian emigrants in France from different eras: Nina Berberova's *Poslednie i pervye* (1930) and Andrei Makine's *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* (2009), both dealing with the emigrants', often futile, approaches to make their exile a temporary home, while constantly fearing to lose both their language and cultural identity. From a didactical background, Arndt Kremer introduces Herder's and Wilhelm von Humboldt's humanistic and intercultural philosophies of language as positive role models for modern multilingualism, especially in schools, where the idea of language as a world view can give equal voices and values to all languages in a modern world of linguistic diversity. From the language of philosophy to the philosophies of language: Katie Lally reads the works of Clarice Lispector and Stefan Zweig through the lens of their respective literary reception of Baruch Spinoza, gaining valuable insights into their world of thought in challenging and changing times. Stefania Rutigliano highlights the various aspects of multilingualism in Carlo Michelstaedter's work, especially in *Persuasion and Rhetoric*, and his critical reflections on „the language of persuasion", individual identity and the crisis of language and communication in Western culture. Back to where it all began: Eva Miriam Simon returns to one of the founding fathers of modern comparative literature and his famous comparative text, August Wilhelm Schlegel's *La Comparaison entre la Phèdre de Racine et celle d'Euripide*, and examines the extent to which Schlegel does justice to his own premises on literary criticism in this text. The wish to overcome linguistic barriers by creating one universal language has occupied humans throughout time. Gerhard F. Strasser presents early Jesuit ideas that are based on numerical combinations rather than on linguistic or philosophical systems, among them Athanasius Kircher's *Polygraphia* from 1663, and the approach of J.J. Becher, who exchanged the numbers for newly invented graphic characters (1661), trying to leave all traditional signs behind.

Karim Abuawad looks into the language of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, exploring the destructive functions of metaphorical writing on the idea of national identity, as well as its potential for being a tool of literary resistance, where the metaphor itself erodes the narrative from within, finally disappearing into nothing. Andrés Claro's article examines how the dominant figurations of the poetic image synthesise the characteristic metaphysical-temporal configurations of the real. The examination of three poems by authors who are classics in their respective traditions (Horace, Tu Fu, and Ezra Pound) opens the way to a reflection on how their primary poetic concepts (analogical metaphor in classical poetics, correlative parallelism in Chinese poetics, and the fragmentation-juxtaposition of montage in contemporary poetics) project characteristic metaphysical-temporal configurations, i.e. the comparison and substitutive referral from the sense-image to the idea in classical ontology, the Tao or process of correlative unfolding in the Chinese tradition, and that conception of interruption amidst simultaneity which increasingly defines contemporary representation. One of the most common forms of intertextual reference is the quotation from a foreign language. Ana González-Rivas dedicates her essay to the surprisingly frequent use of Latin quotations in Gothic literature, examining the degree to which this stylistic device contributes to the meaning of the story, and why authors knowingly chose (sometimes cryptic) quotations from a „dead" language to add weight and atmosphere to their stories. A whole spectrum of intertextuality and its different functions can be found in the work of Roberto Bolaño, which may be seen as a "manual for the use of literature", as shown by Zofia Grzesiak, with a special focus on the blending roles of author and reader, literature and life. The language of love is the focus of Alicia Hostein's reading of *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (1781) and *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), with the aim of identifying and explaining the dialectic of the two reciprocally dependent categories of "love" and "passion" in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Ekaterina Kondratyeva follows the traces of the originally American avant-garde movement of „language poetry" into French literature, finding strategies towards a universal discourse and a new humanism in the works of Hédi Bouraoui, Valérie Rouzeau and Céline Zins. Ya-huei Lin re-reads the transcendental writings of Henry David Thoreau and others in the light of current ecological problems and mankind's language-based relationship with nature, deriving a concrete call for responsible action from literature. In Jorge Luis Borges' famous story "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" the reader enters an alternative universe of ambiguity and uncertainty, where the usual structure of language does not exist. Bill Richardson suggests that the lack of resolution and the impossibility of knowledge or understanding are the point of the story, it being a tale about the nature of language itself, where the answer to all questions remains unreachable in the centre of the labyrinth.

Julia Bacskai-Atkari compares two literary adaptations of the biblical story of Cain with a focus on the use of language between the two brothers: In Byron's *Cain* they are alienated beyond the prospect of reconciliation and unable to find a common language, while in Christoph Ransmayr's novel *Der fliegende Berg* they reconnect, also lingustically, during a dangerous trip in the Tibetan mountains. Fausto De Michele looks into the polysystematic theory of world literature as introduced by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury, and the role and definition of translations as re-writings, building a system of their own within the polysystem, which also includes cinematic adaptations of literature. Michaela Frey focuses on various forms and functions of translation in J.M. Coetzee's novel *Foe* (including the concept of cultural translation), and the inherent possibilities of (mis)understanding, raising questions of authorship and shedding a light also on the marginalised positions and "the Other" that become visible in the gaps of translation. The work of the German contemporary poet Uljana Wolf, who explores the linguistic borders between different countries and cultures, is presented by Katrin Gunkel as an example for translingual and transcultural poetry in a modern gobalised world. The literary influence of the writers of the *nouveau roman* (especially Alain Robbe-Grillet) on the writings of Julio Cortázar and Italo Calvino are at the centre of Jèssica Pujol Duran's comparative analysis of Cortázar's *Historias de cronopios y famas* (1962), *62: Modelo para armar* (1968), and Calvino's *Le cosmicomiche* (1968). Haun Saussy explores the shifting borders between languages and the uncertain linguistic identities in the realities of an ever-moving world, where individual speech is, to varying degrees, always mingling with other languages, creating a hybrid pattern of cross-linguistic word borrowing. What does that mean for the possibilities of translation? Barbara Seidl is also moving through "translingual borderlands", focusing especially on the metaphor of 'silence' in Anna Kazumi Stahl's *Flores de un solo día* and Shirley Geok-lin Lim's *Among the White Moon Faces* as a signal of untranslatability, which marks the empty space in the contact zone between a monolingual language system and the cultural heterogeneity of today. Miloš Zelenka emphasises the contribution of Czech-Slovak comparative literature to the current debate on world literature, focusing on the works of Dionýz Ďurišin and Frank Wollman, whose theories and definitions of world literature as an aesthetic reception of texts through translations (i.e. a way of reading) have been taken up and developed further by Western comparatists to the current day.

Other contributions to this volume are first of all the summarised minutes of five round tables, each of which brought together between three and five scholars on a current framework topic. *The Arts as Universal Code* (A) was chaired by Gerald Gillespie, Language: *The Essence of World Literature* (B) and *Comparative Literature and the Practical Turn* (E) by Achim Hölter, *Has Comparatism Turned into*

Worldwide Cultural Studies? (C) by Dorothy Figueira, and *The Language of Thematics* (D) by Hendrik Birus. A special workshop was dedicated to the cooperation of comparative studies in general and the AILC/ICLA in particular with UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme. It was attended by Dietrich Schüller, Galina Alekseeva, Lothar Jordan, Jan Bos, David Sutton and Achim Hölter. The more detailed contributions of the latter four are printed in updated form in this volume.

Five longer, mostly service-oriented contributions are offered as an annex. First, there is a short reflection on the future of comparative literature in Europe. The documentation by Volker Michel and Jakob Jung presents a current web-based service for research and study in our discipline: avldigital.de. This is followed by two bibliographies framed with systematic reflections, both based on the book exhibition that accompanied the Congress of Vienna in the University Library. One, in keeping with the overall theme of the conference, is about the lexicography of general and comparative literature, worldwide and in many languages, whilst the second is about Thomas Mann's famous novel *Der Zauberberg* (*The Magic Mountain*) as a paradigm of translation into numerous world languages. This, partly documentary, final section is rounded off by a brief overview of papers from the 2016 congress that were published elsewhere.

5 Acknowledgements

This is the place to say thanks. To my colleagues from the former executive council of the AILC/ICLA and especially Hans Bertens as outgoing president and Zhang Longxi as then newly elected president as well as John Burt Foster as secretary. To the outgoing Dean of the Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies, Matthias Meyer, and Heinz Engl, Rector of the University of Vienna, for their hospitality, to Vienna University Library and the City of Vienna, to the Federal Chancellery of the Austrian Republic and the Austrian Academy of Sciences, to UNESCO and the Academia Europaea, the Leopold Museum (and Stefan Kutzenberger for the guided visit) and the Austrian National Library, to the Universities of Salzburg, Graz, and Innsbruck, the German and Swiss Comparative Literature Association, to Erste Foundation for substantial support, and many others that cannot be named here. Thanks to the Event Management of our university, particularly to Gerry Schneider and Ulla Schröttner-Berning.

As for talks and lectures, we enjoyed a wonderful keynote by Marina Warner at the opening, and a stirring address by the first UNESCO representative Frank La Rue. We listened to an excellent keynote lecture by Joep Leerssen in the beautiful baroque building of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and an enthralling

talk between Emily Apter and David Damrosch. Furthermore, numerous distinguished lectures, mentioned above, delivered by Vladimir Biti, who also represented our partner, the Academia Europaea, Hendrik Birus, Isabel Capeloa Gil, E.V. Ramakrishnan, Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, and Peter Zima. All of this in addition to another emphatic address by UNESCO MoW president Abdulla Al Raisi. Plus, literary lectures by one of the most famous Austrian novelists, Christoph Ransmayr, and Nobel Prize Bearer Herta Müller, chaired by Angelika Klammer and translated by Caterina Grasl.

I would also like to include a word of mourning, for Gisela Brinker-Gabler, who passed away on June 6, 2019, and Steven Sondrup, former president of the AILC/ICLA, who left us on November 10, 2020. Both will never be forgotten in the community of Comparative Literature.

The planning and implementation of the ICLA 2016 conference would never have been possible without the great support and commitment of so many colleagues, staff, students and volunteers, who helped admirably during the preparation phase, with the conference itself and subsequently with the printing of this volume.

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The AILC/ICLA 2016 congress in Vienna would not have been possible without the volunteers, all in all 79 more students not yet mentioned above, who have always willingly and, as I hope, joyfully, helped to register people, explain what needed explanation, show participants the way, serve drinks and food, and simply did everything they possibly could to make this conference agreeable. Thank you: Roxanne Bakowsky, Julia Maria Bauer, Britta Birnbacher, Ines Breiner, Bettina Buchbauer, Sabrina Christof, Helena Doppelbauer, Sophia Ebner, Sophie Esslinger, Birgit Fencl, Ariane Fiala, Christiane Nina Maria Fischer, Bettina Fischer, Sandra Folie, Stefanie Fridrik, Elena Fürst, Tamara Giefing, Ganna Gnedkova, Susanne Graf, Michael Heckenast, Claudia Hergert, Mareike Hoff, Martha Höschel, Judith Huber, Peter Marius Huemer, Aurelia Hutterer, Susanne Junker, Stephanie Kampas, Jacqueline Kanta, Marijeta Karlovic Graf, Juliana Nasrin Khaladj, Laura Kisser, Sandra Klim, Denise Kohl, Thomas Kohlwein, Maria Kordasch, Bettina Kreuch, Katrin Kühnert, Franziska Lamp, Hanna Lauter, Stefan Lessmann, Theresa Mallmann, Anna Maschik, Kristina Matic, Christine Mayrhofer, Hannah Mühlparzer, Ivan Petrovic, Claudia-Elena Pinzaru, Petra Polak, Marie-Helene Polt, Lukas Prebio, Flora Püspök, Katharina Pütz, Carmen Reisinger, Linn Ritsch, Julia Christiane Ritter, Lekë Salihu, Vanessa Sampaio Borgmann, Luana Schäfer, Sarah Scharrer, Verena Schmid, Katharina Schmid-Schmidsfelsen, Iris Schmidinger, Sabrina Schmidt, Desire Seidl, Sophie Emilia Seidler, Eva Spiegelhofer, Katarina Stadler, Kevin Strobl, Julia Tucheslau, Erika Unterpertinger, Valerie Vrbecky, Victoria Waba, Jana Waldhör, Raffael Weger, Zarah Weiss, Sarah Wipauer, Bettina Wurzer, Lisa Stefanie Zesar. I can proudly say that the vast majority of them have meanwhile successfully completed their studies in Comparative Literature in Vienna, many with an excellent Master's degree, and some even with a PhD, which will lead them to a further career in the field we all are devoted to.

2 Keynotes

Marina Warner

Communities of Fate: Magical Writing and Contemporary Fabulism

Abstract: Prophecies or curses often open a myth or fairy tale, and the story subsequently unfolds in accordance with what they have announced. Classical tragic myth, for example about Oedipus or Dido, takes place in this form of predestined time and includes such speech acts; the plots of fairy tales, especially the stories of *The Thousand and One Nights*, also frequently turn on spells and oracles. This fatalism, as it has been called, has been generally criticized and often associated with passivity and superstition, both perceived as "oriental." Can these narrative devices be looked at in a different light? And do the stories themselves act as magical writing, with purposes of preventing harm and averting danger? Writers of contemporary "world literature" are increasingly turning to myth and fable because the forms offer them ways of commenting, Cassandra-like, on the fate of their countries and communities.

Keywords: prolepsis, prophecies, narrative, oracles

1 Prophetic plots

When the prophet Jeremiah cries woe, channelling the fury of the Almighty, he intends to put a stop to the behaviour he denounces: "Therefore will I discover thy skirts upon thy face, that thy shame might appear. I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? When shall it once be?" (Jer. 13.26–27).[1] This biblical author has given his name to a form of anathemata: the Jeremiad. Such a rhetorical mode shapes stories that look ahead to apocalyptic horizons where catastrophe – inferno, pandemonium – will take place but also, as in the closing book of the Bible, Parousia or glory. It has counterparts in other rhetorical utterances, which enunciate and denounce visions of the future from a hypothetical position in the past and so appear to be

1 I would like to thank most warmly the committee of the ICLA, especially Sowon Park and Lucia Boldrini, for inviting me to give this lecture in Vienna in 2016, and also for the introduction given on that occasion by Sowon Park. My profound thanks also to Antonia Karaisl von Karais for her assistance.

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gifted with astonishing and uncanny foresight. These include prophecy, warnings, threats, lamentations, blessings, riddles – forms of speech which have designs on what is to come. As different strategic instruments in storytelling, they represent narrative's desire – not very secret desire – to claim to possess knowledge and to hold potential power over the future. A myth or fairy tale, especially the stories of the *Arabian Nights*, often opens with an oracle or a curse, and the story subsequently unfolds in accordance with what has been foretold. Classical tragic myth, for example about Oedipus or Dido, takes place in this perspective of predestined fate, and includes such speech acts.

Fable, parable, and allegory are returning to surprising prominence in contemporary fiction, seeming to suit the purposes of some writers today, novelists and fabulists who are writing from a perspective of "as if." They are posing the prophet's root question, "When shall it once be?", rather than taking up the vantage point that claims "and so it was." Gérard Genette points out the paradox that, while "it seems evident that the narrating can only be subsequent to what it tells, [...] this obviousness has been belied for many centuries by the existence of 'predictive' narrative in its various forms (prophetic, apocalyptic, oracular, astrological, chiromantic, cartomantic, oneiromantic, etc. whose origin is lost in the darkness of time" (Genette 1980, 216). A novel can be, as in the title of one of Gabriel García Márquez's fictions, *A Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Does this narrative approach act as a form of magical writing, an attempt to prevent harm and avert danger? Does an oracle that turns out to be truth-telling in a play or chronicle convey a warning to us who are there to receive it? That if we pay attention to the story we might foresee the outcome, and that it might then be averted – not in the story, which must obey its own fatality, but in real life? The caution can be taken as a shield, technically as an apotropaic device to ward off precisely the repetition of the oracle. The end foreseen can be – in experience outside the text – an end forestalled.

The role of the prophet Tiresias, foreseeing and foresuffering all, exerts a very strong appeal to writers in our turbulent times, and make-believe play and oracular modes of invention and prediction are acting as catalysts to a marked resurgence of Greek tragedies in different contemporary media, including literature, as well as in the ever-growing interest in the fairy tale.[2] Oracular narrative itself can become, I suggest, a form of attempted self-protection, a form of prophylaxis to ward off the horrible future dangers the story relates. A narrative form of make-believe, severed from its historical context of faith or superstition, offers a

2 Since I delivered this lecture in the summer of 2016, there have been new productions of *Medea*, including Rachel Cusk's re-visioned translation for the Almeida production, London, in 2016, and novels by Colm Tóibín, Khamila Shamsie, and David Gann.

way to play-act an alternative outcome or to avert disaster by enacting it, by casting a spell in a performance of sympathetic mimesis. It involves performative speech acts that intend to press language into service in order to guarantee certain consequences in that envisaged future time: that stories can constitute forms of entreaty against bad things happening and curses on potential assailants and enemies, analogous to acts of self-protection such as touching wood and crossing fingers. The telling of these possible fates – for good and ill – arises from the drive of literature and art to illuminate and protect, by remembering, by exposing what has happened, and by reproducing what might happen, in order to conjure it into being – for the telling of it to bring about good, or to avert harm.

The writers I shall allude to here – and return to in the final section – are intensely engaged in visionary truth-telling through figural patterning; they include the Egyptians Radwa Ashour and Gamal al-Ghitani, the Moroccan Bensalem Himmich, the Angolan José Eduardo Agualusa, the Congolese Alain Mabanckou, and the Hungarian László Krasznahorkai. Their fiction is distinctive, but their novels are couched in a revived symbolic language that draws on signs and metaphors and modes of expression from the repertory of prophecy; they illuminate us, the readers, in ways that look to the future, warning and alerting and forecasting. This prophetic strain involves performative speech acts that deploy language to guarantee certain consequences in an envisaged future time; the author, through a narrator, takes a view of the story being told from a point of view of hopeful design; the narratives that unfold turn into forms of entreaty in an attempt – not always conscious – to affect reality and outcomes. These generic trends are taking hold in contemporary fiction, especially as it is staged in public, through spoken-word events and broadcasting, and hybrid formats involving music, dance, and visual elements (Warner 2019).

Prophetic plotting belongs in literatures of destiny and scripture that often address a given group of people – "communities of fate," to quote the comparatist Bruce Robbins in a fine article on "Prolepsis and Catastrophe" (Robbins, forthcoming). He asks if storytelling and story-making today can engage with contemporary experiences and the fates of so many displaced and endangered people. He writes that "this desire for justice is also normal within a global tradition of storytelling that's much larger than realism: that narrative as such poses the broader question of what circle of readers can recognize themselves at any given moment as a political collectivity or community of fate, whether in any given narrative enough guests have been invited" (Robbins, forthcoming). The idea of "communities of fate" defines a possibility of imaginative coexistence, a way of dwelling in fractured space and interrupted time. Robbins continues:

> But I would also like to think that there exists a narrative, or a possibility of narrative, within "world literature", a narrative in which the emergence of the category of "world literature" would constitute a significant event. Contemplating a seemingly endless series of atrocities receding into the depths of time, atrocities that no longer seem easily divided between modern and ancient, it may seem that meaningful history has become impossible and that literature itself, taken as existing outside of time, is the best refuge from the centuries and centuries and centuries of meaninglessness. (Robbins, forthcoming)

Once you tune in to the presence of oracular stories, they appear everywhere, staking a claim to the possibility that someone in a story can possess knowledge of what is to happen – and that claim may not be confined to the pages of the book in question or the drama unfolding on stage. They are the dwelling places, the native habitat, of forms of speech filled with purposes such as cursing and blessing, supplication and praise; their characteristic tenses are the future and the future perfect, their moods subjunctive, imperative, and jussive, as in the closing word of prayer, "Amen," which means "May it be so" or "Let it be so." The supernatural forces in mythic and fairy-tale narratives, personified as gods, fairies, or jinn, seemed more and more to embody the power that the stories themselves possess to determine destiny – not only the destiny of the characters who are subject to magic inside the story, but our fate, too, the fate of the story's receivers. The language in which the stories are told has an effect. "For we are wagering here that thinking never has done with the conjuring impulse," declares Jacques Derrida (1994, 165).

"Prolepsis" is the literary term for flashforward, and "analepsis" for flashback, or what Nabokov calls "backcast," to make a pair with "forecast." Both can be dramatized through the mind or speech of a character in the story or conveyed by the narrator's voice, which then forms a compact with the readers, imparting knowledge to them. Such narrative revelations of what is to come, telling the truth before it takes place, can be tragic, as in Greek drama or *Macbeth*, or providential, as in the Bible and the Qur'an. In the first, tragic mode, the subjects about whom an oracle speaks or the people to whom the oracle is addressed either do not hear what it is saying or refuse to accept it. Or believe it too literally because they are arrogant and defiant – they suffer from hubris. In the second, providential branch of prophetic story, events unfold as significant elements in a divine pattern or plan.[3] Fairy tales and folk tales can belong to both: the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights* are filled with marvellous doom-laden stories that are plotted to bring about, ineluctably, a curse everyone in the tale is striving to

3 "There are two basic types of anachrony. An analepsis, or textual point of retrospection, reaches back to a time anterior to that being narrated […]. A prolepsis […] flashes ahead to events yet to occur in the story sequence" (Cohan and Shires 1988, 84–85).

avoid – as in the Tale of the Second Dervish or the Borgesian fable "The Appointment at Samarra" (Warner 2011, 395–396; 148–149). But providence, while it brings death and ruin to some, brings glory to others, and promises salvation, escape, transformation. It projects eschatology onto a horizon of hope – soteriology. Providential fulfilments also provide the dynamic of fairy tales and their promise of happiness: the curse of death on Sleeping Beauty is lifted by the good fairy and eventually, after a hundred years, she will wake up, whole and unmarred. The injustice done to Doctor Douban by the Greek King Yunan will not be repeated by the Demon to the Fisherman, because the Demon has been warned of the consequences by the story of the Doctor's brilliant revenge (Warner 2011, 191–194).

Both kinds of foresight – tragic and providential – promise meaningfulness in the random scatter of events in time. They make a claim on the future by recounting events unfolding in the past. This is one reason for their reinvigoration today within a secular horizon by writers addressing the turbulence and disorder that is intensifying all over the world. In different ways, these writers are couching contemporary fiction in a revived symbolic language. Such fabulist forms of storytelling – in print fiction and other media – are re-tuning and re-voicing ways of speaking in figures and images in order to express that conscience of which Frank Kermode spoke in his seminal study *The Sense of an Ending* (1967): "modern eschatology – the vision of last things – has substituted conscience, or something subtler, for historical prophecy" (Kermode 1967, 26). He grasped how fiction and eschatology, the story of the past and the apprehension of the future, are tightly intertwined.

Ancient prophetic forms have counterparts in secular literary fiction today: the author, as the organizing agent of the story's unfolding, may step in and comment on what is to come, and the effect of the intervention destabilizes the reader's relation to the temporality of the tale, taking us out of the action and setting us down in another moment. In this case, the prolepsis pushes the narrative away from the reader, back in time from a vantage point in the future. In terms of grammar and syntax, the subjunctive, jussive, the interrogatory, and the imperative belong, according to Genette's useful distinction, to diegetic narrative, involving interpellations and exclamations, dialogue and speech, frequently using the vocative and different voices in counterpoint, as opposed to mimetic storytelling (Genette 1980, 228). With regard to tenses, prophetic writing naturally speaks in the future, but many of its most fruitful exponents in contemporary fiction adopt the future perfect, or *futur antérieur*, to relate something that has not yet happened as if it has. This compression of looking forward and looking back, switching back and forth between different temporalities, is technically called analeptic prolepsis, and it memorably sets the tone of clairvoyant marvelousness in the opening sentence of Gabriel García Márquez's *A Hundred Years of Solitude*:

"Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendia was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice" (Márquez 1970, 1).

Ali Smith, in her novel *How to Be Both,* mostly sticks fast to the first-person internal consciousness of her protagonist, the girl-in-disguise and artist Francesco del Cossa, so that when she does step out of the timeframe into the future, the shock is shiveringly palpable and pleasurable:

> Funny to think of it now, that bleak evening: cause the biggest patrons of my short life *were* after all to be the Garganelli family, and the reason I couldn't find the legging-stuff was that my friend Barto had rolled it in his hand and put it in his pocket and taken it as a souvenir, as he told me years later sitting on the stone step by my feet while I worked on the decorations for the tomb of his father in their chapel (Smith 2015, 95; emphasis in original).

Looping back and forth in time, Francesco's voice enters the pages of the novel from the afterlife and so is able to speak of his own future death as having taken place.

Such stories, in which someone can see into the future, are cautionary, and serve to express the story's own knowledge of its outcome; they rejoice in the knowledge of hindsight, since what we are reading or seeing on stage has already happened. Such foreknowledge can also comfort the reader or audience, as it narrows the horizon of the unknowable and appears to impose order on disorder and attribute a design – the pattern of art – to random chance.

2 Figural forecasting

Edward Said, in his introduction to the fiftieth-anniversary edition of Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis*, comments on one of the most venerable languages of comparative literature: figural exegesis. He focuses on the contrast between Odysseus and Abraham, as set up by Auerbach:

> The former is immediately present and requires no interpretation, no recourse either to allegory or to complicated explanations. Diametrically opposed is the figure of Abraham, who incarnates "doctrine" and "promise" and is steeped in them [...]. For that very reason, they [providential protagonists] are fraught with background and are mysterious, containing a second, concealed meaning. And this second meaning can only be recovered by a very particular act of interpretation [...] figural interpretation (Said 2013, xx).

The apparent meaning conceals another, as in that famous French warning on level crossings, "Un train peut en cacher un autre" [One train can hide another]. Isaac, about to be sacrificed by his father, comes to stand for Jesus, who died to

save humankind.[4] Similarly, the prophet Jonah, swallowed by the whale and regurgitated safe and sound on dry land after several days, comes to foreshadow, typologically, the resurrection of Jesus from the tomb, as shown for example in one of the powerful drawings from the twelfth-century manuscript of Herrad of Hohenbourg's *Hortus Deliciarum* (Hohenbourg 1979, 2: 94, plate 42). Encrypting meaning in this way can produce arbitrary effects, and biblical incidents can yield unexpected prophecies: Judith, who cuts off the head of Holofernes after having played the coquette with him (Jdt. 12–13), becomes a forerunner of the Virgin Mary who overcame the Devil. Even more bizarrely, the bloodthirsty figure of Jael, who hammered a tent peg into the head of another enemy, the Canaanite leader Sisera, also came to prefigure both the victory of Mary over Satan and of Humilitas over Superbia (Judg. 4.17–22; Bailey 2010, fig. 15.1). We are not asked to enter the moral maze of Judith's or Jael's actions or ponder Abraham's inner workings. What matters is the fulfilment of the divine plan, concealed inside the cruel story of consenting parricide and tricksterish seductive female tyrannicides.

Figura signifies a pattern within a text, a kind of figure in the carpet that is not immediately apprehensible, but structurally present in a form that enriches and directs the significance of the whole (Zakai and Weinstein 2012). The figure forms in the present moment of the text under one's eyes, but the latent meanings emerge both in the past and look forward to the future: the narrowly averted sacrifice of Isaac prefigures the death of Jesus, for example. "How much more fulfilling is the new idea that pre-Christian times can be read as a shadowy figure of what actually was to come?" writes Said (Said 2013, xxi).

The most crucial figural narrative device, alongside foreshadowing or prefigurement, is recapitulation: both of them need not be consciously deployed by the writers, but readers decode them from the narrative and then shape and rearrange the original design to fit the latent meaning. Prefigurement and recapitulation underpin the structure of providence and the scheme of salvation. In the scholastic interpretation of Scripture, everything foreshadows everything, no stitch is dropped in the fabric, and each one will be fulfilled: this overarching pattern, oracular in intention, architectural in form, endows imagery with doubled voices, speaking in chords resonating across time: the past becomes prologue.

A prophetic story thus does not necessarily include manifest fortune-telling or prediction or oracles; fulfilment may take place without the story's knowledge of its own significance. Providential structures do not always command cause and effect. In these forms of *inadvertently coded* prolepsis, the prophecy is not

4 See, for example, the *Biblia pauperum* showing Abraham and Isaac, Christ on the Cross, and the Brazen Serpent on the same page (John Rylands Library, R4 588 [Block-Book Collection], 25).

enunciated as such but has to await its decipherers, who will be later readers/redactors/translators. It is the exegete or reader who must discover the oracle in the narrative, who acts as a seer: the invitation to read figurally effectively hands over to writers a field of possibility, for they can rely on a circle of readers who, expecting them to be writing hermeneutically, will decipher the hidden figures in the carpet of their narratives. A strong difference thus distinguishes conscious and unconscious prolepsis; the latter device is undergoing reinvigoration, too, by readers of modern and contemporary fiction.

The unintended prescience of literary imagination has come to play a vital part in current cultural values. In relation to certain books, truth-telling takes place independently of the intention of the work's creator or its former readers: the text comes to seem prophetic – inadvertently. The promise of figurative suggestion underlies William Burroughs's advocacy of a similar palimpsestic process, his cut-up technique. As Burroughs remarked: "When you cut into the present the future leaks out" (Burroughs 1960–1976). Many compelling writers exercise their hold on us because they appear to have seen farther and deeper than their forebears or contemporaries: the very short animal fable "Jackals and Arabs," written by Kafka in 1919, tells of an endless desert war, an unbreakable cycle of carnage driven by gleeful antagonism, mutual stubborn incomprehension, and an immutable commitment to continued hostility. Kafka condenses this apocalyptic epic into a fragment, and brings into play a symbol that, like Bluebeard's key or the mirror of the Snow Queen in Andersen's fairy tale, condenses into a banal and domestic instrument a world of danger: a pair of small rusty scissors that has been travelling through the desert for ever, waiting to be used to kill. "Marvellous creatures, aren't they? And how they hate us!" are the closing lines of this lacerating fable (Kafka 1988, 411). During the COVID-19 pandemic, many early accounts of plague have come to seem prescient, but none more so than Albert Camus's *La Peste*, first published in 1947; rooted in the experience of the Occupation of France, its closing warning about the eternal, endemic bacillus of Fascism reads today as uncannily prophetic.

I do not want to suggest that writers *are* prophets, either according to Romantic (Shelleyan) ideas of the poet's calling or according to readings that cast Kafka as a visionary who foresaw the apocalypse of the twentieth century. And yet.

Forms that lend themselves to figural readings even when no such purpose animates them intentionally include fairy tales and myths; by contrast, a collection of Aesopian animal fables, such as *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, often possesses a conscious didactic intention. These ancient narratives, especially when loaded with worldly-wise, admonitory content, have been assigned to the children's section, and treated condescendingly as an unsophisticated and simplistic primitive literature before the development of the novel. The deep involvement with fabulism of

writers like Kafka, Borges, H. D., and Camus – I could go on – gives the lie to this over-glib viewpoint. The large fabulist family of literary modes offers a language of the imagination that crosses borders and barriers, a most useful quality in an era of mass displacements and transfers of population. Animal fables, parables, travellers' tales, fairy tales, proverbs – all are natural migrants, in constant metamorphosis. The transposition of forms allows for circulation of literature in translation, because the forms are highly portable, recognizable – a kind of musical repertory of tunes. By means of these forms, writers can open another significant gap in expectations between readers and actors in the narrative. A gap into which irony can pour, and seethe and scald, as at the conclusion of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, which parodies the happy ending of a domestic fairy tale: as the monstrous bug – Gregor – has been swept away, the family regroups with new hope, and young Greta comes into the bloom of her nubile eligibility.

3 Speaking fair

The prophetic mode not only tells stories of justice being done and happier outcomes achieved; it also mobilizes forms of speaking fair – foul language's opposite. Countering Jeremiads and curses, different forms of performative speech – elegy, blessing, charm – seek to soothe, cure, and shape possible futures along different lines.

At the end of *King Lear*, the repentant Lear paints for Cordelia a proleptic picture of their future idyll:

> We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage;
> When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
> And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
> And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
> At gilded butterflies [...]
> And take upon 's the mystery of things
> As if we were God's spies
> (*King Lear*, 5.2.3131–3140).

The religious compass points are not given; no reference is made to Druids or other supernatural powers. In Lear's wistful picture, he imagines living in harmony with Cordelia. His vision of mutual blessing presents a counterpoise, unarticulated but powerfully present, to the storm of curses he has vented earlier in the play, first on Cordelia herself in the opening scene, and later, even more intemperately, on his other daughters. His blast of Goneril's womb sends shivers

of fear run through us, as we feel the blows of his words: "Th' untented woundings of a father's curse / Pierce every sense about thee" (*King Lear*, 1.4.297–298).

When Cordelia is later found hanged and her body brought on stage and laid before her father, Lear's lament rises and falls while a turmoil of action swirls around him; his words move from grief-stricken recognition of her death to a series of exclamations, protests, refusals, rhetorical questions, ejaculations, commands – a whole gamut of what Beckett calls "vociferations," the howls of the wounded and disempowered creature before the horror of loss and death (Beckett l977, 45). (This bleak conclusion, abolishing hope, notoriously proved too much for some early producers, and the tragedy was rewritten as fairy tale – with the resurrection of Cordelia, and the father and daughter embarked on a harmonious life together.)

When Lear, earlier in the scene, imagines a time when Cordelia asks for his blessing and he will ask her to forgive him, he is shading the act into another, turning blessing into pardon, with which it is associated but not identical. His expression chimes with the aim of old tales about the mystery of things, like the tales of *The Thousand and One Nights*, which Shahrazad is telling to save her life and the lives of other women whom the Sultan, her husband, has vowed to kill.

The practice of blessing the living and the dead corresponds to the drive of literature and art to illuminate and protect, by remembering, by exposing what has happened and by reproducing what might happen, in order to conjure it – for the telling of it to bring it about good or to forestall harm. It is homeopathy in the form of words, and you do not have to have faith or belong to a church to believe in such verbal agency: this is one of the many areas where magical thinking survives and cannot be extinguished.

4 Contemporary fabulists

The fiction being written by contemporary authors in various languages, which I read *in extenso* for the Man Booker International in 2015,[5] revealed to me the strong return of fabulism: many novels that successfully reach English publication in translation adopt traditional forms of narrative and rhetorical methods – visionary apocalypse, curse, blessing, psalm and prayer, animal fable, allegory, figural palimpsest, and fairy tale – forms which belong, *grosso modo*, to a broad genre of magical realism. But their fantastic quality is not the dominant reason

5 I was chair of the judges, who included Elleke Boehmer, Wen-chin Ouyang, Nadeem Aslam, and Edwin Frank.

for their rise in usefulness as literary devices. The forms themselves lend such fictions mobility across cultural barriers of language, for philosophical as well as aesthetic reasons. They offer a kind of Esperanto of figures of speech. Global mobility and migration have also spurred on this development because such venerable storytelling vehicles have proved their immense popularity and portability, as Abdelfattah Kilito has written about in a luminous essay ("Métaphore") on the travelling tale and the nomadic ode or ballad (Kilito 2012, n. pag.). The issue of linguistic translation still remains fundamental, but generic translatability helps.

Fables, one of the most ancient forms of story, are portable as a genre, recognizable regardless of language or national origin, and their continuity over time can contribute to clearing the counter-space of literature as sanctuary, one that defies enclosure and partition. For example, José Eduardo Agualusa, who is from Angola, lives partly in Lisbon, and writes in Portuguese, creates exuberant and playful fictions, filled with a rich mingling of local folklore and music, colonial archival material, and religious fantasy, with which he re-visions the received history of his birthplace. In an interview, Agualusa pointed out: "We know almost nothing about our pasts." The interviewer then put a question that is key to contemporary world literature: "Do you think a made-up past can come to define someone's future, too?" Agualusa replied: "Yes, no doubt about it: by making up a past you're able to alter your future" (Polzonoff 2007).

Agualusa can be placed in the tradition of imaginative fiction stemming from Miguel Ángel Asturias, Mario Vargas Lhosa, and Jorge Luis Borges. He is a writer who, as Borges writes in one of his famous stories, likes to make reality choose to give in to the creations of his mind.

In *The Book of Chameleons,* Agualusa also plays with allusions to genres such as melodrama and film noir, as his exuberant doctor-protagonist provides distressed clients with fresh pasts and fully detailed new character profiles – for a new life in a new future – and in his recent *A General History of Oblivion*, he again shows an irrepressible capacity to forge retrospective histories which change the perspective on the present – and the future.

When Agualusa projected himself into a witty, sensitive, and wonderfully entertaining animal narrator in *The Book of Chameleons*, he was taking up a new voice in a very old inheritance: the talking animal. This ancient tradition has also been reinvigorated by Alain Mabanckou, in the *Memoirs of a Porcupine*, a ferocious satire of the politics of tyranny; he adopts here the ancient form of the animal fable to speak his mind (Mabanckou 2012). His narrator, the porcupine of the title, is making his confession at the end of a long life of violence; he has been a hit man who has done faithful service to his master as a killer and a body double, and he is looking back ruefully on his terrible crimes and painting a vivid portrait of despotism in the Republic of Congo. Mabanckou is a versatile writer (and a

much funnier writer than the biblical prophets), but his message in this book has a similar apocalyptic colour. But he sees his role as a witness to the variety of African voices and presences in his new existence as a writer on the world stage, be it in London, Paris, or the US – and as he carries out his mission of truth-telling, he can be tender and hilarious, celebratory and lyrical.

At a simply logistical level, the time lag between the composition of the books and their appearance in translation means that the events they encrypt have become known – even well known – to readers, so that we, looking back, are impressed by the insight and courage of the writers involved and their frequent political outspokenness. It is perhaps a melancholy fact about commercial translation that we readers are not always ready to receive a work of imaginative representation until the circumstances are such that the situation the writer evokes has become familiar. In this respect as well, Tiresias is like Cassandra, a prophet who speaks to his or her own time and is not heard.

After the portability of traditional story forms, such as animal fables, a second reason for the rise in figural storytelling is the need to conceal meaning from censorship, or worse, imprisonment or even death. The palimpsestic method of scriptural figuration, hiding one story under another, demands that readers engage in an active form of reading, listening for double entendres, attending to the crossword-puzzle clues; such encryption often becomes useful – even necessary – when the writer is living under a regime where certain forms of expression are not allowed. It is interesting to see how the challenge of writing subversive literature is then met by strategic uses of the imagination, by working with images, situations, characters, dialogue, in which only some people can be counted on to recognize their contrapuntal significance.

The Egyptian novelist Gamal al-Ghitani, who died in 2015, produced one of the most masterly and gripping novels of the Egyptian new literature. In *Zayni Barakat*, first published in instalments in the Egyptian literary magazine *Rose al-Yusif* in l970 and only translated into English eighteen years later, he uses the figural mode of analeptic prophecy (Al-Ghitani 2006). Ghitani was a carpet-weaver and designer before his gifts as a writer were noticed and nurtured by Naguib Mahfouz, who remained a close friend and patron and associate, and the exchange between the skills of oriental weaving and intertextual narrative as practised in *Zayni Barakat* is aesthetically most eloquent. Ghitani breaks taboos, adopts various disguises, and extrapolates boldly from historical sources, evoking Zayni Barakat, a well-documented market inspector, tax gatherer, and financial controller of early sixteenth-century Cairo during an epoch of intense turbulence, as the Mameluks' power was being overthrown by the Ottomans. Drawing on sheaves of research documents voiced by different narrators, filling his fiction with thickly descriptive archival detail, medievalizing lexicon and phrases, Ghitani

brings the seductive and terrifying protagonist to vivid life: this complex, unscrupulous, and glamorous man effectively ran medieval Cairo, ruling with terror through a vast network of spies. Ghitani performs a virtuoso sleight of hand as the reader begins to realize that the complex and ruthless protagonist is none other than President Nasser. It is as if Hilary Mantel's Thomas Cromwell were masking the present-day power-players of Whitehall. The novel appeared to all intents and purposes a historical novel of vigour and excitement, but any reader – except perhaps the censors – could see it attacked the ambiguities of current Egyptian leadership, both the rule of Gamel Abdel Nasser and of his successor, President Sadat, who was in power when Ghitani published his creation in book form – in Damascus, for safety's sake. As the scholar Sabry Hafez comments in a review, "the use of the historical mask in *Zayni Barakat* is not synonymous with writing historical works that shed light on the present. He only uses the mask of historicity to invite us to penetrate the present reality more effectively and to distance the situation from readers so that they can rethink it for themselves" (Hafez l989, 307).

It is a political satire of great pungency, deceptively camouflaged as a stirring bundle of historical records retrieved from the archives. Hindsight becomes a sleight of hand for foresight.

Similarly, in an elliptical and multi-layered novella, *Siraaj: An Arab Tale* – first published in l992, and translated by Barbara Romaine in 2007 – the Egyptian novelist Radwa Ashour, who died in 2014, refashions a seafaring tale in the tradition of the *Arabian Nights*, and sets it in the British imperial era, on an imaginary island flourishing on the trade in slaves and spices and pearls (Ashour 2007). *Siraaj* means "lamp," and in its narrow space, this fiction dramatizes no less than two uprisings, one based on the historic revolt against the British in the l880s in Alexandria, and the other on an imagined rebellion in a Gulf state, as serfs and slaves fight against the unenlightened tyranny of both British rulers and their client despots. Unlike her contemporaries, Ghitani and Bensalem Himmich, Ashour draws tender relations between her characters – between the young Sindbad-like hero, his mother, and his surrogate father, Ammar, a former, much-exploited personal slave of the Sultan. Into her highly wrought prose she weaves imagery and motifs from folk material – not only from popular tales, but also proverbs, songs, and poems. Furthermore, whereas in the novel by Ghitani, his choice of the palimpsestic method involves layers of one temporal era over another, Radwa Ashour, by revisioning a traditional figure from the anonymous legacy of circulating Arabic wonder tales, gives us another perspective from which to look at the use of ironic foreknowledge in fiction on the global stage. Her retrospective, historical setting masks an incisive confrontation with Arab social history as well as geopolitics, taking on with great

honesty conditions in the region in the nineties when the book was written, and showing acutely prescient sensors of what has been overwhelming it since.

The Moroccan author Bensalem Himmich hardly conceals the historical parallels, but rather mobilizes them to question, in a spirit of Jeremiah-like grief and rage, the violence and abuses of power in the present era and dramatized precursors to the current conflicts. *A Muslim Suicide*, the third of a trilogy, unfolds the persecuted life of the Sufi master and doctor Ibn Sa'bin; through the ferocious vicissitudes he suffered, Himmich reflects on the catastrophes that overtook the society of the western Mediterranean when the puritanical and warlike Almoravids swept away the enlightened rulers of Andalusia (Himmich 2011).[6]

Thirdly, the use of performative speech, such as curses and entreaty, accompanies the increased commitment to prophetic fiction. The Man Booker International Prize 2015 (the last year it was given for a writer's work rather than for one translated title) was awarded to László Krasznahorkai, certainly the most evidently messianic and apocalyptic of contemporary writers who have made the difficult transition from a minority language to an international readership. He emerged as the winner for his many qualities – passion, intensity, sheer stylistic virtuosity, and originality of approach to his chosen themes – sustained over a long writing career. It must also be added that he has been remarkably well served by his translators, Georges Szirtes and Ottilie Mulzet, both of them poets.

The earlier novels, *Satantango* and *The Melancholy of Resistance,* satirize the yearning for a messiah through a series of lacerating portraits of self-styled saviours (Krasznahorkai 2014, 2015). To pretend to have an answer can only be the claim of a charlatan, or worse: there is something Conradian about the terrifying deliverer who appears in *Satantango* to lead the hopeless, drunken villagers out of their desperate degradation on a failed collective farm. But in both these novels, there is a figure who acts as an observer, a kind of witness – outside the action, yet implicated in the events as they unfold – catastrophically. In the opening section of his masterpiece, *Seiobo There Below*, translated in 2012, this figure of the watcher takes form as a heron: the bird standing in a river, vigilant, reflective, a sign of the role of the writer in the sequence of chapters to come, each one of which recounts an epiphany of the divine mediated through an aesthetic creation (the Alhambra, an icon by Andrei Roublev, a Noh play) (Krasznahorkai 2013). At times the experience is too powerful for the one who undergoes it: he – always a he – is blasted by the encounter with the divine quiddity of art.

6 The first two novels in the trilogy are *The Polymath*, about Ibn Khaldun (Himmich 2004); and *The Theocrat*, about the visionary Fatimid caliph al-Hakim bi-Amr Illah, ruler of Egypt during the tenth century (Himmich 2005).

Here László Krasznahorkai, in spite of his professed fidelity to Kafka and to rancid irony, acts as a seer, the writer through various protagonists pressing forward a visionary ideal of transcendence through art in the midst of fury and waste – he is still struggling to sing in the dark times and to pick out of the mess something with meaning for a repaired future and to bring forth – a word he likes – beauty.

After l989 Krasznahorkai was able to travel far from his southern Hungarian birthplace of Gulya, and he first chose Mongolia and then developed a profound rapport with China and Japan. He also stays at home, and in every setting – whether familiar and unfamiliar to him – he summons conditions with his intensely absorptive encyclopedic detail, and wraps his subjects around in writhing sentences, the very structure and punctuation and rhythm weaving a tightly patterned net of words. His assiduity can tip into the comic, as he comes from every angle at the sensibility and sense of his characters' individual responses, coiling them in hypnotic, writhing prose like a beautiful and sublime but terrifying squid.

Since then, English readers have now been given his travel essay-memoir-meditation on travels in China, *Destruction and Sorrow under the Heavens* (originally 2004, but translated into English in 2016), and a triptych of stories which return to horrific, lacerating apocalypse: "The Last Wolf," "Herman the Game Warden," and "The Death of a Craft" (Krasznahorkai 2016). The title of the third story, "The Death of a Craft," could be read in reverse: the craft of a death. Krasznahorkai is a writer for whom Kafka is a conscious exemplar, yet these recent animal fables, implacable in their inventories and contextual detail, exceed the ancestor in their furious misanthropy. Krasznahorkai also wrestles with his own consciousness of his prophetic tendencies, in more conscious ways than Kafka, whose prophetic illuminations are to a great extent the product of readers' hindsight. In these three grim, dark tales, this Hungarian fabulist of nightmares elaborates in obsessive inventorying and detail the processes which Herman, presented as the last huntsman of a dying art, sets in motion to control the teeming wild creatures of a forest: the pits and traps, nets and weapons. The writing adopts a bleak, affectless distance, but the story's fury explodes from under the factual encyclopedic tally, echoing the carnage and bloodlust in Flaubert's tale "Saint Julien L'Hospitalier." However, Flaubert is directly confronting Catholic hagiography and plunging himself as deeply as he can go into its dark and fantastic moral toils, whereas Krasznahorkai has no firm ontological referent but a vacancy of meaning: his fable of a man massacring nature with all the ingenuity of an artist communicates an eschatology without a heaven for anyone. Is it is a parable of communist or fascist efficiency? An allegory of denatured skill and human overreaching? "The Last Wolf" enacts its own subject matter, being composed of a single sentence running over seventy-seven remorseless pages,

allowing the reader no escape from the cunning and ever-tightening knots of the narrator's crafted tale.

In a very different register, the Belarusian writer Svetlana Alexievich also voices a language of scriptural performative power. She composes sombre and historical documentary studies, akin in their symphonic structure to the great requiems of music, in which her subjects remember their hopes and dreams, disasters and sufferings. Alexievich, who in 2015 was awarded the Nobel Prize and is one of the first journalists/essayists in that pantheon, gathers testimonies from her native Belarus, as well as Ukraine and Russia; her magnificent epics also recall the choruses and towering messenger-speeches of Greek tragedy. She takes on the task of retrieving the past, writing as an open-eyed, aghast archivist of horrors, and at the same time bringer of hope and redress – the words building blessing on the suffering and the dead. *Second Hand Time* was recently translated into English by Bela Shayevich, and it explores the experiences of many varied individuals since the Soviet Revolution and its ending. Before that, she composed a harrowing and intensely profound tribute to the people of Chernobyl. These works are oratorios: multiple and various voices overheard, perseveringly attended to by the self-effacing author. It is significant that while in English the Chernobyl book is called *Chernobyl Prayer*, in French is has been more sensitively translated as *La Supplication*, "the entreaty" (Alexievich 2016a, 2016b). Svetlana Alexievich occupies the role of an everywoman Cassandra, a figure of prophecy and priesthood – and both shade into the role of a suppliant, pleading to be spared the events she foresees.

The visions that Svetlana Alexievich conveys are analeptical – backcasts – yet written with a forward propulsion, the proleptic energy of entreaty, prayer, in the hope of averting further, future danger and damage; when she comes to us with her subjects as suppliants before the tribunal of history, their natural habitat is the language of hope in the midst of despair. She has declared that she will now write only about love; she has had enough of horror.[7]

5 Conclusion

"Stories are a form of action," wrote Hannah Arendt in her l956 book *The Human Condition*, "the way we insert ourselves into the human world" (Arendt l958, 25), and, she went on, "the ability to produce stories is the way we become historical"

7 Svetlana Alexievich, personal communication during interview with Marina Warner, Royal Festival Hall, London, May 2016.

(Arendt 1958, 5).[8] The revival of fabulism in a prophetic mode issues a challenge to the future, acting in accordance with magical thinking as it attempts to make oracular narrative itself a form of anticipatory self-protection. However, in practical terms, the time lag between the composition of many such authors' works and their appearance in translation means that the events they imagine have come about and become known – even well known – to readers (Krasznahorkai's disintegrating communist society was committed to paper by him before the event).

There are evident dangers of false messianism in any apocalyptic trend, but rather than denounce the role that several writers are taking on, it seems to me that they are looking towards a more expectant and defiant horizon, that of world literature as a zone of collective emancipation, carried on the ethereal pathways of the Internet as well as the material printed page. The French comparatist Pascale Casanova has written about literatures as the ground of communities across barriers of language, ethnicity, and geography in our times of disruption and destruction; a polity of shared imaginings, a collectivity of stories, given and passed on. She calls this the World Republic of Letters (Casanova 2007), and she redefines the nation-state in relation to cultural capital, arguing that national literatures have always existed in international relationship with one another, and that this state of affairs demonstrates the necessity of communicating beyond national borders – to become visible to others and develop a sense of self. More recently, she modified her original contrast between dominant and dominated literatures to propose instead that "the most important opposition is between combative literature and pacified or non-engaged ones" (Casanova 2011, 133).[9]

Imagining future outcomes is one way for stories to intervene in history and experience: sometimes to warn, at other times to hope, sometimes to prevent developments – or attempt to. Prolepsis in imaginative works of literature becomes a powerful form of "as if," since prophecies in ancient literature are ineluctably fulfilled; revisiting them acts to remind us of those tragic fates and asks us not to repeat the circumstances which led to them. Bruce Robbins takes this thought into fully *engagé* territory when he writes, with great urgency and eloquence:

8 Joan Scott quoted these words when she was speaking at a symposium for Natalie Zemon Davis, and it gives me great satisfaction to continue weaving connections with these much-loved and -admired forerunners here, as connecting to the past seems to me to be a way of being at home – in a country of words.

9 "As long as ago as l986, Fredric Jameson wrote: 'I would propose that all third world texts are allegorical, and allegorical in a very specific mode: they should be read as national allegories, even when, or perhaps I should say, above all when their forms have come from representational mechanisms that are eminently western, such as the novel'" (Casanova 2011, 133).

> The present is always different [from the past], because one can act in and on the present as one cannot act on even an identical situation (if such a thing exists) in the past. A secular version of fate is a political community that, like the nation-state, at least has a possibility of controlling what its members do and suffer and adding to those who can count as members. If the moral confusion of deep time is condensed [...] into the form of prolepsis, a grammatical uncertainty giving form to a social uncertainty, it does not follow that we fulfil our moral responsibilities merely by reading strenuous fiction. Literature, whether strenuous or not, is valuable not because it can substitute for collective agents like the nation-state – it cannot – but because it can motivate us to build and inhabit collective agents, whether national or (increasingly, hopefully) transnational. Some years later, we may in this way be able to remember that, faced with the demands of our moment, we at least did what we could (Robbins, forthcoming).

Listening to the voices of the makers of stories, in which the writers struggle with the languages of injustice and intolerance so that they might be seen for what they are, tuning in to the imagination and memories of our forerunners, weaving counter-myths – these are, it seems to me, acts of stewardship at the heart of culture. We live in the stories we pass on and the stories we invent and how they report on experience; one of the territories that needs to be reoccupied is narrative. While enlightened and post-Enlightenment anxiety about myths was justified, in that indeed myths are instruments of ideology and have often been told by the powerful to consolidate their power, now is the time to regain that territory and weave alternative versions, counter-narratives. Books, the bearers of stories, and writers and storytellers, the *hakawati* and the *raawati* (the storytellers in the Arabic tradition), the griots and griottes of West Africa, the rhapsodes, the skalds and the bards – in short, the bearers of words, the interpreters and the scryers of signs, who speak the languages of literature and invite others to understand their communications, through images and forms, patterns and devices, can move to build a "country of words" (Darwish 2003, 11), even when the barriers are going up to prevent access and destroy sanctuaries and bridges.

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Hendrik Birus

Zur Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen

Abstract: Literarische Namen sind als Eigennamen *per definitionem* unübersetzbar; als Elemente eines literarischen Werks können sie bei dessen Übersetzung in andere Sprachen nicht unberücksichtigt bleiben, selbst wenn sie buchstabengetreu übernommen werden. Dieses Problem wird bei den verschiedenen Typen literarischer Namen – Appellativnamen (verkörperten und redenden Namen) vs. suggestiven Namen (klangsymbolischen und klassifizierenden Namen) – ganz unterschiedlich zu lösen versucht. Dabei gibt es eine Fülle von Mischformen. Namenübersetzungen können aber auch innerhalb literarischer Werke, etwa bei Lessing, Goethe oder Nabokov, eine wichtige Rolle spielen.

Keywords: Verkörperte Namen – redende Namen – klangsymbolische Namen – klassifizierende Namen; Shakespeare, Lessing, Goethe, Jean Paul, Hölderlin, Brentano, Brecht, Nabokov, Disney

I

Gestatten Sie, dass ich mit einer ganz persönlichen Erinnerung beginne. Denn das Problem der Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen hat mich schon in meiner Kindheit bewegt. Das geschah so: Nach Kriegsende hatten wir von früheren Brieffreunden meiner Eltern aus Detroit Care-Pakete bekommen, die wichtig für unser Überleben in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone waren, denn Zigaretten, Kaffeebohnen und Schokolade konnte man auf dem Dorf gegen Grundnahrungsmittel eintauschen. Als Platzfüller lagen für mich gelegentlich Ausmalbücher und später richtige Kinderbücher bei. Natürlich auf Englisch, was ich mit meinen knapp zehn Jahren nicht verstand. Also mussten sie mir die „Großen“ übersetzen. So auch mein fünf Jahre älterer Cousin, der mir nun – wie zuvor meine Mutter – Walt Disneys „The Cold-Blooded Penguin“ nach besten Kräften verdeutschte, was bei dem ersten Satz ganz unproblematisch war, der lautete: „Way down at the bottom of the world near the South Pole, where the summers are even colder than the winters, there lived a little penguin“ (The Cold-Blooded Penguin 1946). Doch den nächsten Satz: „His name was Pablo.“ übersetzte mein Cousin: „Sein Name war Paul.“ Worauf ich empört antwortete: „Nein, Pablo!“ Und er wiederum: „Wenn du ‚Pablo‘ willst, dann kann ich das Ganze ja auf Englisch vorlesen.“ Mit dem Recht des Stärkeren fuhr er also fort, den Pinguin *Paul* zu nennen. Doch aus heutiger Sicht würde ich sagen, dass ich mit meinem Protest sachlich im Recht

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war. Denn *Pablo* ist ja auch im Englischen ein fremdsprachiger Name; und so bestand keine Notwendigkeit, ihn in der deutschen Übersetzung durch den deutschen Namen *Paul* zu ersetzen.

Mein zweites Beispiel habe ich erst kürzlich kennengelernt. Denn bei einem Symposion in der Villa Vigoni zum Thema „Goethe und der italienische *Romanticismo*" wurde eine zeitgenössische italienische Übersetzung von „Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahren" mit dem Titel „Gli anni del noviziato di Alfredo Meister, romanzo di G. Volfgango Goethe" (Mailand 1835) vorgestellt, in der wie beim Titelhelden kein Vorname mit dem Original übereinstimmt. Nach dem Vorbild einer freien französischen Übersetzung wurde *Mariane* zu *Adolfina*, *Philine* zu *Clotilde*, *Mignon* zu *Fanfan*, *Laertes* zu *Federico*.

> Zuweilen hat man vielmehr den Eindruck, dass der Übersetzer eine besondere Vorliebe für deutsche oder jedenfalls exotisch wirkende Namen hatte, denn Melina wird Waldorf, Augustin, der Harfner, heißt Adalbert (und erst am Ende, seiner italienischen Herkunft gemäß, Domenico), Therese wird Eliska. (Rispoli 2018, 162–164)

Kann man solche völlig willkürlichen Umbenennungen ‚Namenübersetzungen' nennen? Schwerlich.

Und schließlich der umgekehrte Fall aus neuester Zeit: *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* in Shakespeares „Twelfth Night; or, What You Will" (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 299–323) ist seit jeher fantasievoll ins Deutsche übersetzt worden: von Wieland mit *Sir Andreas Fieberwange* (Shakespeare 2003, 767–789), von Schlegel/Tieck mit *Junker Christoph von Bleichenwang* (Shakespeare 1841, 103–194),[1] von Erich Fried mit *Junker Andreas Schmerzwang* (Shakespeare 1995, 263–318), von Thomas Brasch mit *Sir Andrew Leichenwang* (Brasch 2002, 7–84). Einzig Marius von Mayenburg übernimmt den Namen völlig unübersetzt (Shakespeare 2015). Wenn er so um des Lokalkolorits der Ausgangssprache willen auf die Wiedergabe des komischen Effekts in der Zielsprache verzichtet: hat er damit die ‚Aufgabe des Übersetzers' verfehlt?

Schwankt so die Antwort auf die generelle Frage der Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen zwischen ‚anything goes' und ‚nichts geht', dann ist dies eine klassische Situation für die Leibniz'sche Forderung: *Calculemus!* Wie in einer Nussschale konzentriert sich nämlich die schon von Schleiermacher exponierte (vgl. Schleiermacher 2002, 65–93) paradoxe Aufgabe der literarischen Übersetzung im Problem der Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen. Denn als *Eigennamen* sind sie, worüber man sich seit John Stuart Mill, Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein und Strawson einig ist, *per definitionem* unübersetzbar,[2] als *Elemente des literarischen Werks* aber können

1 Ähnlich Rudolf Alexander Schröder: *Ritter Andrea Bleichenwang*, Rudolf Schaller: *Ritter Andreas Bleichenwang* und Hans Rothe: *Freiherr Andreas von Bleichenwang* bzw. *Andreas Junker von Bleichenwang*.

2 Vgl. das Kapitel „Zur philosophischen Theorie der Eigennamen" (Birus 1978, 21–31).

sie bei dessen Übersetzung in andere Sprachen nicht unberührt bleiben, selbst wenn sie buchstabengetreu übernommen werden. Bei den verschiedenen Typen literarischer Namen wird dieses Problem ganz unterschiedlich zu lösen versucht.

II

In der Literarischen Onomastik spricht man seit längerem von *Appellativnamen* (vgl. Wackernagel 1874, 59–177) und unterscheidet von ihnen *suggestive Namen* (vgl. Fleischer 1964, 12; Eis 1970, 9–28; Krien 1973):

1) *Appellativnamen*: Dank ihrer funktionalen oder genetischen Affinität zu den *Appellativa* (‚Gemeinnamen') des allgemeinen Wortschatzes haben sie eine klare – sei es direkte, sei es ironische – Charakterisierungsfunktion im Hinblick auf ihren Träger: ‚Er heißt A, und er ist ein (oder: kein) A.' So steht schon im Alten Testament: „Wie jemand heißt, so ist er: *Nābāl* [hebr. ‚Tor, Narr'] heißt er, und voll Torheit/Narrheit ist er." (1. Sam. 25,25) Und in Johann Georg Lichtenbergs *Fragment von Schwänzen* wird über den Leibhund von König Henry VII gesagt: „Er hieß Cäsar, und war Cäsar. Auf seinem Halsbande stund das Motto: *aut Caesar, aut nihil*, mit goldenen Buchstaben, und in seinen Augen eben dasselbe, weit leserlicher, und weit feuriger" (Lichtenberg 1972, 534).
2) *Suggestive Namen* hingegen gewinnen ihre Bedeutungsfärbung zumeist in Analogie oder Kontrast mit dem übrigen Namenensemble einer Dichtung, oder jene Bedeutungsfärbung kommt auf der Basis der eben genannten Appellativnamen zur Abhebung: ‚Er heißt *B*, und dies suggeriert – zumal im Vergleich zu den sonstigen Namen *C, D* und *E* oder als Modifikation des Namens *B'* – die Eigenschaft x.' Man denke nur an die Namenserie *Gripsgraps, Pitschpatsch, Piffpaff, Pinkepank* und *Trilltrall* in Clemens Brentanos „Märchen von dem Schulmeister Klopfstock und seinen fünf Söhnen" (Brentano 1978, 439–483) oder in Johannes Bobrowskis Roman „Levins Mühle" an die Namenopposition von *Kaminski, Tomaschewski* und *Kossakowski* vs. *Lebrecht* und *Germann* (Bobrowski 1987, 7–223), deren Witz – im Sinne einer gezielten Erwartungsenttäuschung – darin besteht, dass die ersteren ‚polnischen' Namen von Deutschen getragen werden und vice versa.

Doch diese Unterscheidung von *Appellativnamen* und *suggestiven Namen* erweist sich für unsere Fragestellung als noch zu großmaschig. Ich schlage daher – anknüpfend an Roman Jakobsons Opposition von Similaritäts- vs. Kontiguitätsstörungen und der daraus abgeleiteten „Polarität zwischen Metaphorik und Metonymik" (Jakobson

1974 [1956], 239–259, Jakobson 1974, 117–141) – folgende Typologie[3] vor, die sich in der Literarischen Onomastik inzwischen weitgehend durchgesetzt zu haben scheint.

Die Appellativnamen lassen sich untergliedern in:

A) *Verkörperte Namen*: Literarische Eigennamen, deren Semantisierung vornehmlich auf der *Kontiguitäts*assoziation eines bereits (real oder fiktional) existierenden Trägers dieses Namens und dessen Eigenschaften beruht, wie die namentlich genannten Zielscheiben von Iambos und Satire, *Sokrates* und *Agathon* in der Komödie des Aristophanes und in Platonischen Dialogen, *Hippocrates* als Quacksalbername im Schauspiel des Mittelalters, die Königsnamen in Shakespeares „Histories“ oder schließlich Nietzsches *Zarathustra*.

B) *Redende Namen*: Literarische Eigennamen, deren Semantisierung vornehmlich auf der – sei es etymologisch, sei es sekundär (also volksetymologisch) motivierten – *Similaritäts*assoziation von Elementen des allgemeinen Wortschatzes beruht. Vor allem für diesen Namentyp gilt, was Roman Jakobson als allgemeinen Grundzug poetischer Namengebung bezeichnet hat: „In poetry the internal form of a name, that is, the semantic load of its constituents, regains its pertinence“ (Jakobson 1981, 48–49). So heißt es im Terenz-Kommentar des Aelius Donatus:

> Die Namen der Personen, zumindest in den Komödien, müssen einen Grund und ursprünglichen Wortsinn (*etymologia*) haben. Es wäre nämlich absurd, wenn der Komödienschreiber, da er doch die Fabeln passend erdichtet, entweder einer Person einen unpassenden Namen gibt oder eine Funktion, die mit dem Namen nicht im Einklang steht. Daher heißt der treue Sklave Parmeno [‚Bleibtreu‘], [...], der Soldat Thraso [‚der Kühne‘] oder Polemon [‚Krieger‘], der Jüngling Pamphilus [‚Allgeliebter‘], die Matrone Myrrina [‚Myrte‘] [...] und ähnliches mehr. Hierbei ist es der größte Mißgriff des Dichters, wenn er stattdessen einen gegensätzlichen und abweichenden Namen erfindet, außer daß er im Scherz einen Namen per ἀντίφρασιν [‚im Gegensinne‘] gibt, wie bei Plautus ein Geldwechsler Misargyrides [‚Geldhasser‘] genannt wird. (Donatus 1905, 12–13; zitiert und erläutert im 90. Stück von Lessings „Hamburgischer Dramaturgie“: Lessing 1985, 629–631)

Solche redende Namen finden sich ebenso gut in der satirischen und didaktischen Literatur des Spätmittelalters und im Reformationsspiel, in Dialogen der Renaissance und des Barock und in barocken Festbeschreibungen, aber auch in Shakespeares Dramen: *Marina* – „whom, | For she was born at sea, I have nam’d so“ (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 1061),[4] *Perdita* – „for the babe | Is counted lost for ever“ (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 337),[5] „Admir’d *Miranda!* | Indeed, the top of admiration“

3 Hierzu und zum Folgenden vgl. *Poetische Namengebung* (Birus 1978, 34–31) sowie „Vorschlag zu einer Typologie literarischer Namen“ (Birus 1989, 17–41).

4 Aus Shakespeare: *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 1048–1072).

5 Aus Shakespeare: *The Winter’s Tale* (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 324–354).

(Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 12),[6] und im bürgerlichen Trauerspiel, wie *Thorowgood* und *Trueman* in George Lillos „The London Merchant“ (Lillo 1965 [1731]) – und erst recht im humoristischen Roman.

Freilich hatte schon Jean Paul in der „Vorschule der Aesthetik“ gegen diesen Namentyp eingewandt:

> Unausstehlich ist dem deutschen Gefühle die brittische Namensvetterschaft mit der Sache; – wozu Hermes früher die häßlichsten Proben an den Herren Verkennt und Grundleger und neuerlich an Herrn Kerker und überall geliefert. Aber ganz und gar nichts soll wieder kein Name bedeuten, besonders da nach Leibnitz doch alle Eigennamen ursprünglich allgemeine waren, sondern so recht in der Viertels-Mitte soll er stehen, mehr mit Klängen als mit Sylben reden und viel sagen, ohne es zu nennen, wie z. B. die Wielandschen Namen: Flok, Flaunz, Parasol, Dindonette etc. So hat z. B. der uns bekannte Autor [d.i. Jean Paul selbst, Anm. H.B.] nicht ohne wahren Verstand unbedeutende Menschen einsylbig: Wutz, Stuß getauft, andere schlimme oder scheinbar wichtige mit der Iterativ-Sylbe *er*: Lederer, Fraischdörfer – einen kahlen, fahlen: Fahland u. s. w. (Jean Paul 2015, 177)

Die letztgenannten Namen, die ‚viel sagen, ohne es zu nennen‘, gehören zu der großen Gruppe der *suggestiven Namen*, die sich differenzieren lassen in:

C) *Klangsymbolische Namen*: Literarische Eigennamen, deren Semantisierung vornehmlich auf ihren ikonischen Qualitäten (z. B. onomatopoetischen, synästhetischen, diagrammatischen *Similaritäts*assoziationen) beruht, wie etwa die Namen der ‚Schnüffler‘ und Heuchler *Montufar* (Scarron), *Tartuffe, -uffle, Panulphe* (Molière), *Onuphre* (de la Bruyère) und als ihr Gegenstück Gryphius’ polternd großsprecherische Namen *Don Daradiridatumtarides* und *Don Horribilicribrifax* (Gryphius 1883 [1663]) oder in Brentanos Märchen der „privatisierende Menschenfresser“ *Wellewatz* (Brentano 1978, 346–368; „Das Märchen von dem Baron von Hüpfenstich“), die garstigen Schwestern *Murxa* und *Wirx* (Brentano 1978, 232–265; „Das Märchen vom Murmeltier“) und der törichte *Dilldapp* (Brentano 1978, 369–385; „Das Märchen von dem Dilldapp“). Uriel Weinreich hat dies als „hypersemanticization“ bezeichnet:

> The phonic vehicle of signs assumes an independent symbolic value (whether ‘impressionistic’ – sound-imitative – or ‘expressionistic,’ i. e., synaesthetic); a special semantic relation is imputed to signs with similar vehicles (rhyme, etc.); in short, incipient correlations are exploited, in contrast to the arbitrariness of this relation in semantically ‘normal’ uses of language. (Weinreich 1980, 42)

Die andere Spielart der suggestiven Namen sind:

6 Aus Shakespeare: *The Tempest* (Shakespeare 1969 [1905], 1–22).

D) *Klassifizierende Namen*: Literarische Eigennamen, deren Semantisierung vornehmlich auf der *Kontiguitäts*assoziation bestimmter (nationaler, religiöser, sozialer u. a.) Gruppen von Namenträgern beruht, die durch den allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch oder aber durch feste literarische Konventionen bedingt ist (z. B. männliche vs. weibliche, christliche vs. antik-heidnische, Adels- vs. Bedienstetennamen). Bei ihnen kann die geografische Lokalisierung eine Rolle spielen, wie bei Namen heidnisch-griechischen Ursprungs (*Cimone, Efigenia, Lisimaco, Cassandrea* oder *Nicostrato*) in den im antiken Griechenland spielenden Novellen V,1 und VII,9 von Boccaccios „Decameron" (Boccaccio 1987, 593–608 und 861–875). Oder sie dienen vor allem der sozialen Differenzierung, wie die slawischen bzw. jiddischen Domestiken-Namen *Welko, Djura* und *Jankel* im habsburgischen Kontext von Hofmannsthal/Strauss' Oper „Arabella" (Hofmannsthal 1976, 5–70), bei denen die Etymologie oder prominente Namenvorbilder in keiner Weise von Belang sind.

Die Opposition von *Appellativnamen* vs. *suggestiven Namen* bildet die Diagonalen in diesem Schema, indem die *Appellativnamen* unter dem Gesichtspunkt der *individuellen* Semantisierung (A) *verkörperte* und (B) *redende* Namen verbinden; die *suggestiven Namen* hingegen verbinden unter dem Gesichtspunkt der *seriellen* Semantisierung (C) *klangsymbolische* und (D) *klassifizierende* Namen.

III

Was hat das für Konsequenzen für ihre Übersetzbarkeit?

(ad A) *Verkörperte Namen* werden in Übersetzungen analog zum alltäglichen Sprachgebrauch behandelt, denn hier gibt es je nach der Sprachzugehörigkeit Namenvarianten (*Wien*, frz. *Vienne*, engl. *Vienna*; *Donau*, ungar. *Duna*, slaw. zumeist *Dunaj*, rumän. *Dunărea*), aber auch regelrechte Mehrnamigkeit (*Bratislava*, bis 1919 slowak. *Prešporok* von dt. *Pressburg*, ungar. *Pozsony*; *Donau*, altgriech. *Ἴστρος*, lat. *Hister/Ister*). Wenn Hölderlin in seiner Hymne „Der Ister" (Hölderlin 1992, 362–364; Kommentar 1026–1031) den antiken Namen *Ister* (v. 21) für die Donau verwendet, so thematisiert er den Fluss – gemeinsam mit dem *Alpheus* (v. 9), dem Hauptfluss der Peloponnes – aus der Perspektive seines ins Schwarze Meer mündenden Unterlaufs und springt von da aus zu seinem Quellgebiet im badischen Schwarzwald und seinem Oberlauf durch die Schwäbische Alb (v. 23–26, 34–47 u. 68). Es wäre also ganz widersinnig, bei der Übersetzung dieser späten Hölderlin-Hymne einen der modernen Namen der Donau zu verwenden.

Ähnliche sprachabhängige Namenvarianten finden sich auch bei Personennamen. So wird bei Friedrich Schlegel *Giovanni* zu *Johannes Boccaccio* und bei Goethe *Leonardo* zu *Leonard da Vinci*, *Laurence* zu *Lorenz Sterne* und *Alessandro* zu *Alexander Manzoni*. Auch wenn dies längst unmöglich geworden ist, wird noch heute *Lev Nikolaevič Tolstoj* häufig zu *Leo Tolstoi* eingedeutscht und *Pëtr Il'ič Čajkovskij* zu *Peter Tschaikowski*; ja, wie der Komponist so auch seine Opernhelden *Evgenij Onegin* und *German* („Pique Dame") zu *Eugen Onegin* und *Hermann*.

(ad B) *Redende Namen* sollten, wenn überhaupt, entsprechend ihrer Etymologie übersetzt werden. So bei Lessing die griechischen Komödiennamen „der großsprecherische feige Soldat [...] Pyrgopolinices, Hauptmann *Mauerbrecher*", „der elende Schmaruzer, der diesem um das Maul gieng, [...] Artotrogus, *Brockenschröter*", „der Jüngling, welcher durch seinen Aufwand, besonders auf Pferde, den Vater in Schulden setzte, [...] Phidippides, Junker *Sparroß*" (Lessing 1985, 630; 90. Stück); oder in der Schlegel/Tieck-Übersetzung der Shakespeare-Komödien: *Dull* und *Moth* zu *Dumm* und *Motte* („Love's Labour's Lost"), *Pinch* zu *Zwick* („The Comedy of Errors"), *Speed* zu *Flink* („The Two Gentlemen of Verona"), die Feen *Pease-Blossom, Cobweb, Moth* und *Mustard-Seed* zu *Bohnenblüthe*, *Spinnweb*, *Motte* und *Senfsamen* („A Midsummer-Night's Dream"), *Christopher Sly* zu *Christoph Schlau* („The Taming of the Shrew"), *Shallow* und *Slender* zu *Schaal* (wörtlich ‚seicht, flach') und *Schmächtig* „The Merry Wives of Windsor", *Touchstone* zu *Probstein* („As You Like It"), *Sir Toby Belch* und *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* zu *Junker Tobias von Rülp* und *Junker Christoph von Bleichenwang* („Twelfth-Night; Or, What You Will"), und schließlich *Elbow* und *Froth* zu *Elbogen* und *Schaum* („Measure for Measure").

Statt genuin komisch mögen diese übersetzten Namen oft einfach putzig klingen, so dass man Marius von Mayenburgs Verzicht auf solche Namenübersetzungen gut nachvollziehen kann.

Ganz anders stellt sich die Übersetzungsproblematik bei den suggestiven Namen dar:

(ad C) *Klangsymbolische Namen*: Sie sind – mehr noch als *verkörperte Namen* – gänzlich unübersetzbar oder aber nur durch ganz andere Namen ersetzbar, etwa indem die lateinischen Anklänge von *Daradiridatumtarides* und *Horribilicribrifax* (Gryphius) oder die deutschen von *Gripsgraps, Pitschpatsch, Piffpaff, Pinkepank* und *Trilltrall* (Brentano) durch Anklänge an ganz andere Sprachen abgelöst werden.

(ad D) *Klassifizierende Namen*: Hier steht der Übersetzer z. B. vor der Alternative, ob er Boccaccios italienisch-griechische Hybridbildungen *Cimone, Efigenia,*

Lisimaco und *Cassandra* beibehält[7] oder ob er sie durch die korrekten (oder traditionell latinisierten) griechischen Namen *Kimon, Iphigenie, Lysimachos* und *Kassandra* ersetzt.[8] Oder er muss darauf achten, die sozialen Charakterisierungsfunktion der klassifizierenden Namen auch in der Zielsprache zu bewahren, weswegen Lessing gegen die Namenübersetzung des Helden von Rousseaus „Nouvelle Héloïse", *Saint-Preux* (Rousseau 1964, 1–745), durch *Siegmund* protestierte:

> Der Name *Siegmund* [Hervorhebung H.B.] schmecket bei uns ziemlich nach dem Domestiquen. Ich wünschte, daß unsere dramatischen Dichter auch in solchen Kleinigkeiten ein wenig gesuchterer, und auf den Ton der großen Welt aufmerksamer sein wollten. (Lessing 1985, 226)

In diesem Sinne betonte der Rezensent einer französischen Übersetzung der „Lehrjahre" „Les années d'apprentissage de Guillaume Meister, par Goethe":

> daß entweder der *deutsche* Vorname des Helden, nach dem Beyspiel mehrerer englischen, und gerade des Vornamens *Wilhelm*, der in französischen Romanen gang und gäbe ist, beybehalten, oder ein anderer gewählt, jener aber, der im Französischen unedel oder platt klingt, in keinem Falle übersetzt werden müßte. So hatte *Gibbons* Freund, der verstorbene *Deyverdun*, in seiner französischen Uebersetzung von *Werthers Leiden* sich gehütet, den Freund, an welchen *Werthers* Briefe gerichtet sind, *Guillaume* zu nennen, wie er in einer frühern, höchst elenden Uebersetzung hieß. (Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung 1803, Sp. 143–144)

Der italienische Übersetzer hat daraus (wie eingangs erwähnt) nach dem Vorbild einer weiteren französischen Übersetzung die aus heutiger Sicht groteske Konsequenz gezogen, die Romanfiguren der „Lehrjahre" generell umzubenennen: *Wilhelm* in *Arturo, Mariane* in *Adolfina, Philine* in *Clotilde* etc. Daneben zeigt er aber eine Vorliebe für exotisch wirkende deutsche Namen: „Melina wird Waldorf, Augustin, der Harfner, heißt Adalbert (und erst am Ende, seiner italienischen Herkunft gemäß, Domenico), Therese ist Eliska" (Vgl. Rispoli 2018, 164).

IV

Dass aber Namenübersetzungen innerhalb der literarischen Werke selbst eine Rolle spielen können, zeigt gerade einer der letztgenannten Namen, *Melina*, den der Übersetzer in *Waldorf* umbenannt hat. Denn in „Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung", dem ‚Ur-Meister', ist der Name *Melina* das Produkt einer Übersetzung: Als nämlich Wilhelm Meister nach dem Verlust seiner Geliebten Mariane

7 So in der Übersetzung von Albert Wesselski (Boccaccio 1983 [1909], 470–481).
8 So in der Übersetzung von Karl Witte (Boccaccio 1961, 272–280).

einem auf der Flucht gefangenen Liebespaar begegnete und dem jungen gefangenen Schauspieler Melina gegenüber ein *déja vu*-Gefühl hatte, „rief er mit einer Art von augenblicklicher Inspiration aus: ei Herr Pfefferkuchen sind Sie es, den ich wieder finde? Und ist es möglich, daß ich Sie eine ganze halbe Stunde habe verkennen können?“ Und der Erzähler knüpft daran die Reflexion:

> Wenn es uns erlaubt ist, in seine Seele eine Mutmaßung zu wagen, so lag es wohl darin: jener Pfefferkuchen den er kannte, war eigentlich ein stumpfer, kurzer, enger Mensch, ohne die Grazie des Adels in seinen Bewegungen und Betragen. Sein Wesen war gemein wie sein Name, und außer einer starken Stimme, und einer gewissen Heftigkeit, womit er leidenschaftliche Rollen spielte, war nichts, was ihn einigermaßen ausgezeichnet hätte; und dieses Bild war in Wilhelms Seele geblieben.

Woraufhin sich zwischen ihnen der folgende Dialog anspinnt:

> Wie sind Sie zu dem ganz fremden Namen gekommen, sagte Wilhelm? Er ist so gar entfernt nicht von dem vorigen, antwortete jener. Namen haben einen großen Einfluß auf die Vorstellung der Menschen. Der meinige gab zu Spöttereien Anlaß, und er war mir selbst zuwider. Weil man auch an verschiedenen Orten Honigkuchen statt Pfefferkuchen sagt, so übersetzte ich ihn Melina, so bald ich Gelegenheit hatte, an einem fremden Orte zum ersten male aufzutreten. – Ich zweifle ob jemand die Etymologie herausfinden werde, versetzte Wilhelm.

Diese Episode schließt damit, dass der Erzähler fortfährt: „Melina, (welchen Namen wir ihm nicht mißgönnen wollen) fing darauf an, Wilhelmen seine ganze Geschichte zu erzählen, und dieser brennte vor Verlangen etwas näheres von Marianen zu hören [...]“ (Goethe 1992, 108–109). Jener Namenwechsel ist für die Gesamtstruktur des Romans so marginal, dass er der Umarbeitung der „Theatralischen Sendung“ zu den „Lehrjahren“ zum Opfer gefallen ist und der Übersetzer daher nichts von dem Hintergrund des Namens *Melina*, den er ahnungslos durch *Waldorf* ersetzt hat, wissen konnte.

Der Zweifel, „ob jemand die Etymologie herausfinden werde“, gilt erst recht für das zweite Beispiel dichtungsinterner Namenübersetzungen, die hier, obwohl völlig verdeckt, eine wichtige strukturelle Funktion haben: Lessings „Nathan der Weise“ (Lessing 1993a, 483–627). Der Widerstreit der drei abrahamitischen Religionen ist hier durch die spannungsvollen Beziehungen der Hauptpersonen verkörpert, die sich am Ende – mit dem Titelhelden als Katalysator – als Verwandtschaftsbeziehungen enthüllen. Dass in diesem ‚Dramatischen Gedicht‘ Namenbedeutungen überhaupt eine Rolle spielen,[9] erhellt (immerhin auf der Rückseite des Titelblatts des Dramenentwurfs) eine Notiz Lessings zum Namen der Amme:

9 Hierzu und zum Folgenden vgl. „Das Rätsel der Namen in Lessings *Nathan der Weise*“ (Birus 1984, 290–327) sowie schon *Poetische Namengebung* (Birus 1978, 134–176).

> NB für *Dinah* Sie lieber *Daja*. Daja heißt, wie ich aus den Excerptis ex Abulfeda das Leben des Saladin betreffend, beim *Schultens* S. 4 sehe, soviel als *Nutrix*; und vermutlich, daß das Spanische *Aya* davon herkömmt, welches Covarruvias von dem Griechischen αγω, παιδαγωγος herleitet. Aber gewiß kömmt es davon nicht unmittelbar her, sondern vermutlich vermittelst des Arabischen, welches wohl aus dem Griechischen könnte gemacht sein. (Lessing 1993b, 631)

Von der offenkundigen Unhaltbarkeit dieser etymologischen Herleitung einmal ganz abgesehen, dokumentiert dieses hingeworfene *nota bene* die enge Verflochtenheit von Lessings poetischer Namengebung mit seinen sprachwissenschaftlichen Interessen. Ja, wie sich zeigen wird, gehorcht diese im „Nathan" denselben Prinzipien, die auch seine Sprachforschungen bestimmt haben: „er synonymisiert und er etymologisiert" (vgl. Hübner 1940, 244).

Wenn sich im Laufe des Dramas enthüllt, dass Nathans Tochter *Recha* lediglich seine Adoptivtochter ist und dass ihr Taufname *Blanda von Filneck* war, so ruft der Tempelherr aus:

> Blanda? Blanda? – Recha nicht?
> Nicht Eure Recha mehr? – Gott! Ihr verstoßt
> Sie! gebt ihr ihren Christennamen wieder!
> Verstoßt sie meinetwegen! – Nathan! Nathan!
> Warum es sie entgelten lassen? Sie!
> (Lessing 1993a, 626)

Doch von einer Verstoßung kann bei diesem Namenwechsel nicht die Rede sein. Denn *Recha* ist die hebräische Entsprechung (zumindest hielt sie Lessing mit damaligen Lexika dafür) zu *Blanda*: ‚die Zarte, Sanfte'.

Komplizierter ist die Situation beim Tempelherrn, der sich als ihr Bruder entpuppt. Denn obwohl er behauptet: „Ich heiße selber ja nach meinem Vater: Curd | Ist Conrad" (Lessing 1993a, 565), ist er weder auf den Namen *Curd* getauft, noch war *Conrad von Stauffen* sein Vater, sondern lediglich sein Onkel mütterlicherseits. Tatsächlich ist der Name des Tempelherrn aber *Leu von Filneck*, und sein Vater war *Assad*, der längst verschollene Bruder Sultan Saladins. Dennoch trifft sein Satz: „Ich heiße selber ja nach meinem Vater" die Wahrheit, denn *Leu* und arab. *Assad* bedeuten gleichermaßen ‚Löwe'. Und des Tempelherrn vorgeblicher Taufname *Curd*? Er ist nicht bloß die Kurzform von *Conrad*, sondern er lässt sich auch als Synonym des angenommenen christlichen Namens seines Vaters, *Wolf von Filneck*, verstehen, indem (wie Lessing seiner historischen Quelle entnehmen konnte) im Türkischen „der Name *Kurd* [...] einen Wolf bedeutet" (Marin 1761, 56). *Leu* und *Curd* sind also wörtliche Entsprechungen der väterlichen Namen *Assad* und *Wolf*. Hat Lessing generell die Personennamen im „Nathan" über ihre alltagssprachliche Funktion hinaus auch zur Charakterisierung ihrer Träger genutzt, so haben die Namen Rechas, des Tempelherrn und ihres Vaters noch die weitere Funktion, die Entfremdung, ja Selbstent-

fremdung der verstreuten Glieder dieser Familie, die in deren undurchschauter Mehrnamigkeit ihren Ausdruck findet, schon im Voraus durch die Bedeutungsgleichheit ihrer polyglotten Namen symbolisch zu versöhnen. Freilich tritt diese prästabilierte Harmonie der Namenkonstellation nirgends an die Oberfläche der Handlung, ihr durchgeführter Funktionalismus bleibt für Leser oder Zuschauer völlig verdeckt.

Dass solche kryptischen Namenstrategien auch ganz andere Funktionen haben können, zeigen gerade die späten Romane Vladimir Nabokovs, in dessen Roman „Pale Fire“ (Nabokov 1980 [1962]) sich anagrammatische ‚Spiegel-Namen‘, wie *Jakob Gradus* und *Sudarg of Bokay*, *Kinbote* und *Botkin*, *Nodo* und *Odon*, und polyglotte Namenentsprechungen, wie *Jakob Gradus*, „alias Jack Degree, de Grey, d’Argus, Vinogradus, Leningradus, etc.“ (Nabokov 1980 [1962]), 307 „Index“) oder russ. *Izumrudov* = engl. *Emerald*, die Waage halten, oder in dessen ‚family chronicle‘ „Ada or Ardor“ die aus verschiedensten Sprachen stammenden Namen der Doktoren *Lapiner, Krolik, Seitz, Coniglietto, Nikulin/Kunikulinov* und *Lagosse* allesamt auf ‚Kaninchen‘ verweisen.[10] Kein Wunder, dass sie die Übersetzer vor kaum lösbare Aufgaben stellen – es sei denn, sie lassen alle Namen, wie sie sind.

V

Doch kehren wir noch einmal zurück zu unserer Leitfrage nach der Übersetzbarkeit literarischer Namen. Die Antwort fällt ja je nach Namentyp höchst verschieden aus. Da eine Typologie als solche aber von vornherein keine disjunkte Klassifikation nach Merkmalen anstrebt,[11] gibt es hier eine Fülle von Mischformen zwischen den Namentypen: Etwa die Verwendung *klassifizierender* griechischer Personennamen in Hölderlins Briefroman „Hyperion oder der Eremit in Griechenland“, die zugleich, wie der aus Platons „Symposion“ entlehnte Name *Diotima*, als „verkörperte“ Namen und dank ihrer wörtlichen Bedeutung, wie *Hyperion* („Hyperion: die Sonne, weil sie über uns dahingeht“ [Hesych]) und Adamas (als Negation von δάμνημι:

10 Vgl. Nabokovs nachträgliche Anmerkung für die deutsche Übersetzung *Ada oder das Verlangen. Aus den Annalen einer Familie* (1974, 561).

11 Zur wissenschaftstheoretischen Problematik von ‚typologischen‘ vs. ‚taxonomischen Klassifikationen‘ vgl. *Fundamentals of Concept Formation in Empirical Science* (Hempel 1952, 46–54) und *Aspects of Scientific Explanation and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Science* (Hempel 1965, 151–152 und 157–159) sowie schon die mittlerweile klassische Arbeit von Carl G. Hempel u. Paul Oppenheim: *Der Typusbegriff im Lichte der neuen Logik. Wissenschaftstheoretische Untersuchungen zur Konstitutionsforschung und Psychologie* (1936, besonders 5–7 und 103–105).

‚unbezwinglich'; ‚Stahl, Diamant'), als redende Namen aufzufassen sind.[12] Ebenso die satirisch-parodistische Verwandlung des *verkörperten* Namens des antiken Aristoteles-Kommentators *Simplicius* in den *redenden* Namen *Simplicio* dank der unverkennbaren Anspielung auf mlat. ‚simplex' (einfältig) in Galileo Galileis „Dialog über die beiden hauptsächlichsten Weltsysteme, das ptolemäische und das kopernikanische" (Galilei 1988) oder die Verballhornung des *verkörperten* Namens *Klopstock* zu einem *redenden* Namen in Brentanos „Märchen von dem Schulmeister Klopfstock und seinen fünf Söhnen" (Brentano 1978, 439–483) oder schließlich die Verfremdung der *verkörperten* Namen der Nazi-Größen *Röhm*, *Goebbels* und *Göring* zu den italianisierenden (also klassifizierenden) ‚Mafia'-Namen *Roma, Givola* und *Giri* in Brechts „Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui" (Brecht 1991, 7–112). Für solche Mischformen zwischen den vier Namentypen kann es keine übersetzerischen Patentlösungen geben, sondern der Übersetzer wird stets aufs Neue entscheiden müssen, auf welche Komponente er in der Zielsprache am ehesten verzichten und wodurch er sie substituieren kann: „[...] der Mittelweg ist der einzige, der nicht nach Rom führt" (Schönberg 1980, 66).

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12 Vgl. Jochen Schmidts Kommentar in Hölderlin, *Werke und Briefe* (1992, 965–969).

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Vladimir Biti

Past Empire(s), Post-Empire(s), and Narratives of Disaster: Joseph Roth's *The Radetzky March* and Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge over the Drina*

Abstract: The breakup of East-Central European empires generated various narratives of disaster. This article confronts two such novels, Joseph Roth's *The Radetzky March*, which is written from the perspective of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's ruling constituency, and Ivo Andrić's *The Bridge over the Drina*, which is written from the perspective of the subjects of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. For Roth, who focuses on the private family, the Empire entered its disintegration when its children renounced their fathers. For Andrić, who departs from the political family, that took place when its authorities abandoned their subjects. An external contingent force distorts the paternal relationship and sets its constituencies apart. The article analyses the two novels' different answers to this trauma.

Keywords: disaster, empire, paternal relationships, post-empire, technologies of self-survival

No event becomes a disaster by itself, but via the qualification of those participants who retroactively perceive themselves as having been its victims. However, not all participants do so, which is why "disaster" is a controversial predicate that requires legitimation. This is the task of narratives of disaster. As a political means, they relate not only to the disaster but simultaneously to the other participants' narratives, which they must disengage in order to legitimate their own versions. Official and oppositional narratives take part in this competition, each group being complex and divided. In this paper, I am going to investigate two oppositional narratives in their unintended but illuminating mutual relationship. Both evince the disaster of empire(s) – of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in *The Radetzky March*, and of the Ottoman Empire as well in *The Bridge over the Drina* – albeit from different perspectives: Roth from the perspective of its ruling constituency, and Andrić from the subjects' perspective. This spawns two interconnected but different disasters, one primarily of the private family and another prevalently of the public family. In the first the individual and in the second the collectives are deprived of belonging. For Roth, who focuses on the private family, the Empire entered its disintegration when its children renounced their fathers.

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For Andrić, who departs from the political family, that took place when its authorities abandoned their subjects. But neither of these novels, contrary to their dominant reception, simply blames one group for the other's disaster; they derive their catastrophe from the unpredicted interference of an agency beyond the reach of both groups' responsibilities.[1] An external contingent force distorts the paternal relationship and sets its constituencies apart. The breakup of European empires induced in many of their citizens, in the first place those that were steeped in multiple coexisting loyalties, the uncanny feeling of no-longer-being-at-home (which is what the Freudian *Unheimliche*, in fact, etymologically amounts to). In the new political environment after the supranational imperial structures had disintegrated along with the institutions that protected them, the collective attempts to rescue the supranational collective identity or the lost paternal care were exposed to numerous risks, which confronted these citizens with the

1 For the dominant reception of Roth's novel in such a restricted ideological frame, see Kożuchowski (2013, 112–121). The historian Kożuchowski himself subscribes to it. For the thesis of the elective affinity between Roth's and Grillparzer's monarchism, see Nürnberger (1981, 88–97); Bronsen (1988). For an overview of Roth's reception, see Kraske (1988). For a more recent reception, see for example Pazi (1993); Rosenfeld (2001). I endorse Claudio Magris's opinion that in his literature, perhaps unconsciously, Roth overcomes the narrowness of the political and ideological views that were expressed in his journalistic work. This particularly holds for *The Radetzky March* because his later works, written under the growing threat of Nazism, become more and more nostalgic. Even if "Roth the man" writes monarchist articles simultaneously with *The Radetzky March*, the writer Roth cannot be interpreted as a "prisoner of ideological boundaries" (Magris 1966, 259; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are my own). It would be wrong, however, to give too much credence to the opinions of "Roth the man" either. They underwent fundamental changes and were heavily dependent on historical, political, and pragmatic circumstances. As Magris (1966, 258) rightly puts it: "He was an eternal youth and never rose to the realm of ideas; they remained for him only occasions and instruments for animation, effects and costumes for his momentary state of mind." He engaged his various circumstantially induced opinions, or ideological roles for that matter, to animate his various figures – sometimes even one and the same figure, as we will come to see. The reception of Andrić's work, in its turn, was subjected to ideological restrictions in the frame of three South Slav national literary historiographies. The Serbian literary historian Jovan Deretić places it in a period that saw a return to traditional narrative forms (1981, 350–351). He interprets Andrić as a historian rather than a novelist, including him in Serbian literature's mainstream that is, allegedly, history-oriented. The Croatian literary historian Krešimir Nemec claims that Andrić synthesized the narrative methods of the classic realist novel (1998, 200), confirming, as he reads it, the principal characteristic of the Croatian novel: a tendency towards the assimilation and integration of heterogeneous traditional sources (83–84, 196). The Bosnian-Herzegovinian literary historian Dejan Đuričković claims that Andrić opposed modernist poetics in order to maintain a claim to totality, supposedly typical of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian novel (1990, 41).

necessity to find out new technologies of self-survival. I take these developments to be both novels' main concern.

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Roth's novel portrays its main characters as firmly encapsulated by solitude. This solitude is represented as a grave condition that governs their communication with other characters. The elderly Emperor who approaches his provincial "sons" absent-mindedly, indifferently, and negligently is the epitome of such figures of inaccessible loneliness. Of course, disinterestedness suits the supreme position in any political hierarchy and is therefore hardly astonishing. The Emperor, however, appears to be absent-minded not only in relation to the provincials but also to his own self. This agency appointed to rule the whole Empire – as omnipresent among its inhabitants as God is in the world (75; *86*) – is not exactly sovereign.[2] On the contrary, the Emperor, who is responsible for the well-being of millions of people, leaves the impression of an extremely distracted person. At the age at which he enters this novel, he has ceased to master even his own self.

Portrayed on innumerable public walls and reproduced on coins and stamps as coffered up in the "crystalline armor" of his "icy and everlasting, silver and dreadful old age,"[3] he casts a tough and freezing glance at his subjects (75; *85–86*). Remote and unapproachable, his face lacks personality and familiarity. Under such conditions, some subjects remove his portrait from their walls (109; *124*) and others consider him to have definitely been abandoned by God (176; *196*). Even to the Emperor himself, God starts to appear as mysterious as he himself regularly appeared to his soldiers (240; *267*). The Emperor felt as if he was drifting away from them, as though they were all shrinking and "the things they said reached his ear from a vast distance and then bounced away meaninglessly" (243; *273*). This increasing distance from his subjects renders him unable to listen to his visitors and interlocutors carefully. During an inspection of his troops in Ukraine, he thus promotes a barber from Olmütz from corporal to sergeant completely against his will and wishes. Although in doing so he has destroyed the barber's life, the narrator presents him as extremely pleased at having accomplished a great deed and made the barber happy (242; *269*).

2 In the following, the first parenthesized number refers to the page in Michael Hofmann's English translation of *The Radetzky March* (Roth, trans. Hoffmann 2002); the second, italicized and separated by a semicolon, to the German original (Roth 1981).

3 Hofmann translates "in seiner eisernen und ewigen, silbernen und schrecklichen Greisenhaftigkeit eingeschlossen" as "coffered up in an icy and everlasting old age," astonishingly dropping "silver and dreadful."

The Emperor's profile as such has a wide impact within the novel. His officers of provincial origin, while unreservedly committed to him, display an analogously radical solitude, resuming the Emperor's humiliating disregard towards the "provincials" in an even stronger form. In the way this novel represents its characters, it guides its reader to the conclusion that the desperate *dislocation* of some imposes an equally devastating *location* on others, and vice versa. Is the proliferation of solitudes an unavoidable corollary of the divided imperial coexistence? Their mutual instigation of solitude resurfaces in all relations between *The Radetzky March*'s main characters, as well as between its main and minor characters. The novel obsessively returns to the complex relationship between imposed mobility and immobility – the solitudes of Austrians and provincials, those of the dominating supranational individuals and of the dominated national collectivities. As these solitudes foster one another, *The Radetzky March* makes a distribution of sympathies between them obsolete, which seriously questions its much-trumpeted nostalgic character.[4]

Following three generations of a typical imperial family, the Trottas, Roth lets their solitudes deepen rather than ameliorate one another. Having been ennobled after saving the Emperor's life at the battle of Solferino in 1859, Baron Joseph von Trotta breaks off his personal relationship with his immobile Slovenian father, concealing him from his Bohemian wife out of provincial shame. After having renounced his family father in favour of a political one, he, in his own role as a father, in a typical gesture of repetition compulsion, quits personal relations with his own son, raising him toughly and coldly. This guides his son to repeat the same gesture towards him, attaching himself to the Emperor instead. Raised by the Baron in such an impersonal way, District Commissioner Franz Trotta, as the father, reproduces the same attitude towards his son Carl, who, for his own part, also chooses to admire his grandfather and the Emperor instead.

It appears that within the frame of the Habsburg Empire, the family could only ensure its external reputation if it consented to its internal discontinuation. The narrator reminds us, as if pointing out the price of the Big Father's love, that a "great chain of hills" separated the Captain from his son (170; *188*) just as they also did for the Baron and his father (8; *11*).[5] The Dual Monarchy's officers of provincial origin had to detach themselves from taking care of their family bonds, since attachment to one's original family was considered provincial behaviour. If

4 For a recent reading of the novel along more ambiguous lines, see Foteva (2014, 173–195). Foteva, however, does not address the problem of the dis/located solitude that figures centrally in my reading.

5 In the latter case, Hofmann translates "schwerer Berg [*lit.* severe mountain] militärischer Grade" as "a great weight of military distinction."

one wanted to overcome it, one was expected to abandon this "primitive" loyalty in favour of binding oneself to the Emperor. Families could only improve their social status in this way, and it required a mobility from their members across various imperial provinces, often located great distances from their families' homes. Once cut off from their geographical, social, cultural, and linguistic roots, the Emperor's supranational officers were compelled to live free-floating, dislocated lives. The development of their careers affiliated them to locations that lacked their emotional attachment and, in their turn, regarded these settlers as foreigners.

The novel carefully investigates how the protagonists' feelings of non-belonging and their distrustful reception by their new surroundings generate their unbearable solitude and concomitant attempts to come to grips with it. There seems to be no exception to this rule. After having fought for his Emperor and become a military invalid, Baron Trotta's father, born in the Slovenian town of Sipolje, became a gardener at the Emperor's Laxenburg castle in Lower Austria, which was, incidentally or not, a surrogate for his native one. Baron Trotta himself, disappointed with the Emperor's mendacious administration, withdrew from the military service in southern Hungary that confronted him with mistrust and gossip (5; *8)* into a silent Bohemian landscape. District Commissioner Trotta, for his part, was sent to Silesia and then Moravia, whereupon, faced with complete isolation, he undertook a trip to Ukraine to re-establish a personal relationship with his endangered son. Lieutenant Trotta was assigned to Moravia and then Ukraine, where, after quitting his embarrassing military service, he tried to integrate into the domestic peasant population.

At the beginning of their appointments to various provinces, however, neither of the Trottas cares to identify his exact new location. They want their provincial surroundings to remain indistinctive in order to project onto them the self-pleasing, therapeutic fantasies of their solitude without facing resistance from the domestic population. Only after this resistance arises and the provincials announce their dissatisfaction with their imposed identity, do the Trottas become frustrated with their dislocation. Yet even then, they prove unwilling to approach the provincials for whom they are responsible in distinctive terms, instead continuing to heal their dislocation through a stubborn detachment. In demonstrating such an obstinate blindness towards the perspective of the provincials they are expected to take care of, they unknowingly redouble the Emperor's utter disinterest in his subjects.

But it is not only the provincials that the Trottas are cut off from. Baron Trotta's unwilling reduplication of the Emperor's traumatic self-enclosure makes the attempted return to his family father fail. The very structure of the Dual Monarchy, circling around its "absent centre," prevented the return of its subjects to their mutual personal relationships. An attachment to the impersonal Common

Father, hammered into the consciousness of imperial subjects through the daily rituals of identity-formation, sentenced any attempt at personal belonging to failure. The novel obstinately reminds us that the Emperor's portrait supervised his subjects from all public walls, coins, and stamps, and that the performance of the *Radetzky March* was notorious on all public occasions. Contact with the omnipresent Emperor's portrait sometimes takes a detour via portraits of his representatives, such as that of Baron Trotta, which supervises his grandson from afar with equal persistence (70, 104; *79, 118*). The Impersonal and Indifferent Father thus spectrally multiplies in all of his subjects.

For example, inheriting his personal father's disrespect for the other's personality, District Commissioner Trotta also indirectly reaffirms the aloofness of the Supreme Father. The Commissioner's disrespect holds not only for his relation to his son but also for all of his other social relations. For instance, he does not deem Bandleader Nechwal's wife or children as worthy of exact memorization (31; *37*). As regards his other provincial subordinate, Sergeant Slama, he silently passes over the affair between his son and the Sergeant's wife and expects Slama to do the same, as if provincial wives are somehow "naturally" convenient for the sexual initiation of the Emperor's youth. Due to the early death of his mother and his predominantly motherless childhood, District Commissioner Trotta does not hold women in high esteem. The same ignorance is apparent in his relation to the imperial provinces' exact location. He refuses his son's wish to continue his military service at the Empire's "southern frontier" in Slovenia (because an Austrian officer has to remain cut off from his place of origin; 138; *151*), instead directing him to its "northern sister" Ukraine (138; *152*). At that time, incidentally, the Empire's southern frontier was Dalmatia, while Ukraine was more accurately its "eastern" rather than "northern sister."[6]

The third Trotta, Lieutenant Carl Joseph, is a double of his grandfather, whom he perceives as his true father since he experiences his actual father as a stranger (66, 185; *75, 206*). This is, after all, the father's fault, because Commissioner Trotta directed his son to continue Baron Trotta's military career in order to make his own castrated wish come true. By being the Baron's remote copy, the Lieutenant resumes the Baron's non-belonging to the milieu of his military appointment (77, 227; *87, 252*), which drives his relation to the Emperor into a similar ambiguity. On the one hand, he manifests unreserved loyalty, deeply admires his Emperor (26,

6 It is unclear who in the last instance allocates Slovenia to the south and Ukraine to the north of the Monarchy, Commissioner Trotta as a focalizer or the narrator. Both are equally ignorant of the exact location of imperial provinces, confusing them unconcernedly with each other. I will return to the narrator's redoubling of his protagonists' detachment from their surroundings in my conclusion.

210–211; *32, 234*), and rescues his portrait from humiliation in Madam Resi's brothel (82; *93*) and the Ukrainian garrison (328; *364–365*). On the other hand, the Emperor strikes him as a complete stranger (76, 185, 328; *86, 206, 364*) who deserves only indifference and pity (246; *275*). Divided like his grandfather, he yearns for a return to the native Sipolje of his forebears, a location that he imagines in equally blurred terms. As a true descendant of his grandfather, the Lieutenant does not really distinguish between the Czech and Slovenian peasants and languages (66; *74–75*), but adds a further touch to his forebear's ignorance. By imagining mosques and praying Moslems as constitutive parts of Sipolje (124; *140*), he confuses Slovenia with the newly occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina. As for the subordinates from the lower social strata, he treats his Ukrainian servant Onufri in an even less personal manner than how his father handled his butler Jacques. Both Onufri and Jacques are certainly destined to fulfil the literal and symbolic wishes of their masters. Yet the Lieutenant cannot memorize Onufri's strange Slavic name and cannot bear to direct his gaze at Onufri's provincial face, meaning that he does not really know what Onufri looks like until he finally learns his name (69; *78*). His teeth, after all, remind him of a horse (68; *77*) and his behaviour of a bear (71; *80*).

In this novel, however, the absent centre of the Dual Monarchy does not push only the Trottas and those who depend upon them into irrevocable solitude. Consider the case of the rich, independent Polish landowner Count Chojnicki, a figure from the group of the so-called frontier men located on the Empire's eastern margins, that is, in Ukraine, near to Russia. He is described as an extremely mobile person, a "migrant bird" familiar with many milieus, a strange fellow with innumerable acquaintances but not a single friend or enemy, a man of oscillating moods deprived of proper belonging; in a word, an "alchemist" who merges all manner of identities (146, 174; *162, 194*). As Roth himself was born on the Empire's eastern frontier, many commentators have pointed out his continuous sympathy with this kind of person.[7] In addition, Chojnicki's anti-democratic and monarchic worldview (148, 184; *164–165, 205*) apparently sides with the opinions expressed by Roth in his journalistic work. Yet neither Count Chojnicki's nor Roth's worldview (as articulated in this novel) is that simple. Chojnicki calls the Kaiser a "senile idiot," the government "a bunch of morons," and the parliament an "assembly of credulous and pathetic nitwits." The Empire is, he states, in such a terrible condition that it must perish (148; *164*). Being dis/located both at its centre and at its frontier (like Roth himself), he unmistakably senses its impending catastrophe. As a frontier man who rejects all values, almost to the point of nihilism, the Count would most probably commit suicide were he not an

7 Roth locates the concluding happenings in his novel at the small Ukrainian town of B. near the Russian border. This would fit with his birthplace of Brody.

extremely curious reader of announcements of catastrophe. Catapulted out of all comfortable identity locations, he has stayed in life out of sheer curiosity for what is going to happen (171; *190*), as one might likewise state for Roth in the exile from which he composes his novel.

Unlike Chojnicki's *geopolitical* frontier, Roth's narrator inhabits a *historical* frontier. He is divided between the yesterday-world of before World War I, *about* which he writes, and the present world after the war, *in* which he writes, and never tires of reminding the reader of this predicament. Such a position is analogous to that of Stefan Zweig (2014), who finished writing *The World of Yesterday* in 1942, ten years after Roth. Drawn into the traumatic solitude of emigration, Zweig also incessantly compares the past and the present worlds, but with an emphasis on the traumatic fate of the Jews, which also, of course, became his own personal destiny. Yet while Zweig testifies personally in his memoirs, Roth's novelistic narrator is impersonal, an old-fashioned mediator of past happenings. He behaves like a typical epic narrator who never addresses his protagonists, since they no longer belong to his world, but exclusively his readers.[8] Taking advantage of his historically later position, he enters into a kind of initiated partnership with readers, behind the back of the protagonists whom he permanently ironizes because of their shortsightedness and naivety. Alongside this surreptitious conspiracy with his readers, at several points Roth's narrator also directly compares the past time about which he writes (1859–1914) with that which he shares with contemporary readers (1932). Yet he does not belong to the latter world either, because he does not really see it as emancipated from the past one. Equipped with the bitter post-war experience – many liberation movements resulting in the reactionary nation-states – Roth's narrator realizes that anchoring identity in the present instead of the past merely re-establishes solitude.

8 For these characteristics of the premodern epic as opposed to the modern novelistic narrator, see Cavarero (2000, 39). Cavarero polemicizes against Arendt's epic understanding of the narrative by opting for the novelistic understanding. By introducing the epic narrator into his novel, Roth bereaves his figures of the possibility of shaping their own life trajectory – characteristic of the novel as genre – by making them sheer toys of predetermined fate. Hofmannsthal applies an analogously anachronous technique by introducing the typically baroque figure of the fortune-teller into his lyric comedy *Arabella* (finished in the same year as *The Radetzky March*). Such fatalism finds its explanation in the atmosphere of the 1930s, after World War I had destroyed the nineteenth century's optimistic conviction that humans are the carriers of their history. This idea, of course, first became problematic in the imperial provinces, in which Roth places the action of his novel and where he was born. Taking recourse to an "antiquated" epic technique – in the same way as Hofmannsthal in his lyric comedy or Brecht in his contemporaneous epic theatre reach for an "anachronous" baroque technique – Roth simultaneously prevents his readers from identifying with the novelistic characters.

From his perspective, being located at a historical frontier means being dislocated from both the epoch before and the epoch after World War I. Like Brecht's interpreter of stage happenings, Roth's narrator belongs neither to the darkness beyond the stage nor under the lights of the stage itself. As for the latter world of today, the narrator of *The Radetzky March* keeps his distance from the petty nation-states into which the outcome of World War I has pushed him. As for the former world of yesterday, the supranational Empire from before the war is definitely over, which gives him the opportunity to reconstruct the trajectory of its catastrophe, as he trusts, *sine ira et studio*. As seen in this supposedly impartial perspective, the trigger for the Empire's breakdown was the dislocation of its centre that, withdrawn into solitude, unavoidably generated further dislocations instead of the desired cohesion. Unexpectedly though, one of the effects of this fateful concatenation of dislocations turns out to be the narrator's own dislocation from the world of his protagonists. If they are forever gone, then his dislocation is enforced, which means that the narrator is affected by the same developments as they are. He is an involved transmitter rather than the distant master of this concatenation. As if suppressing this undesired involvement and taking advantage of his distance, Roth's narrator instead locates his protagonists in their predetermined fate, which supposedly they cannot comprehend. At one point in the novel, for instance, he states that Lieutenant Trotta was unable to express the reason for his depression but that "we" (i.e. he and his reader) can say it on his behalf (122; *138*).

However, precisely by using his temporal dislocation to locate his protagonists in their own time, to rivet them to their fate, he unwittingly redoubles their pattern of keeping the others at a distance. All Trottas mercilessly apply this to their fellow beings and especially to their provincial subordinates, multiplying in such a way their own solitude. In doing so, they blindly follow their Emperor in his unbeatable detachment. Yet if this universal pattern ultimately catches up even with Roth's narrator, then he is its carrier rather than a critical observer, an exemplary representative of the literary world that he is at pains to antiquate from his quasi-outside-life position. This is how the second and hidden narrator's frontier position, next to the highlighted historical one, comes to the fore: between the protagonists' literary space and the author's life space. Despite his consistent striving to exempt himself from his protagonists' destiny to reach his supposedly sovereign author's freedom, the narrator's dislocation turns out to be no less located and his solitude no less enforced than that of the protagonists.

As Roth's narrator compulsively repeats the politics of an empire that he claims to have placed in a museum, the question that must be raised is as follows: who locates whose solitude, the narrator that of the protagonists, as we have hitherto had the impression, or the other way around, as we are now about to realize? The spaces of literature and life thus penetrate into one another, inducing

the mutual dislocation of their identities. In *The Radetzky March*, therefore, against the intention of its author, not merely the disaggregation of the Habsburg Empire takes place but also the disaggregation of literature's empire. Inasmuch as this empire is established by a frontier man as a typical go-between, it loses its traditional sovereignty and self-sufficiency. Although in reintroducing the epic narrative into his novel, Roth did his best to procure a protected location for literature's solitude, this solitude breaks free from its envisaged shelter into an unforeseeable dissemination.

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The composition of Andrić's most famous novel, *The Bridge over the Drina*, displays a striking imbalance. Only eight out of its twenty-four chapters deal with three-and-a-half centuries of Ottoman rule over Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the remaining sixteen chapters are dedicated to just thirty-five years of Austrian administration. As this blatant asymmetry indicates, Andrić's main concern is to unravel the transition from one civilizational pattern to the other, rather than simply present historical happenings around the bridge. The Yugoslav "brotherhood and unity" ideology imposed upon this writer the reputation of being a bridge-builder between the South Slav peoples and cultures that, as if by default, accompanies him until the present day, but his real stake in this novel is exactly the opposite. *The Bridge over the Drina* shows how Austrian civilization gradually ruined Ottoman heritage until, ultimately, it even destroyed the bridge as its most valuable symbol. Following this thread, Ana Foteva summarized the novel as follows: "The story of the bridge on the Drina is one of a failed attempt to heal a personal [Mehmed Pasha's] trauma and to bridge over differences [between the West and the East]" (2014, 130). In other words, the Austrians introduced a new type of imperial administration that replaced the Ottoman model, and the novel recognizes no continuity between them. In his *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) explained this transition as a shift from sovereign to disciplinary power.

Although Andrić describes both imperial administrations very meticulously, including their consequences for the population's everyday lives, this seems to have eluded the attention of his critics, with the exception of an important hint in Zoran Milutinović's recent reading (2011, 205–260).[9] This is astonishing because Andrić primarily represents the sovereign Ottoman power through its brutal public spectacles, which perfectly matches Foucault's definition. We find several such manifestations in the novel, but two are foregrounded: the so-called blood tax (the violent abduction

9 Milutinović analyses both *The Bridge over the Drina* and *Bosnian Chronicle*. In describing this transition, however, he uses the categories of the German sociologist Max Weber rather than Foucault's ones, which are, in my opinion, more pertinent.

of small boys in the imperial provinces from their parents in order to raise them as elite Ottoman troops), and the impaling of a rebel against the Empire. The novel's critics have usually attributed this cruelty to despotic Eastern rule, as opposed to the humanity of Western administrations, but this is a further stereotype, apparently nourished by a hatred towards the "Turks" found in the South Slav (especially Serbian) cultural tradition. According to Foucault, public executions accompanied by the torture and mutilation of the rebel's body characterized all empires, including Western ones. Confession was not only extorted from the perpetrator's body through violent means in the Ottoman Empire, as is the case in the novel, but also in Western societies, where the body was exposed to public torture as the sovereign's response to threats against his own body (i.e. the empire). Foucault cautions that the scenario envisaged by this public spectacle of sovereign power can fail if its participants disobey (i.e. deny recognition), and it is exactly this that happens in the novel, turning the demonstration of power into a source of unrest and rebellion. This, in turn, effectuates the containment of the despot's autocracy, which in the novel paves the way for the transition to a new, disciplinary type of penal law.

In his novel, Andrić does not represent the two types of imperial rule over Bosnia and Herzegovina in such a way as to expose the first type to sharp condemnation and the second to approval. His sophisticated narrative technique resists such cheap moral oppositions prevalent in the affective consumption of so-called lovers of literature.[10] The cruel type of Ottoman power undergoes "humanization" in the novel, whereas the disciplinary type of Austrian power is not nearly as human as it presents itself as being. Like the Ottoman type, it is portrayed via its most characteristic manifestations: public announcements, a census, the establishment of the administration and the police, recruitment, the introduction of a water supply, railways, banks, stock exchanges, newspapers, barracks, casinos, and brothels. This systematic "civilizing" of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the invisible network of laws, regulations, and provisions that penetrate into established customs and habits, confronts the population's resistance. Although the Ottoman cruelty and robbery is over, the "capillary" surveillance reduces and constrains individual liberties, classifies, reshapes, and disciplines subjects, multiplying their duties and ob-

10 See the following ironic commentary from Andrić's *Signs by the Roadside* that can be taken as the credo of the narrator's behaviour: "Moral outrage because of other peoples' flaws, which completely screens similar shortcomings in us, enables us to take the strict and sublime attitude of a judge and victim at the same time, inducing a state of moral euphoria in us" (1978, 102). As we will come to see, instead of being such a biased judge embittered by his or her former victimhood, Andrić's narrator wants to be a sublime divine agency characterized by absolute understanding.

ligations to the brink of absurdity. Leisure is replaced by a feverish activity that becomes an end unto itself, spawning devastating consequences.

Focusing on the shift from sovereign to disciplinary imperial rule, *The Bridge over the Drina* displays the same scepticism towards historical progress as its modernist novelistic predecessors, for example Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The novel was written during World War II as the terrible outcome of the "disciplined" post-imperial age in which state sovereignties run amok, which is why its settling of accounts with that age takes its cue from genre predecessors that are located in colonial settings. The civilization of the wilderness of imperial provinces faces embarrassment and failure in both cases, because the greed for knowledge is just a disguised form of greed for power. Both emerge out of the insatiable drive to subject the other to one's objectives. In the wake of such resilience on the part of the modernist novel to the disciplinary society that creates greedy subjects, Andrić bereaves his work of two key attributes of the realist novel as an exemplary instrument of such a society. These are the hero and the plot. The novel is deliberately left without a goal-oriented hero who turns his life into a steady progression towards sovereignty. The figure of the Galician Jew Lotika, admittedly, leaves the impression of such a life design, but she is forced to take command over her destiny by an unhappy coincidence of circumstances; moreover, she is a female in a world which only envisages sovereignty for males. This "perverted" state of affairs indicates that she has not chosen her life trajectory herself. And the point that this novel makes is that nobody does. In the reception of Andrić's work, such fatalism has usually been attributed to his "oriental" mentality, but if we consider that works by prominent Austrian writers such as Hofmannsthal and Roth also display it, the thesis of Andrić's Orientalism amounts to a stereotype similar to the attribution of brutality exclusively to the Ottomans.[11] Hofmannsthal, for instance, repeatedly insists that human life obeys ineffable destiny (Schäfer 1967, 72–73). Structuring the comedy genre almost in the medieval, Dantean sense of the word, he suggests that an invisible divine power masks itself in the figures in order to reveal through them its unalterable conditions (Schäfer 1967, 221, 241). Roth, for his part, develops his "semantics of contingency" by allowing his figures' life projects to be distorted by chance, allocating them a completely different course from that which they had envisaged (Düllo 1994). Even Miloš Crnjanski, the Habsburg Serbian writer, firmly enmeshed in the *Weltschmerz* atmosphere and without any "oriental" life experience, highlights the

11 The "engineer" of this influential thesis was the Serbian writer and critic Isidora Sekulić (1923).

rule of the "comedian Chance" in the shaping of his figures' life trajectories (1959, 74).[12]

In accordance with this post-imperial "melancholy" regarding human destiny, Andrić exposes his characters to the whimsical mechanisms of an anonymous rule over their lives. Not masters any more, they are toys of their destinies whose life paths are charted in the faraway imperial centres. The subdued peripheral atmosphere in *The Bridge over the Drina* is reminiscent of that in another famous "river-based" novel, Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*, although this takes place in a "liberated" African country (probably Zaire under Mobutu), whereas Andrić's work is set in an occupied South-East European one. This is because the non-European post-colonial and the European post-imperial regions overlap not only in terms of the disjunctive temporalities of modernity (Bhabha 1994, 236–237; Appadurai 1998), in the sense that modernity turns out to be the master's meal and the slave's poison, but also coincide in terms of "liberations." In both post-colonial and post-imperial settings, instead of compensating for the subordination to the former masters, the "liberators" prove to be just as merciless towards the population. Andrić's novel, first, depicts the Austrians as a kind of liberator from the Ottomans and, second, comes into existence in 1942, after the South Slav liberator from the Austrians (i.e. the Yugoslav monarchy) experienced its own bitter capitulation.

Andrić is a writer of the uprooted human condition following the Great War, in which nobody really knows where she or he belongs, since that now depends on an elusive, constantly shifting global perspective.[13] The subjects of the former post-imperial provinces, placed as they are at the crossroads of various political and economic interests, turn especially into victims of the consecutive shifts in identity patterns. The permanent state of exception genuine to these transit zones tears them out of their old affiliations and pushes them into new ones. Such a disoriented condition of enduring turbulence activates the biding and reluctant "technologies of the self" (Agamben 1999) placed in the service not so much of authentic life as the ideal of the European political agencies, but rather of hibernation genuine to their

12 For a reading of Crnjanski's entire *oeuvre* in the melancholic key of human life as a pure toy in chance's hands, see Milošević (1966).

13 This unmooring of determinate belonging is a general feeling among post-imperial intellectuals. See for example Hofmannsthal's statement that "the nature [*Wesen*] of our age is ambiguity [*Vieldeutigkeit*] and indeterminacy. It rests only on the slippery [*dem Gleitenden*] [...] A slight chronic dizziness vibrates in it" (1979a, 60). See also Walter Benjamin's famous description of the completely erased pre-war experience of the Great War generation that suddenly found itself standing "in the open air in a landscape in which nothing remained unchanged but the clouds, and in the centre, in a force field of destructive currents and explosions, the tiny frail human body" (1977, 291).

suppliers.[14] They deactivate the executive power of material reality in favour of the postponed utopian world. No past and present option is forever excluded; rather, it is saved for this imagined future. This philosophy of social survival that always keeps an eye on the past, forgotten, and discarded options of progress finds its breeding ground in the long experience of "in-betweenness" accumulated in the imperial transit zones over the course of centuries.[15] Under Ottoman and Habsburg rule, the Bosnian Muslims were attached to Istanbul, the Orthodox to Montenegro and Serbia, and the Catholics to Hungary, Venice, Austria, and Zagreb, thus developing what Du Bois dubbed "double consciousness" in the colonial context (Foteva 2014, 93).[16]

From the second half of the eighteenth century, the Habsburg Monarchy, while granting imperial citizenship (*Staatsbürgerschaft*) to all its inhabitants, required that each citizen have a *Heimat* (i.e. a "homeland") in which his birth was registered in the parish records. Through such a measure, imperial belonging was systematically divided (Judson 2016, 77). It manifested itself as the challenging of *affiliation* (or loyalty) to the *state* through *affinity* (or emotional attachment) to a *homeland*, either internal or external.[17] The citizens of the subordinate imperial constituencies were accordingly torn apart between belonging and longing. In his activist youth during the Habsburg rule of Bosnia, Andrić prematurely seized the opportunity to translate his affinity to South Slav *linguistic and cultural* identity, an attachment that found expression when he joined the revolutionary Young Bosnia movement, into an affiliation with the South Slav *political* entity that loomed large on the horizon. Yet, somehow, the disaggregating Empire still managed to punish his youthful adventure with three years' harsh imprisonment. After this attempt to turn a subversive affinity into an official affiliation sorely

14 Menasse, for example, describes Austrian life experience as a prolonged "state of termination" – the old cannot die and the new cannot be born – which induces typical indecisiveness and hesitation in the relationship between the past and present (1993, 6–23).

15 This category was introduced by Homi K. Bhabha in "Culture's In-Between" (1996) with regard to a (post-)colonial setting, but fits the (post-)imperial one very well too.

16 For further instructive elaboration of this category, see Gilroy's remark: "Double consciousness emerges from the unhappy symbiosis between three modes of thinking, being, and seeing. The first is racially particularistic, the second nationalistic in that it derives from the nation state in which the ex-slaves but not-yet-citizens find themselves, rather than from their aspiration toward a nation state of their own. The third is diasporic or hemispheric, sometimes global and occasionally universalist" (1993, 127).

17 For the latter, very useful category, see the convincing and elaborate argumentation in Brubaker (1996, 1–10). In the earlier imperial context, on the contrary, lower social strata were emotionally attached to the central power that protected them from the tyranny and pressure of local authorities (Judson 2016, 38). Although taking another form, the in-betweenness persisted.

failed, he reactivated the reluctant imperial technique of keeping them apart in order to prevent that pain's return.

This is how Andrić creates his meandering narrative strategy. Let us formulate it as "I am affiliated to the present state of discrimination but affined to the past multinational, multiconfessional, and multicultural empire." Exempting himself from any belonging, his novelistic narrator repeatedly lets his affinity with one character or community deactivate his affiliation to another character or community. Through the consecutive testing and disengagement of various identity designs, a never-ending identity search emerges. The narrator repeatedly lets his affinity with the comprehensive past disengage his affiliation to the compartmentalized present. Already in the first, "synoptic," chapter, which summarizes past developments around the bridge from the present vantage point, his view of the bridge is mediated either by collective myths and legends or a naive infantile perspective. Myths and legends, such as the one about the rebel Radisav from the third chapter or the one about the flood from the fifth chapter, represent the perspective of local communities, which subverts the official imperial narratives imposed from above (Foteva 2014, 124). Nevertheless, the commonality that these myths create is neither all-embracing nor enduring, first because it is directed against the foreign conqueror, and second because it is regularly induced by an exceptional state that ends with the return to the regular state of mistrust and tension between communities. The narrator therefore identifies neither with local myths nor the imperial narrative, but questions one through the other. This scepticism towards any narrative construction of essentially contingent human affairs explains why *The Bridge* is not a historical novel but a chronicle in which great history is parenthesized. Put in Hegelian terms, Andrić's narrator defends arbitrary everyday "historicity" from the "iron necessity" of "world history."[18] His choice of the chronicle leaves the impression of an almost strategic return to the premodern human as a bystander to predesigned earthly occurrences. It presents itself as a retirement into a disinterested contemplation from the time of empires after his interested investment in the state-political solutions was brutally rebuked.

The question that must be posed, however, is whether this contemplation can be disinterested in the post-imperial age if it was already calculating in the imperial one. In the imperial age, it characterized the subordinate constituencies' "double consciousness" that calculated the possibility of redeeming their divided-

18 Ranajit Guha sees literature's mission precisely in this alternative representation of the past, particularly when it comes to the literatures of the "non-historical" peoples which were despised and rejected by the Western colonizers upon their arrival (2002, 75–94). In such a way, these peoples disappropriate their expropriating appropriation not only by the foreigners but also domestic elites that profit from embracing the imported pattern of world history (49).

ness in a unified future. In his effort to save the memory of the victims of such a consciousness, Andrić resumes the same strategy in the post-imperial age. Even now, unity is impossible because it still implies harm and reintroduces divisions. What is needed is a unity that causes no harm to its constituencies. In order to accomplish this, the former unity's most terrible victims must not fall into oblivion. According to Hofmannsthal, such victims have to be rewarded for "redeeming the suffering of the thousands by finding the expression for it" (1979a, 70–71), and Andrić indeed lets his narrator act to take care of them.

Involuntarily, the victims that he selects to take care of – after they had undergone sanctification in the collective national memory – bereave his strategy of its proclaimed disinterestedness. As their self-instituted representative, Andrić's narrator attempts to redeem them by artistically refining and sublimating both their own and their consecrators' elementary (i.e. "gesturing" and mythic) expression. The third and fourth chapters delineate the Serbian rebel Radisav, the sixth the echoes of Serbian uprisings, and the twenty-first the Austrian revenge against the Serbian rebels following the Sarajevo assassination. This does not exhaust the list of Serbian martyrs.[19] At one point, when the narrator speaks about the rebels' fires in Serbia, which could even be seen from the other side of the Drina, he states that "both Turks and Serbs saw the fires clearly and looked at them attentively" (Andrić, trans. Edwards 2007, 83). Subsequently, however, not only does he not hide which of these camps is his, but points out the sacrificial continuity of this camp's rebellious historical existence: "The Serbian women crossed themselves in the darkness and wept from inexplicable emotion, but in their tears they saw reflected those fires of insurrection even as those ghostly flames which had once fallen upon Radisav's grave and which their ancestors almost three centuries before had also seen through their tears from that same Mejdan" (Andrić, trans. Edwards 2007, 83).[20]

19 As Nataša Kovačević remarks, next to the children immured in the bridge, "other executed [Serbian] outsiders include an elderly, 'feeble-minded,' 'vagabond religious pilgrim' Jelisije, a 'holy fool' type of character, as well as a poor Serbian youth Mile, who 'lived quite alone in a water-mill' and who is punished for singing a Serbian revolt song to himself in a forest, because 'he had heard others singing' it" (2017, 181; the quotations are from the Edwards translation). All of them are "random, socially undistinguished martyrs" (182) who happened to be "in the wrong place at the wrong time" (181). Kovačević claims that Andrić's narrator demystifies the mythical appropriation of these outsiders for the Serbian national cause, which is true. However she disregards the fact that he, through an artistic sublimation of their victimhood, ultimately remystifies them for the Serbian supranational (or "paternally cosmopolitan") cause, which is my claim.

20 "The Serbian women" (here and in the quotation below) are in the original "naše žene" [our women], which clearly identifies the "impartial" narrator as a member of the Serbian commu-

Such frequent evocation of sacrificial predecessors indicates that the narrator's *imperial literary perspective* is at pains to redeem the executed victims of the *imperial political strategy*. As the limitless mobility of his mind, which presents itself as the crown of this long tradition, unmasks the tormenting character of the mobility of imperial rulers, his therapy finds its breeding ground in a new feeling of superiority over them. This long-term process of transformation that culminates in the generous benevolence of Andrić's narrator evokes that which Nietzsche describes in *On the Genealogy of Morals* as the contagious seed of "a hatred the like of which has never been on earth," miraculously resulting in "the deepest and most sublime of all kinds of love" (1996, 20).[21] As a representative of a similarly frustrated nation, Hofmannsthal argued that the turbulences of the post-imperial age turned Austrians into the single mobile, progressive, European part of the German spirit that was now responsible for pushing humankind forward (1979b, 457) in the manner that had previously characterized the Germans (1980, 214). In order to compensate for the bitter feeling of dispossession generated by the reiterated execution of imperial authority over them, the victims take up this authority's protecting mission – the Austrians that of the Germans, and the Serbs that of the Austrians. I propose that these peculiar nesting Occidentalisms be read as a process of consecutive reappropriation parallel to the one which Milica Bakić-Hayden (1995) dubbed "nesting Orientalisms," implying the concatenated transfer of stigma to the "Orientals." In contrast to nesting Orientalisms' derogation of others, the stubborn reappropriation of the Western mission aims at its

nity. This paragraph refers to the novel's beginning, where the narrator, in the same "holy" connection with Radisav's martyrdom, addresses the faith of "*our* women" (my emphasis) for the first time: "The Serbian women believe that there is one night of the year when a strong white light can be seen falling on that tumulus direct from heaven" (Andrić, trans. Edwards 2007, 18).

21 In §§354–355 of *The Joyful Wisdom*, Nietzsche (2010) presents his own philosophical technique as a culmination of a long development that began with the "denigrated and humiliated" mob; continued with the actor who has learned to command his instincts with other instincts; then with the "artist" like the buffoon, the fool, and the clown; thereupon, with the proper artist; until the process was finally crowned with the "genius." The delineated process that leads the subject full of *ressentiment* from other-directed negation to self-negation matches the one that Andrić's subject has undergone. In Andrić's case, this self-negation spawned an interminable series of self-disengagements for his narrator. He thereby spontaneously followed Kant, who expected the "genius" to continuously disengage the automatic application of his or her reason's habits (Kant 2007, 134–137). Inasmuch as Wittgenstein adhered to Kant's "ethical transcendentalism" (Janik and Toulmin 1987, 227–319), Andrić also spontaneously followed the commitment of Wittgenstein's philosophy to the systematic deconstruction of all metaphysical statements (Wittgenstein 2016, 6.53). Andrić's resolute siding with self-negation against other-directed negation, which was induced by his personal trauma, clearly differs from his South Slav contemporaries' (i.e. Crnjanski's and Krleža's) continuous alternation between these two kinds of negation.

carriers' remedial self-aggrandizement. Yet inasmuch as nesting Occidentalisms ultimately unmask the Western mission as a discrimination-based myth through their reiterated failures, their carriers inadvertently derogate rather than aggrandize themselves.

As such a spontaneous appropriator of the Western "fatherly" mission, Andrić's narrative technique ultimately acquires the compromised profile of a manipulative mythopoeia. Like his dethroned imperial predecessor, his post-imperial myth of the postponed reunion of divided humankind imposes new divisions in his effort to eliminate old ones. For this subject, the world only makes sense if it fully succumbs to his vision of universal human reconciliation instead of drawing him into the conflict of divergent affiliations. However, as Balibar stated concerning the possibility of an uninterested contemplation of the modern world's fundamental disagreement, "there is no neutral position or discourse here, no way of being 'above the fray'" (2002, 57). Inasmuch as Andrić's narrator endeavours to gain the status of the Subject That Knows in this kind of world that cannot tolerate "sages" any more, his passionate attachment to the horizon of reconciliation presents itself less as a well-reflected strategy and more as a convulsive defensive reaction.

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Isabel Capeloa Gil

From Peripheral to Alternative and back: Contemporary Meanings of Modernity

Abstract: Drawing on Giorgio Agamben's understanding of the contemporary as that which inscribes itself in the present through a disjunction or anachronism, this essay discusses contemporary meanings of modernity by looking at the way in which non-synchrony and dis-placement can be used as instrumental approaches to rethinking the dominant Eurocentric approach to a progressive, Northern-based idea of the modern. Peripheral, alternative, global, transnational, and even "bad" modernities have been concepts wrangled by cultural theory to come to terms with the trials of hegemonic modernity. The paper will discuss some of these attempts at redefining the modern and ask what they mean, whose voice they convey, and from whence they are spoken. It will then argue in favour of a revision of the peripheral as a productive category to frame an aesthetics of the (in)actual, drawing attention to the disjunction at the heart of the contentious idea of the modern in a few Iberian examples (e.g. Fernando Pessoa and Amadeo Souza Cardoso). This is particularly important for rethinking an artistic-based epistemology of the South, particularly from the standpoint of Iberian discourse.

Keywords: modernity, modernism, peripheries

1 The blank page

I start with a subheading borrowed from Susan Gubar's feminist essay "'The Blank Page'" to reflect on the blankness that comes from a body racked by over-incision (1981, 255). The blankness of the modernist page does not refer to a lack but to an overload of definitions, critical discourses, incisions that cut the skin and lay bare the over-inscribed body of a field that has in fact been contaminated by the newness it seeks to absorb. This bloody body incised down to the bone has been dressed in many contradictory robes. The idea of the modern defines both a process and an attitude that can never be fully accomplished. The presence of the modern across ages, territories, fields, and disciplines rightfully suggests that we may never be fully modern,[1] despite the fact that the volition, the injunction to be

1 I wish to distinguish this contention from Alain Finkielkraut's assertion (2005) that we have never been modern, as it derives from a revisionism that disavows the contribution of enlight-

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modern, is pervasive and persistent. There is a "rage for modernity," as Dilip Gaonkar contends (2001, 21). And yet, because, it can never be fully thought through to its completion, the modern cannot be fully experienced. This is its allure and its tragedy.

But how necessary is it to be modern, Alain Finkielkraut (2005) asks? At what cost, under what circumstances, and to whose advantage? To address contemporary meanings of modernity means to address this "changing same" (Grossberg 2006, 259) under the current conjuncture, it requires returning to the "why"s, the "when"s, and the "whose"s of the modern endeavour,[2] while paying due credit to those who have mulled over the meanings, the modes, the agency of both modernity and modernism. The field, as I said, is overblown with incision.

Thus, the newness that enters the world with each new incision is often periphrastic or radically oblivious. What is in fact new in a field such as New Modernist Studies,[3] or is it rather an approach that encompasses the discussion about the distinct and yet deeply intimate concepts of modernity and modernism? How different are they from the Old Modernists? If "modernity" is a contentious term, there is arguably nothing more contentious than the periphrastic "New Modernist." The term, which refers to the global shift in modernist research, places the New Modernist in a position of double denial: a negation of Eurocentrism in both time and geography. And yet, both Old and New Modernist Studies scholars find themselves before similar challenges, namely coming to terms with the impact of societal modernization in life experience and the manifold ways in which the struggle over existence under these conditions is articulated with creative disruption, often through the subversion of dominant art practices that is at the core of (trans)cultural modernities.

Just like Gubar's blank page, another literary allegory is perhaps in order. One is keenly aware of one of Jorge Luís Borges's characters, Ireneo Funes, the Uruguayan gaucho who could not forget a single thing. Applied to the wider pro-

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ened reasoning to a structural transformation of the societal *habitus* in the wake of the sociopolitical transformations at the end of the eighteenth century. Rather, I insist that the modern has, through thick and thin, been continuously a practice of ambivalence that draws on the ritual, the authoritarian, the popular, and the superstitious, just as it acknowledges science and reason, emancipation and freedom.

2 See, for instance, Raymond Williams in his 1987 lecture "When Was Modernism?" (Williams 1989), revised by critic Geta Kapur (2000). She considers the specific Modernism of the Indian art system. See also Harry Levin's diagnostic "What Was Modernism?" in his article for the *Massachussets Review* (Levin 1960).

3 See Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz, *Bad Modernisms* (2006, 1–8). The designation usually refers to "an impetus to 'revitalize a field that had fallen into disfavour'" (Wollaeger 2012, 7), mainly by drifting away from Eurocentric highbrow modernism.

cess of modernity, Funes's "long insomnia," as Borges put it, clearly defines the state of the art in a field that, albeit obsessed with the new, with ruptures, gaps, and dislocations, is nonetheless haunted by the memory of contested beginnings and obsessed with innovative appropriation. The long insomnia of New Modernist research is thus placed before the paradox of the denial of origin and the drive to return, of starting, innovating, generating and being obsessed with borrowing, mixing, hybridizing, appropriating. Beatriz Sarlo writes in her book from 1988, *Modernidad periferica: Buenos Aires 1920–1930*, that cultural work is a practice of looting, drawn from the impulse of honouring, mimicking, copying, stealing, denying, envying, subverting, and contradicting. What these ambivalent structures demonstrate is that modernity and the underlying notion of the modern are deeply troubled by the anxiety of naming, beginning, with concerns over spatial boundaries, forms of mediation, power discourses, and issues of agency.

So let us start where it all began, with a name, which, as we have learnt from the Adamic narrative, is also a form of wielding power, of setting the territory and producing an episteme. The name is a symptom!

2 The modern as symptom

There are as many modernities as words shall exist to shape them. "Modernity" is an inexact word (Ramalho Santos and Ribeiro 2008, 2) that seems to require a supplement to fulfil its meaning-making mandate, arguably because the term addresses the aporia of unaccomplished time, displaying the sought-for but continuously denied desire to capture the fleeting moment while seeking to expand the territory. Indeed, modernity both as a process and as a chronotopic concept seems to fall short of words, despite the abundance of designations at hand. The list of contemporary terms to designate the modern is effectively long and disparate: "Eurocentric modernity," "high modernity," "singular modernity," "unaccomplished modernity," "reflexive modernity," "contra-modernity," "settler modernity," "postcolonial modernity," "reactionary modernity," "cosmopolitan modernity," and then, graphed in the plural form, "multiple modernities," "translocal and transnational modernities," "alternative modernities," "primitive modernities," "peripheral modernities." This changing same disrupts both location and time. First, as Lawrence Grossberg contends (2010, 459), the concept displays a vernacular abundance speaking to differently situated experiences (gender, region, age, class), while resiliently holding on to the promise of creation, emancipation, progress, and preservation across different geographies.

Then, there is time. From the standpoint of chronology, the very idea of the modern presents the failure of history, the move to denounce the past and hold on to a now paradoxically felt as past and passing. As Andreas Huyssen insightfully claims, the modern is embedded within the trauma of the present past, which renders null the dream of a present future (2003, 11). Time-wise, then, it seems modernity can only be uttered in a pre- or postmodern mode, as an unaccomplished process doomed to be carried away by the breeze of progress like Walter Benjamin's Angel of History looking back at a pile of rubble.

Furthermore, the failure of the historical concept and its universalizing claims has lain in certain hegemonic discourses that reify the modern as a privilege of Western rationality, disseminated from a European centre across the imaginary waiting rooms of history (Chakrabarty 2000, 8). And yet, in the wake of a counter-hegemonic critique of Western rationality, be it from the standpoint of postcolonial subjectivity, gender, and new race critique, it was precisely the critical drive at the core of the modernity project that led to the conceptual instruments with which to denounce the West's volition to control the now it so desperately sought to own. In this ambivalent game, the intellectual critique at the core of the European progressive movement triggered the process through which the tropes of Western modern advancement – industrialization, secularization, and rationalization – have been questioned and disputed as indicators of universal validity.

It is thus that Homi Bhabha conceives of a "contra-modernity" to qualify the post-colonial as a stage that both mimics and subverts hegemonic Western modernity (1994, 173), or Susan Stanford Friedman argues in favour of "polycentric modernities" unpacking the Eurocentric narrative and enlarging the geographical scope of the endeavour (2008, 15). Notwithstanding, delocalization seems to be strikingly marked by a certain spatial imaginary that, as Peter Brooker and Andrew Tacker contend, may be highly debatable debatable. Just as decolonization enlarges the geographical frame to be more inclusive, it also smuggles in a drive for situatedness that is increasingly allowing identitarian strategies to seep in and in turn question comparative cultural approaches that may unlock the conceptual frame of national borders.[4] Indeed, the articulation of space with the somewhat contentious time-centred concept of the modern was driven by an inclusive intent that had at its core the sense that "the centre could not hold." This effectively undergirded claims for the decentring of the modern and its splitting up into "pe-

4 Yet we would not take the argument as far as Brooker and Thacker do when claiming that "to examine modernism within the spatial framework of geography might seem perverse or, even in some ways, reactionary" (2005, 1). A geographical argument per se cannot be simply equated with hegemonic control. This would be a rather naive perception of geography's complex discourses.

ripheral modernities" (Sarlo 1988) or into the polycentric modernities of Latin America and Asia, as Susan Friedman discusses (2008, 15). The call for situatedness rests on the critique of a certain philosophical universalism of the modern, while deriving its impulse precisely from this very same ambition of emancipation.[5] And yet, one must be careful not to fall into a new essentialism by reifying location and promoting certain forms of cultural nationalism. Clearly, what is at stake here is the need to disrupt "modernity" both as a holistic cultural-political construct and as a sign of hegemonic coevalness shifting Europe's Others to the borders of time.

Although the distinction between modernity as a socio-political construct and modernism as its aesthetic-cultural counterpart seems to be widely consensual, the neat separation between the two terms is not uncontentious, as the cultural does not exist beyond social framing and nor does the political occur beyond the aesthetic exploits of artists. Raymond Williams embraced the distinction for reasons that were at once analytical and political. Criticizing the narrowness of the modernist cannon for its elitist Eurocentredness, Williams does not object to modernist objects per se, but to their reification as representative of the movement's totality (1989, 78). Thus, he argues not so much against modernism as a general approach as for a recovery of the modern from the ideologically constrained category of the modernist.

The gap between the two terms is addressed by Adornian aesthetics, particularly through the claim that modernism reflects modernity's critical self-awareness. The assertion, though, seems to bring more problems than results for a complex mapping of the concept, for it seems to suggest that modernism bears a privilege of critical reasoning that is absent from the whole concept of the modern. This is what Rebecca Walkowitz refers to as a perverse cosmopolitanism of sorts that fights the false communal universalism of a certain strand of modernism through an obstinate incorrectness, allowing cultural modernity to be reversely appropriated by alternative cultural practices (Walkowitz 2006, 13) and thus constructing modernism as a continuously brewing "adversary culture" to the structure of modernity itself (Huyssen 2005, 7). In fact, the stress put on modernist critical antagonism seems to reflect the passion for denial that Antoine Compagnon has defined as one of the paradoxes of modernity (2003, 12). For, indeed, critical self-awareness

5 If, as Walter Mignolo sustains, one cannot help but be where one thinks (2000, 49), then it seems to follow that a critical cosmopolitanism may be impaired by the tyranny of location. Gaonkar suggests that the decentring is in fact a mode of "creative adaptation" of a core that ultimately is Western-based: "Modernity has travelled from the West to the rest of the world not only in terms of cultural forms, social practices, and institutional arrangements, but also as a form of discourse that interrogates the present" (2001, 14).

and antagonism are not only part and parcel of the heretical modernisms but already embedded in the critical impulse of the Enlightenment. The paradox lies perhaps in the artificial need for the distinction of the aesthetic from the social, as a form of self-legitimation that forfeits systemic integration.

I, then, borrow Susan Friedman's words to suggest that a critical revision of the modern does not only stop at geographical expansion and discursive amendment, but also requires a revision of the modernity/modernism gap, promoting instead "an integrated, interdisciplinary approach that acknowledges how the social and the cultural are interwoven in different modernities, modernizations, and modernisms in different times and places" (2008, 15).

Modernity and modernism are then, by nature and vocation, other, diverse, fluid, translocal, plural, polycentric, alternative, not only because the location of the cultural is to be adversarial to hegemonic power discourses, as Dilip Paramedhswar Gaonkar contends when referring to "alternative modernities" (2001, 2),[6] but because the process of modernity is a complex system blending the social, the political, the cultural, and the economic. It is simultaneously critical and hegemonic, imaginative and rational, dislocated and situated, global and local, traumatic and empowering. To map the complex critical geography of the modern, then, requires a fluid cartography that will use the imagination of flux as an open model to track the role of culture in understanding the diverse and at times antagonistic modes of engagement with the process of modernity.

To speak about a peripheral modernity, then, is a task that requires the imagination, indeed one that rethinks the modern from the perspective of creative renewal. One that blends the intimation of questioning with the imaginative possibility of doing otherwise, differently and yet in a way that is inclusive of this common humanity of ours. I suggest therefore to proceed by focusing the conceptual lens on the possibilities of rethinking modernity from the perspective of the peripheral, and then use the peripheral casuistry of Fernando Pessoa's despondent diagnosis of the modern in *The Book of Disquiet* as a case in point for the periphery's renewed creative appropriation of the modern.

6 Larry Grossberg considers that the notion of alternative others the other modernities and displaces their subjects to the margins. In order to avoid the power positions involved in the centre/periphery dualism, he suggests the use of "multiple modernities" instead (2010, 286).

3 Peripher(ies)

"Peripheral" is a modern word whose use was disseminated with the exploits of the early modern age. From the Greek *periphéreia* – circumference – it originally refers to the external boundary of a round surface. In English, "periphery" came into use in the late Middle Ages between 1300 and 1400, while "peripheral" is noted between 1800 and 1810. "Periphery" (*periferia*) came into Portuguese vocabulary in 1720, and "peripheral" made its way into the dictionary in 1839. The semantic deployment of the periphery went hand-in-hand with the political creation of the centre. Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory recognizes a certain genealogical affiliation of the peripheral to the Iberian nations, which – afforded the status of semi-peripheral powers in Anglo-modernity – are nonetheless considered semi-peripheral in the (now present past) world-system, as go-betweens in the shifting of the circumference into new cores (1974, 250). In a way, the semi-periphery has it worse than the actual periphery in Wallerstein's theory, as it becomes a resentful core, hanging on to the idea of a centre while being pushed to the margins. The ultimate destiny of all cores, it seems, is to become semi-peripheries first and accomplished peripheries later, as the current shift in power balance to Asia seems to suggest. Clearly the destiny of the centre is "not to hold," as Yeats's poem conceded.

To recapitulate, the very notion of the "peripheral" in its European linguistic usage since the fifteenth century, as something marginal, situated on the rim, of minor importance, as the *OED* shows, goes hand-in-hand with the rise of the modern project. I am here referring to the social modernization process of secularization, rationalization, industrialization, and emancipation that, though Eurocentric, has guided the construction of what Charles Taylor calls a certain "acultural modernity" (1995, 30) and Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (2001, 23) defines as a societal modernization, marked by a universalist claim to hegemony drawn from the implementation of social and technological processes driven by Northern-based cultures and expanded into the global South. In this acultural modernity, which is also an epistemic model, the peripheral is often the Other, the non-modern.

Just as the modern is no longer a chronological construct but has been unavoidably inculcated by the territory, so too has the peripheral been stripped of its geographical limitations and plunged into the historical (dis)continuum. And yet, not all modernity(ies) has (have) fashioned itself (themselves) in the critical volition to reflect upon its (their) foundation as peripheral.

That is so because what has been understood as the euphoric, progressive project of modernity was already rooted in a divisive episteme. In fact, the enlightened emancipation of the individual of the Kantian project was already a process of epistemic and hierarchical distinction between the territory of a Northern progressive modernity and a (semi-)periphery of as-yet unenlightened sub-

jects (in the sense of being submitted to the epistemology of the North). This took place by means of a shift in the territorial system that was anchored around the Mediterranean basin and the Atlantic South towards the North, effectively creating a new centre for the modern project.

In fact, the construction of a culturally degraded South began simultaneously with the political and economical empowerment of the Northern centre. It is not simply today, under the *Diktat* of austerity, that a broadly defined global South longs to become visible and penetrate a political, economic, social, and epistemic fortress Europe, which in the words of certain politicians is under attack from the simultaneous movement of highly trained young professionals from southern Europe and North African death-boats. In 1771, the controversial Dutch philosopher Cornelius de Pauw wrote that "Africa begins in the Pyrenees" (1771, 246),[7] discursively transforming the rim of the modern circumference into the gateway to degeneration and the entrance hall to that waiting room of history with which Hegel branded the African continent in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. Clearly, as Franco Cassano has consistently argued, the South is full of the discursive practices of the North (2005, 54).

Thus in order to avoid falling into the trap of the divisive episteme, binary simplifications,[8] and provincial politicization, it is important to ask when, where, what, and whose periphery we are discussing. It may be a wild claim to argue that, under current conditions, all centres are to become peripheries, but it is useful to acknowledge the quality of the rim and the nature of the exchanges (individual, communal, political, social, religious, sexual, economic) that take place there and are, actively or subversively, smuggled into the circumference.

Beatriz Sarlo's appraisal of the Buenos Aires scene stresses the structural flows between the Northern centres and the specific conjuncture of Argentinian cultural time which allows for the euphoria of the modern to take a distinct South American shape. And yet, Beatriz Sarlo's theory is one of convergence, stressing a march that would eventually draw modernist cultures together. Writing ten years later, in 1998, Carlos Blanco in "Desde la periferia" suggests instead a structural divergence at work in the peripheral as a territory where the primitive, the strange, the alien

7 Translations in this article are my own unless otherwise indicated.

8 Boaventura de Sousa Santos calls this divisive strategy the "abyssal gap." Abyssal thought (*pensamento abissal*) is defined as "a system of visible and invisible differences, whereby the invisible support the visible. The invisible differences are established by radical lines that divide social reality into two distinct universes: the 'this side of the line' universe and the 'beyond the line' universe. The division is such that the 'beyond the line' disappears as a reality, it becomes and is effectively produced as non-existing. Non-existence means that it has no relevant or meaningful existence" (2010, 23).

get smuggled back into the centre and return in an ineffable go-between (1998, 26). This is uncannily addressed by the Catalonian artist Antoni Tàpies in "Modernidad y primitivismo," where he considers graffiti precisely a symptom of the smuggled evocation of the primitive in art in a sort of "analogia viviente" (2008, 197). This divergent strategy for the periphery comes across in Florencia Garramuño's notable study *Modernidades primitivas: Tango, samba y nación* (2007), where she argues that there was a paradoxical coincidence between the smuggling of primitive, African rhythms into the two musical forms and the intense process of accommodating a cultural and social process of Western-based modernization which was in turn co-opted into the process of national identity formation. The hybrid flows of this murky entanglement are probably epitomized in Carmen Miranda's song "O Tango e o Samba" [Tango and Samba] (1937). Carmen Miranda is a case in point of the periphery herself. A native of the small town of Marco de Canavezes, a municipality north of Oporto in Portugal, she clearly embodies the murky inscriptions of diverse peripheries and their ambivalence. Born in a rural area, in a peripheral northern locality in semi-peripheral Portugal,[9] she emigrated at ten months old with her family to the then-peripheral Brazil to become a world-class Hollywood star in the American centre. Carmen Miranda becomes an exotic mesh morphed into an invention of Latin American tradition. The tango and the samba, musical forms that pivot around the blurring of boundaries of class, gender, and culture, congregate in the work of composer Amado Régis, the ambivalent go-between of peripheral cultural politics, epitomized in the dialogue of different rhythms and languages.

"O Tango e o Samba" (music by Amado Régis, 1937)

Chegou a hora!
Chegou! ... Chegou!
Meu corpo treme e ginga
Qual pandeiro
A hora é boa
E o samba começou
E fez convite ao tango
Pra parceiro
Hombre, yo no sé por qué te quiero
Yo te tengo amor sincero
Diz a muchacha do Pará
Pero, no Brasil é diferente
Yo te quiero simplesmente

9 On the Portuguese geopolitics of the semi-periphery and its exogenous position see Moreira (2000).

Teu amor me desacata
Habla castellano num fandango
Argentino canta tango
Ora lento, ora ligeiro
Eu canto e danço, sempre que possa
Um sambinha cheio de "bossa"
Sou do Rio de Janeiro.

To address modernity from the standpoint of a moving periphery, then, means stressing plurality, renewal, and a strategic dissent; that is, it means prompting culture to relentlessly question its own conjuncture, taking into consideration a shifting, flowing geography. In this case, it means articulating the ambivalent locations of both singer and song. Periphery in this construct does not simply address the unequal relations of power in the Wallersteinian centre/periphery systemic model, but calls forth a notion of the modern that bears the mark of a centre that can definitely not hold and is rather reversely appropriated, by borrowing and mixing traditions, agencies, and styles, as Sarlo argues (1988, 22).

Instead of assuming a derivative dissemination from a core, the peripheral considers that modernity can only be envisaged as a plural form, with many different time and space coordinates, subject to different power structures, and spoken by a plurality of voices, bringing forth a myriad of vernacular narratives. How else would we combine the allure of totalitarian power in certain European modernist aesthetics[10] with the resistance to the system by post-colonial movements? Inspired by Dipesh Chakrabaty's call for the provincializing of Europe (2000, 100), peripheral modernities conflate the simultaneous claim to peripherize and provincialize the modern. More than considering a model of alternative modernities, as Dilip Paramedhswar Gaonkar contends (2001, 2), rhetorically suggesting there is a model modernity to which these other modernities are alternative, the challenge we wish to pose is to rethink the disparate, non-coeval, and geographically heterogeneous modernisms/modernities from the standpoint of their common dissent, be it to power, aesthetic forms, or hegemonic identity formations, envisaging a study of the modern where all centres become one with peripheries.

10 On authoritarian modernisms and "reactionary" aesthetics, see Gil (2008).

4 The peripheral case, or The mirror, the coat hanger, and the fountain pen

In law as in medicine, a case usually bears something pedagogical or exemplary about it. In a 2007 issue of *Critical Inquiry*, Lauren Berlant called it a "problem-event," an exemplary situation that applies the rules of the field of knowledge while deploying the strategy that may ultimately question it.

> The case represents a problem-event that has animated some kind of judgement. Any enigma could do – a symptom, a crime, a causal variable, a situation, a stranger, or any irritating obstacle to clarity. [...] the case is always pedagogical, itself an agent. [...] as an expressive form of expertise and explanation the case points to something bigger, too, an offering of an account of the event and the world. (Berlant 2007, 663–665)

Fernando Pessoa is one such case, a problem-event for literature, for Portuguese and European culture, and a rather unpedagogical case for the modern that reflects a strategic peripheral consciousness.

Exactly one hundred years ago, in 1913, Fernando Pessoa began work on *Livro do Desassossego composto por Bernardo Soares, ajudante de guarda-livros na cidade de Lisboa* [The Book of Disquiet].[11] 1913 is a good year. "The summer of the century," as the German writer Florian Ilies recently put it (2013); or, as Jean-Michel Rabaté claimed, the cradle of modernism, more specifically, "the inception of our modern period of globalization" (2007, 1). Although Rabaté also credits Pessoa as one of the drivers of this early "globalization," I feel it is relevant to look at the many ways in which the Portuguese author works precisely as an antagonist to that very discursive practice. Indeed, the uncanny fragments of the disquietude project present a philosophy of the modern against the grain, at odds with the master narratives of both modernization and cultural modernity, a project enticingly considered by Alain Badiou as the roadmap to a "modernity ahead of us" (1998, 38).

Arguably, in the Pessoan paradox of a modernity ahead of us, not one that is yet to be accomplished as Habermas contends, but instead cannot by definition be attained, there resonates what Giorgio Agamben refers to as the mark of the contemporary, that is, a certain untimeliness, a "dys-synchrony" (Agamben 2011, 11) expressing the ability to coincide with time while at the same time being out of joint with it. The modernity ahead of us, that of Pessoa's disquiet project, re-

11 Alain Badiou, in the *Petit manuel d'inesthéthique*, writes that "the singular line of thought deployed by Pessoa is such that none of the established figures of philosophical modernity is capable of sustaining its tension" (1998, 37). He is particularly addressing Pessoa's anti-Platonism and the concession of the inability to think beyond the materiality of the existing time.

flects, I contend, a certain peripheral consciousness of the modern, a disjunction that strikes not only at the heart of modern coevalness, but also dismantles its territories, i.e. that disturbs the very articulation of the time of the modern and its place. It is a project that simultaneously participates in the modern mainstream narrative while contesting it, that is coeval while looking back and treading ahead, that is inside the territory of modernity while questioning its limits.

The reasons why I have chosen Pessoa as symptom of a certain peripheral mode of articulating modern consciousness are twofold. The first reason is geographical. Pessoa is the exemplary agent of a modernity shaped from the semi-periphery of the European centre. Geography here is not a simple setting but a location traversed by power structures and embedded in a historical conjuncture, rendering his Iberian semi-peripheral situation much more than a result of the power dynamics of the world-system, and rather as a condition of existence, situated in the interval between cultures and traditions,[12] be it the Anglophone culture he was raised with in South Africa, the African colonial experience, or a certain Portuguese messianic decadence. It is a condition of a paradoxical empty fullness remarkably put forth in the initial verses of the heteronym Álvaro de Campos's poem "Tabacaria":

> Não sou nada.
> Nunca serei nada.
> Não posso querer ser nada.
> À parte isso, tenho em mim todos os sonhos do mundo. (de Campos 2014, 43)
>
> [I am nothing.
> I shall never be anything.
> I cannot wish to be anything.
> Aside from that, I have within me all the dreams of the world.]

Nothing could better represent the paradox of a gap that is simultaneously void and overflowing. This is precisely what defines the interval of the peripheral condition, the not yet and nonetheless already fully there.

Although an author working inside the territory, Pessoa's peripheral position in the cultural system provides for a writing clearly inspired by an outside looking in, either the Eurocentric avant-garde or the Anglo-American poetic tradition

12 The interval congregates Pessoa's/Soares's aesthetics of the fragment with an understanding of experience as disruption, breach, and caesura. As Paulo de Medeiros (2015, 84) has insightfully argued, the interval reveals fragmentation as strategy while serving as a wider space of (negative) refraction of Pessoa's/Soares's identity. Helena Buescu (2001) has underscored the strategic link between the interval and the fragment as essential to Pessoa's modernist e(aes)thetics. See also Maria Irene Ramalho Santos's underpinning of the wider genealogy of the fragment as an absolute, in the Romantic tradition (2010, 16).

(Whitman, Hart Crane). This has led Maria Irene Ramalho Santos to claim for Pessoa the status of an "Atlantic poet," and to argue, following Harold Bloom's suggestion in *The Western Canon* (1994), that a renewed understanding of his poetry is key to grasping American modernism itself (Ramalho Santos 2010, 17). Peripheral consciousness in this sense draws on the assumption that national borders – in artistic terms, those that create national literatures and cultures – are national only insofar as they "re-situate the nation in the world-system and continuously reinvent it" (Ramalho Santos 2010, 17). As such, the very notion of the peripheral is a becoming, allowing the time–space constraints of the present to be continuously reinvented.

Second, Pessoa's inspirational singularity for a reflection on modernity results from an understanding of the peripheral as a critical attitude – a peripheral consciousness, I contend, anchored in the possibility of critically questioning the language of art, in his case of literature, and continuously attempting to renovate it while searching for a new language, as the semi-heteronym Bernardo Soares does. In the logic of writing modernity's disquiet as an autobiography without facts, a fragmented juxtaposition of scattered utterances, Pessoa seeks a different way to tell beyond the chronology of progressive time and beyond the limited location of his Lisbon bedroom. He does this from the ambivalent position of being simultaneously in time and out of joint with a Eurocentric euphoric modernity, at the geographical rim of Northern enlightened modernity and at the semi-centre of the Southern Atlantic, within the system of a broad – and perhaps early – epistemology of the South. It is in fact a renewal of artistic language from a peripheral consciousness that also resonates in Antoni Tàpies's piece from 1986, "Por un arte modern y progresista," where he claims that "una de las señas de la verdadera modernidad es la renovación y el trabajo constante sobre el lenguaje" [one of the signs of true modernity is constant renovation and work on language] (2008, 209).

Let us begin with language, then: with a peripheral, poetic fragment from the *Book of Disquiet* vividly echoing the peripheral project of a modernity ahead of us. Allow me to quote Pessoa/Soares:

> As COISAS modernas são:
> (1) A evolução dos espelhos;
> (2) Os guarda-fatos.
> Passámos a ser criaturas vestidas de corpo e alma.
> E como a alma corresponde sempre ao corpo, um traje espiritual estabeleceu-se. Passámos a ter alma essencialmente vestida, assim como passámos – homens – corpos – à categoria de animais vestidos.
> Não é só o facto de que o nosso traje se torna uma parte de nós. É também a. complicação desse traje e a sua curiosa qualidade de não ter quase nenhuma relação com os elementos da elegância natural do corpo nem com os dos seus movimentos.

> Se me pedissem que explicasse o que é este meu estado de alma, através de uma razão social, eu responderia mudamente apontando para um espelho, para um cabide e para uma caneta com tinta. (Pessoa 2008, 364)
>
> [THE modern THINGS are
> (1) the evolution of mirrors;
> (2) the wardrobes.
> We have become dressed creatures, in body and soul.
> And because the soul always matches the body, there is also a spiritual garment. We have developed an essentially dressed soul, and have thus become – men, bodies – dressed animals.
> It is not simply the fact that our attire has become a part of us. There is also the difficulty proper to the said attire and the curious fact that it bears almost no resemblance either to the elements pertaining to the body's natural elegance or to those of its movements.
> If anyone were to ask me to explain my soul's disposition by means of some kind of social reasoning, I would simply reply by pointing to a mirror, a coat hanger, and a fountain pen.]

The fragment is indicative of Bernardo Soares's disjunctive reasoning, of his inability to provide meaning to existence and to the world. This is a sensation that is best represented in what comes across in the book as the aesthetics of the "interval," of a gap which neither denies nor acknowledges the weight of both tradition and progress, and signals the drifting nature of modern existence, trapped in-between, in an opening which may be void but not meaningless. The particular despondency and alienness of the modern condition is eagerly depicted with imagery related to dressing and attire. Indeed, the condition of the modern subject is thus displayed: "De tal modo me desvesti do meu próprio ser que existir é vestir-me. Só disfarçado é que sou eu" [In such a way have I undressed myself, that to exist is to get dressed. I am myself only in disguise] (Pessoa 2008, 364).

Dressing, then, refers to the discourses, the values and conventions, that make the *habitus* of the modern subject. So deeply traversed by these discursive practices is the subject that he can no longer exist without his cloak, which is ultimately a disguise. *The Book of Disquiet* is a fragmented book about modernity and its singular impossibility, renovating the language in which it is spoken while never fully formulating what modernity is. This fragment, then, is one of the rare occasions in which the idea of the modern is spoken about via the lyrical subject's despondency. Pessoa recuperates the Baudelairean strategy of addressing the modern through things and situations (fashion, make-up, women, the dandy, carriages, the military man, the multitude, etc.) that prompted Michel Foucault to argue that Baudelaire's modernity entails both a form of relationship to the present and to oneself (1990, 141). The dandy character, for the French poet, extols the complexities of hypercivilized modernity. His extreme care for the body unleashes a reflection on the privilege of this quirky singularity, just as artificial

care for the self and social distance display the cultural contradictions of a self-centred hedonism that is a mark of civilizational crisis and social decay. In the same vein, Soares's fragment on modern things provides a reflection on the intertwining of a certain care for the self and a peripheral modern consciousness.

The fragment begins with the statement that the modern is embodied in things. It is not simply the claim of a material turn that we witness here, the definite victory of objective culture *à la* Simmel, but rather the affirmation of the object's cultural status as material metaphor of an out-of-joint consciousness. For the I who is nothing, the object acts as a fulfilling identity supplement. Modern then are mirrors and wardrobes. A mirror as an archive of a (false) image, demanding critical questioning; and a wardrobe as the place where the vested (literally also the dressed) discourses/garments are kept. Yet, unlike Baudelaire's *dandysme*, which displays a critical, if distant, self-assurance, the garments kept in Soares's soul wardrobe exhibit an incompatibility between body and object. The dandy's blasé attitude and self-righteous sense of distinction present a dissonance between the cultivation of self and the contradictions of the modern world, whereas Soares's garments testify both to the subject's singular disjunction and simultaneously to his dys-synchrony with the present. The mirror, the coat hanger, and the fountain pen are the go-betweens of a modern project that is beguilingly situated on the rim of a spatio-temporal system while refusing to give in to the broad circumference which uses peripheries to create centres.

The peripheral mode that conjoins the personal with the collective, the creative with the social, comes clearly across in this material trilogy. First, there is the mirror that is held up to self and society, substantiating the reflexive mode that has accompanied the modern and its volition to be made visible, but also to render visible and by so doing to obscure as well. Then, there is the coat hanger, an object that bears no shape but that provides shape to the undressed garment. The hanger suggests a conjuncture that frames processes and existence. And finally, there is the fountain pen, the epitome of creation in the Freudian theatre of the mind, a sign of the critical creative project, of modernity as a language of critical renewal. The three modern things embody the coercive dressage of the modernist project and suggest a new language to substitute the current ways of doing and modes of reading. Instead of speaking about the modern in a language that will ultimately display the coercion of the soul, the mute objects suggest an alternative episteme, and allow the artist to say otherwise. While the mirror held up to the I both prompts and questions the self-reflexive hedonism of the modern spirit and the coat hanger expresses the constrictions of a vested modernity, the fountain pen suggests the possibility of art, of writing, to continuously undo the constrictions by remaking, erasing, rewriting. The objects act as symptoms of a modernity exhausted with itself and looking for the mute materiality of the object as a sub-

stitute for a tired subjectivity. And yet, it is not by undressing, by the deconstruction of the garments, ultimately through the mode of critique, that Pessoa's modernity looks ahead. It is the pen, the artist's instrument, that will redraft the modern project, fill in the blanks of the empty interval, the blank page, on the writing desk, of the small bedroom, in the peripheral city of Lisbon, overlooking the world.

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Joep Leerssen

Literary History outside the Gutenberg Comfort Zone

Abstract: As this article argues, lyricism and narrativity are often expressed in non-printed or non-written forms, which as such are often marginalized in the eyes of literary scholars, even comparatists. Comparatists are institutional heirs to a philological tradition that gravitated around the Gutenberg Comfort Zone of printed literatures in the European languages and genres. But a proper understanding of world literature should reconsider not only the notion of a Western-centred world. It should also reconsider the Western-centred (print-based and modernity-directed) notion of literature, and the production-anchored (rather than diffusion-oriented) sense of literary history.

Keywords: history of philology, manuscript culture, orality, reception history, remediation, world literature

1 Introduction

The topic of this congress invited us to reflect on one of the fundamental and defining concepts of comparatism as a discipline, that of transnationalism.[1] Hugo Dyserinck, in whose department I enrolled in 1973, defined comparative literature as the discipline which, uniquely among the philologies, studied literature as a multinational phenomenon from a supranational point of view (Dyserinck 1991 [1977]). Forty-five years later, that principle still holds, although nowadays we can phrase it with the help of newer and sharper terms like "cultural transfers," "entangled histories," and correctives against "methodological nationalism" and Eurocentrism.

All of this is implied in the notion of "comparative." But what about the notion of "literature"? In the following pages, I want to consider, historically and typologically, some implicit a priori assumptions of what constitutes literature. I shall argue that our habitual understanding of it is rooted in the print culture of post-Gutenberg Europe, part of a Gutenberg modernity, and therefore uncongenial to any type of literature that is not itself part of this post-Gutenberg modernity. In particular, I want to address modes of "non-Gutenberg" literature that we

1 This paper was given as a keynote at the 21st ICLA conference, "The Many Languages of Comparative Literature" (Vienna, 22 July 2016).

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encounter not as printed matter but as performances, not as textual objects but as textual practices. My motto here comes from the great Cuban poet-intellectual José Martí, who wrote in a poem from his *Versos sencillos* (1891):

> Todo es hermoso y constante,
> Todo es música y razón,
> Y todo, como el diamante,
> Antes que luz es carbón. (Martí 1891, 13)
>
> [All is marvellous and constant,
> everything is music and reason,
> and everything, like a diamond,
> before it gets to shine is coal.] (my trans.)

Martí's poem itself aspired to move from the lumpish, inky condition of printed textuality to the sparkling condition of music. Indeed, the condition of music is what made it famous: readers may know Martí's poem without realizing that they know it, for its opening stanzas, beginning with the line "Yo soy un hombre sincero," were fitted into the traditional Cuban tune called "Guantanamera." That re-mediation is a measure of its canonicity and has made its global spread possible, and this conjunction of medium and diffusion is what I want to discuss here.

How do poems on the interstice between ink and song fit into literary history, global or otherwise? This question forces us to reconsider how we write literary history in the first place, and how our way of writing literary history emerged as a fixed praxis. Before addressing the question of the history of writing literary history, let me clarify the issue further with reference to another ballad from a different part of the world and an older, premodern tradition.

2 "Dónal Óg" and Irish literary culture

The Irish-Gaelic poem called "Dónal Óg" [Young Donald] comes from the European periphery, in a language and cultural tradition which, though part and parcel of the European complex, stands in a marginal position to it. The poem itself vacillates uneasily between the media of writing and orality: it originated as a demotic ballad text in Gaelic, became famous around 1900 as a printed poem in English translation, and since c. 1960 its fame as a printed poem has reinvigorated the popularity of the oral ballad. "Live" renditions of it, impossible alas to reproduce in a printed text, can be found online on YouTube. The first stanza translates into English as follows:

O Donal Óg, if you go across the sea,
Take me with you, do not forget –
And you will have a handsel on feastdays and marketdays
And the King of Greece's daughter to share your bed.

The ballad is focalized through the lyrical subject of a young, lovelorn woman. She is hankering after her lover, the "Young Donald" after whom the poem is named, promising him comfort during the day and joy during the night. In a succession of breathless four-line stanzas, her emotional turmoil is evoked: how she pines for him; her worries that he might have left her; her plight, facing her uncomprehending mother and relatives; her desire and her dejection.

My heart is as black as the blackness of the sloe,
or as the black coal that is on the smith's forge;
or as the sole of a shoe left in white halls;
it was you put that darkness over my life.

The poem is an emotional roller-coaster ride culminating in an almost cosmic, metaphysical stanza of despair:

You have taken the east from me; you have taken the west from me;
You have taken what is before me and what is behind me;
You have taken the moon, you have taken the sun from me;
And my fear is great that you have taken God from me.[2]

The poem's raw emotional power, barely contained by its highly controlled diction and formal rhyme schemes, has made it a classic. Like many literary classics, the text allows succeeding generations of readers to encounter and recognize their own concerns, reflected and poetically heightened. Recently, the text has reached out to feminists and new-age readers; in the twentieth century, Celtic scholars were moved to find echoes of the woman's complaint, or *pastourelle*, part of the medieval-aristocratic register of *amour courtois*, surviving in the Irish popular tradition, and to see that tradition's vibrancy and literary power under English oppression.

2 The quoted stanzas run as follows in the original: "A Dhónaill óig, má théir thar farraige, / Tabhair mé fhéin leat 's ná déan do dhearmad. / Beidh agat férín lá aonaigh 's margaidh, / 'gus iníon rí Gréige mar chéile leapan agat." – "Tá mo chroí-se chomh dubh le hairne / Nó mar ghual dubh a dhóifí i gceárta / Nó le bonn bróige ar hallaí bana / Agus tá lionn dubh mór os cionn mo gháire." – "Ó bhain tú thoir agus bhain tú thiar díom, / Bhain tú an ghealach gheal is an ghrian díom, / Bhain tú an croí seo bhí i lár mo chléibhe díom / Is nach rí-mhór é m'fhaitíos gur bhain tú Dia díom." Text quoted following Ó Tuama and Kinsella (1981, 310–312); translation following Gregory (1903, 66). On the poem and its literary-historical position, see Ó Duibhginn (1960).

For Victorians like Lady Gregory (whose translation I have quoted here), the appeal lay in its emotional intensity. Her associate, William Butler Yeats, *fin-de-siècle* aesthete that he was, fell for the scintillating imagery (among Young Donald's vain promises, bitterly recalled, are fish-skin gloves, bird-skin shoes, golden ships with silver masts, and sugar mills on every stream of Ireland). What impressed early twentieth-century readers most of all was the final stanza, which was often quoted as a synecdoche for the poem as a whole, with its recognition that intense love could not be contained within the moral restrictions of traditional Christianity. The poem has the power of embracing different meanings for different readers. But what, to recall the famous exam question, did the author intend with it?

There is no way of knowing this, since we do not know the author or even the period in which the poem came into being. For all its fame and power, Dónal Óg is surprisingly vague and amorphous when it comes to provenance. The paper trail is by now fairly cold. The oldest version recorded from oral performance dates from the 1870s (significantly, it was recorded among the Irish emigrant community in Chicago). The oldest transcriptions date from the 1820s (these are in the Hardiman Papers, Royal Irish Academy). By the mid-nineteenth century, "Dónal Óg" appears to already have been an established part of the ballad repertoire, including Scotland, which indicates a long history of diffusion. But how long?

This type of ballad form can hardly be traced back to before 1650, and the poem's despair at the condition of mortal sin and sexual guilt indicates the operative influence of the Counter-Reformation.[3] In light of this evidence, scholars half-heartedly gravitate to a tentative ballpark dating of "sometime after 1650." But fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and in the absence of a firm authoritative dating, the Internet has begun to live a life of its own. "Dónal Óg" is extremely popular on poetry websites, copied and pasted from one blog to the other, and in that echo-chamber of fact-free memes, it is now universally dated to the *eighth century* – meaning: a poem of awesome antiquity.[4]

3 This is how I read the final stanza (cf. Leerssen 1999). The fear that Young Donald has "taken away God" from the lyrical subject need not indicate an existentialist loss of faith but rather despair at living in a condition of mortal sin. The loss of East and West, of what is before and what is behind, echoes the Lorica prayer of St Patrick: "Christ be with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ where I lie, Christ where I sit, [...] Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me."

4 The "eighth-century" meme may be a "1066 and all that" spillover from the dating of some religious nature-poems in Gaelic that are indeed from the early Middle Ages. In anthologies these tend to be grouped alongside "Dónal Óg" and other anonymous, undatable material.

The question of dating is obviously as intractable as that of authorship and gender.[5] Intractable as those problems are, there is an even greater problem: the very textual substance is amorphous. The poem as it stands in this particular version is a rather haphazard collection of individual stanzas, some of which are also encountered as part of other poems, and some of which may have drifted into this particular poem from other sources. Variants and different versions exist, giving a different order of stanzas or including alternative stanzas. Accordingly, some versions foreground the young woman's desire, and other versions emphasize her despair. "Dónal Óg" is variable, shape-shifting, a fleeting shadow in different shapes, formats, and periods.[6]

We are on firmer ground when we trace not the origin but the reception history of "Dónal Óg" and how it acquired its canonical stature in twentieth-century literary culture. Its fame began with Augusta (Lady) Gregory (1852–1932), an important author of the Irish Literary Revival and a close associate of William Butler Yeats. She gave a printed translation ("Grief of a Young Girl's Heart") in her essay-*cum*-anthology *Poets and Dreamers* of 1902, and it was her English version that hit the reading public. *Poets and Dreamers* was reprinted repeatedly; "Dónal Óg" was included in other collections by Lady Gregory and others, and emulated through echoing citations and recyclings by the other leading personalities of the Irish Literary Revival, sometimes following Gregory, sometimes competing with her. As a result, it is now a staple of anthologies. Its hypercanonicity was confirmed when it was included in John Huston's 1987 film adaptation of James Joyce's *The Dead* – something which is true to the spirit and the time-setting (1904) of Joyce's story, though not part of the original – and in a way shoehorned into the narrative. Tellingly, it is recited rather than sung, as a philological specimen, and troubles the genteel company with its emotional intensity:

> THE HOSTESS. And now, let us have a recitation! Mr Grace, would you beguile us yet again?
> *(Mr Grace moves to the front of the drawing-room under applause from the guests.)*

5 The fact that the lyrical subject is female and the genre is that of the "young woman's complaint" means that the ballad is now predominantly (though by no means exclusively) performed by female singers and directed at a female audience; but the fact that the author is unknown and probably non-individual means also that the author's gender is as moot as the date of his/her/their *floruit*.

6 Among "folk" performers, such problems of variants and variability are well known. YouTube gives samples of many different versions of "Dónal Óg." One website among many discussing different variants is http://mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=14957 (17 August 2020), based on the *Digital Tradition Folk Song Database*.

> MR GRACE. Ladies and gentlemen, I had intended doing a comic recitation for you this evening, but I came across something recently that I would very much like to pass onto you. It is called "Broken Vows."
> *(Mr Grace recites six stanzas from "Dónal Óg"; camera alternates between his recitation and the increasingly awed, uncomfortable faces of the guests, ending with a close-up of Gretta Conroy's moved expression.)*
> *(Silence, no applause.)*
> MR GRACE. It's a translation from the Irish, by Lady Gregory.
> THE HOSTESS, *breaking the silence.* Very strange – but beautiful.
> *(Various guests now express their appreciation, mainly the females.)*[7]

Here, as in Martí's "Yo soy un hombre sincero," the non-print re-mediation is both an indicator and consolidator of literary canonicity.

In the decades since Huston's film accolade, Irish literary history has made giant strides forward; two benchmark publications being the *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (Deane 1991) and the *Cambridge History of Irish Literature* (Kelleher and O'Leary 2006). Both of these aimed to be inclusive (running to three and two massive volumes, respectively), encompassing English, Latin, and Gaelic-language traditions, and covering many genres, including popular balladry, over many centuries.

What is truly astounding is that in both these standard surveys with their many thousands of pages, "Dónal Óg" does not receive a mention. Too literary to be discussed as folklore, too oral and too chimerical to be discussed as literature, the acknowledged crown jewel of Gaelic-Irish lyricism quite simply slipped through the editorial cracks, failing to hit the radar screen in any of the different sections or chapters which compartmentalize the complex literary landscape of Ireland over the last centuries. The poem was picked up, I should add, in the substantial two-volume extension of the *Field Day Anthology* specifically thematizing "Irish women's writing and traditions" (Bourke 2002). That extension was provoked belatedly, almost as an afterthought, by the gender blind-spot in the original three-volume enterprise. In this extension, the poem is covered, but grouped into a section called "The Song Tradition" (dedicated to ballad performances by women), and presented as the performance of a singer in 1970. The provenance of the text is unimportant here. The editors in their notes date the text to the accepted ballpark "after 1650" and describe it as a group effort, the end result of a long process of collective shaping and polishing. In this presentation, the editors are in fact follow-

7 The fragment is online on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgl-28nYB2Q (7 August 2020).

ing the approach already taken by the first translator, Lady Gregory, who states she got the text from oral recitation, and comments:[8]

> There are some verses in it that attain to the intensity of great poetry, though I think less by the creation of one than by the selection of many minds; the peasants who have sung or recited their songs from one generation to another, having instinctively sifted away by degrees what was trivial, and kept only what was real, for it is in this way the foundations of literature are laid. (Gregory 1903, 54; 261)

Gregory already implies what my comments so far have documented: practically everything that could be sensibly said of "Dónal Óg" belongs not to its substance or historical origin, but to its track record, its ongoing reception history, from the earliest transcriptions of the 1820s to the recent Internet memes. "Dónal Óg" only exists as a function of its reception. There is no there there.

3 Textual variability, textual historicity

Texts like "Dónal Óg" are unclassifiable in the rubrics of traditional literary history, and quite unlike *Pride and Prejudice* or *Heart of Darkness.* They exist only as an ongoing, fluid praxis very much like that of the folktale as analysed by Roman Jakobson and Pyotr Bogatyrev: as a bandwidth of performative variability.[9] Haun Saussy followed this line of reasoning in his insightful *Ethnography of Rhythm: Orality and its Technologies*:

> The criteria for authorship, authenticity, and consistency, and what counts as a doublet, a gap or an interpolation, differ once we are circulating in the domain of oral style. The tags of earlier and later, original and copy, author and nonauthor, fade away in an economy of mutually substitutable parts and traditional lines of thought. Orality stands in a different dimension of time. (Saussy 2016, 200)

However, the collectivity and *Nacheinander* of performativity eludes capture in the individuated, static *Nebeneinander* of written accounts (as my tortuous references to YouTube have shown when drawing on performative illustrations); but the radically "unanchored" variability of texts like "Dónal Óg," and their resistance to historiographical rubrication, is not merely a function of their orality. Nor would I like

8 Gregory called the text "Grief of a Girl's Heart" and gave it as a prose translation; later anthologies rearranged her text into the now current stanza form.

9 Jakobson and Bogatyrov's 1929 work places, it will be recalled, oral texts in a structuralist *langue–parole* relationship, between a tale's/ballad's ideal-typical motif structure (quasi as a *sjužet*) and its palette of actual, variable actualizations (as performative *fabulae*).

to make "orality" a general term for whatever has failed to be textually contained. Textual fluidity is also a defining feature of manuscript culture – of which "Dónal Óg," with its traditions of different transcriptions, is also part. Indeed, performance and textual transcription coexist in what we might consider a two-phase model of diffusion and condensation. In historical transmission, transcriptions underwrite performances and performances are captured as written, printed, or documented precipitates (ranging from commonplace notebooks to broadsheets to anthologies and, these days, to websites). Whatever textual variants exist result from the cycling back and forth between ink and sparkle, between what Mukařovský would have called objects and actualizations. As Walter J. Ong already pointed out: "Texts can represent all sorts of different adjustments to orality–literacy polarities. Manuscript culture in the West was always marginally oral, and even after print textuality only gradually achieved the place it has today" (Ong 2002 [1972], 154).

Indeed, even in print culture, textual variability is by no means a failure to maintain the ideal stability and identity of the text, but rather part and parcel of the ontological condition of how texts perpetuate their presence through time and disseminate themselves across space. For Paul Zumthor, medieval texts were always "unfinished business," in perpetual development; a condition he termed *mouvance.* More recently, Bernard Cerquiglini in his *Éloge de la variante* has vindicated this open-ended variability against the philologists' retroactive imposition of post-medieval standards of textual closure. Textual variants were not what we have come to consider them today: problematic digressions from textual integrity. On the contrary, variants are themselves the default, normal condition of literary life. Cerquiglini's analysis follows Ong and Zumthor in seeing the advent of print culture as a game-changer, creating a fixation on textual fixity. The printing process imposed the necessity of achieving a definitive closure on typesetting before proceeding to the page-printing stage, and hence a concern with a definitive text – cast in lead, as it were.[10]

This tallies with the fact that print culture generates the rise of what Michel Foucault calls the author-function: the author as the text's primary brand and organizing criterion.

> Texts with a "literary" status can only be read when furnished with an author-function. Each poetic or fictional text will be exposed to the question of where it comes from, who wrote it, at what date, under which circumstances, with what motivation. The text's meaning, status, and

10 Zumthor 1972; Cerquiglini 1989; also Hult 1991; and cf. Ong 2002 [1972], 128.

> value depend on the answers to those questions. […] Literary anonymity is deeply irksome to us, and we can only accept it by way of enigma.[11] (Foucault 1994 [1969], 800; my trans.)

Whereas manuscript culture would organize its codices thematically, each codex being essentially an anthology of texts put together for whatever reasons were operative in a given scribal situation, print will gravitate towards textual identification by title and authors. Within a century after the invention of print, we get the first *Opera omnia* editions, rubricating collections of texts under the name of their common author. Print culture soon generates a paratextual coating that identifies texts by title, author, and also date of printing.[12] These then become the three primary rubrics which allow librarians and historians to classify and order texts, pegging them down by author and date, and thus imposing a chronology of production. Any text that lacks an author and date (like "Dónal Óg") becomes in essence unclassifiable for the type of literary history that develops after Gutenberg – it is like a lost data cluster without a filename on a corrupted hard disk, or a library book misplaced on the wrong shelf and without a proper call number.

This is the deeper reason why "Dónal Óg" was able to escape the editorial notice of two great literary-historical surveys. Almost unavoidably, the study of literature after Gutenberg gravitates to identifiable texts, meaning texts with known authors whose identities link their various works mutually and whose biographies place those texts in the light of what is known about their lives. The text's individual qualities will be outlined against the background of the author's working conditions. In historiographical practice, that usually takes the form of a master narrative highlighting the author's innovative creativity against the *re-*

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11 In the original: "Mais les discours 'littéraires' ne peuvent plus être reçus que dotés de la fonction auteur: à tout texte de poésie ou de fiction on demandera d'où il vient, qui l'a écrit, à quelle date, en quelles circonstances ou à partir de quel projet. Le sens qu'on lui accorde, le statut ou la valeur qu'on lui reconnaît dépendent de la manière dont on répond à ces questions. […] L'anonymat littéraire ne nous est pas supportable; nous ne l'acceptons qu'à titre d'énigme." DeLooze stresses medieval practices of authorial self-naming, i.e. deliberate non-anonymity (DeLooze 1991).

12 It seems relevant to highlight the paratextual identifiers of title and date alongside the name and identity of the author. In the case of "Dónal Óg," we have seen how English adaptations foreclosed the poem's meaning by imposing emotionally dirigistic titles like "Grief of a Young Girl's Heart" or "Broken Vows." The Gaelic title, such as it is, derives from the opening words, which are only its opening words in a certain specific stanza arrangement; and, as rendered here, it follows a recent orthographical standard – any pre-1945 text would have spelled Donald's Gaelic name as "Domhnall" rather than "Dónal." Thus, the poem's lack of a pre-inscribed title is radical rather than incidental or anecdotal, and forms part and parcel of its textual fluidity and historical elusiveness.

poussoir of the conventions of the time. The individual identifiability of texts is part of a historicist logic of artistic progress.

4 The rise of writing literary history and the edges of the Gutenberg Comfort Zone

There is, in fact, a prototype of such a history dating from these very decades; it comes from the world of Renaissance art. Giorgio Vasari's proud proclamation of Renaissance values, the *Lives of the Most Excellent Italian Architects, Painters, and Sculptors from Cimabue to our Own Times Described in the Tuscan Language* (1550), traces, with unabashed, triumphalist self-celebration, how from Cimabue to Michelangelo, pupils surpassed their masters, how techniques were transgenerationally lifted to ever higher planes of achievement, and how the Renaissance bootstrapped itself out of what became known, in the process, as the Middle Ages or Dark Ages.

This deep-seated paradigm also informed other fields of historiography, not least literary history. Even in the title of Dr Johnson's *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, with Critical Observations on their Works* (1781), we see the presiding genius of Vasari. Other literary histories were similarly organized on bio-bibliographical lines, inventorizing the record under the new dispensation of print culture and ordering it by authorship and date; examples include the multivolume, long-running, and still-ongoing *Histoire littéraire de la France* by the Maurist Benedictines (1733–), Jean-Noël Paquot's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire littéraire des dix-sept provinces des Pays-Bas* (1764), and Erduin Julius Koch's *Compendium der deutschen Literatur-Geschichte* (1790). Meanwhile, "Dónal Óg" was acquiring its unobtrusive currency in the ballad repertoire. By 1815, Gaelic-Irish literature was drawn into this bio-bibliographical regime of early literary history. Charles O'Conor and Edward O'Reilly performed their first inventories of ancient Irish writers at the very moment the first manuscript transcriptions of "Dónal Óg" were made: the former in his *Rerum hibernicarum scriptores veteres* (1814), the latter in his *Chronological Account of Nearly Four Hundred Irish Writers* (1820). The predication of these works on authors' identities and a chronological order of production dates is captured in the titles chosen for them.

A new way of studying literature, less predicated on bio-bibliographical author-lists, emerged between 1770 and 1830. We may broadly characterize it as a shift from an antiquarian mode to a philological one. The new philologies emerged, giving the various "modern languages" or "national literatures" an equal standing with the classics, and in turn necessitating a transnational counterpoise called com-

parative literature. The process began somewhere around 1770 (when Herder attacked Enlightenment universalism) and crystallized around 1825, when Goethe fought his rearguard actions for literary cosmopolitanism.

The historical dynamics of this period are extremely complex: a number of intellectual and institutional changes coincided in time and reinforced each other's impetus and impact. These include the reorganization of the libraries and archives of the European states; the rediscovery of medieval manuscripts in these reorganized libraries; the Indo-European linguistic paradigm organized around Sanskrit; the rise of historicism and national conservatism (in response to the rapid revolutionary changes of the period); the rebooting of the European university system after Humboldt; the academic professionalization of the pursuits of history-writing and literary study; and the second print revolution, which hugely raised the quantity of print production, lowered its cost, and magnified its social penetration (Leerssen 2004a).

This cluster of revolutionary changes all happened in these same decades, and it meant that a lot of new sources were coming to attention which failed to fit into the bio-bibliographical paradigm or what may be called the Gutenberg Comfort Zone (fig. 1). This material included oral sources, rediscovered ancient manuscripts predating the rise of print culture, and non-European texts.

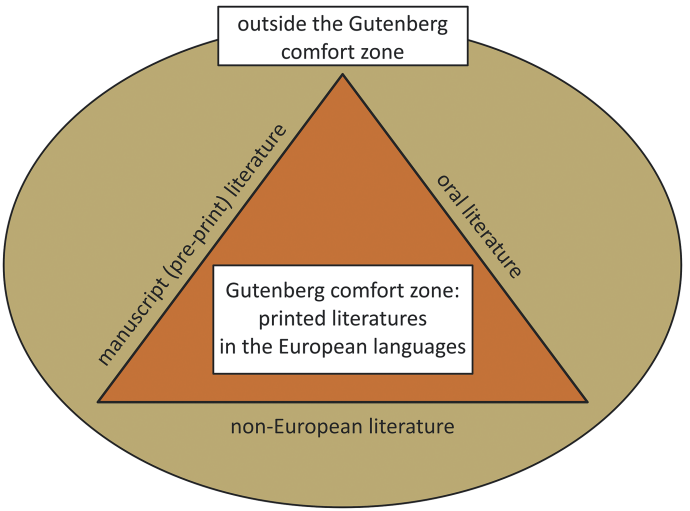


Fig. 1: The Gutenberg comfort zone and its limits.

Let me begin with the importance of oral sources: balladry, either taken down from performative recitation or else edited from earlier transcriptions. Scholarly interest in anonymous balladry began with Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765)

and Herder's *Volkslieder* (1778–1779), and led to Arnim and Brentano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (1805–1808) and the folk and fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm (1812). From there the vogue affected all of Europe, and indeed, later in the century, beyond. The "Grimm ripples" reached Ireland with the work of Thomas Crofton Croker (*Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*, 1825–1827), a decade after the literary histories of O'Conor and O'Curry. It was an adept of Croker, James Hardiman, who noted down one of the earliest transcriptions of "Dónal Óg."

This oral material was not always a sentimental type of rusticism. There was also a sense that older balladry might be heroic, tragic, or even epic in scope, as well as providing a type of literary archaeology. Macpherson's *Ossian* had in the 1760s transmuted orally collected balladry from the Scottish Highlands into archaeological fragments of an allegedly ancient Homeric-style epic. That claim, though soon debunked, had set people thinking. Other material of an epic or tragic nature was appearing, such as the Croatian *Hasanaginica*, which found its way into Herder's anthology in Goethe's translation; it was definitely in the tragic-sublime style. The Grimm-inspired Serbian fieldwork of Vuk Karadžić supported the idea that the registers of epic and orality were not altogether divorced, and that something like "oral epic" was conceivable. (Wolff 2012; Leerssen 2004b, 2012a).

At the same time, philologists were beginning to realize that even written epics could have an oral gestation period: Homer was now seen not as a Big-Bang primordial genius coming out of nowhere but as the summarizing agency codifying an older oral, rhapsodic tradition of formulaic balladry.

Thirdly, forgotten epics were being rediscovered all over Europe: the *Nibelungenlied*, *Beowulf*, the *Chanson de Roland*, the *Lay of Prince Igor's Campaign*: all these made their print debut in literary circulation in editions appearing between 1800 and 1836. Every nation was revealed to have its own primordial original epic. Where there were no manuscripts to be found in attics, they were either forged (as in the Czech case of the "Bohemian manuscripts" "discovered" by Vaclav Hanka in 1817–1818) or else assembled out of oral material (as in the Finnish *Kalevala*).

The bewildering number of publications name-checked here may give an idea of how very complex and turbulent the historical dynamics of this period were: a perfect storm of concurrent changes affecting all of Europe; the turbulent primal soup out of which our discipline, comparative literature, would emerge (Leerssen 2012b, 2015).[13]

What was relatively untroubled by all this welter of change and transition was the discovery of non-European literary traditions. This was a much more

13 Remarkably, this process affected, more or less simultaneously, very dissimilar countries with very dissimilar socio-political regimes: some still feudal monarchies or empires with serf-

steady process, taking place under its own steam; it had begun well before the tipping point of 1770–1830, and continued across and after it. A highly useful survey by Ritchie Robertson lists, in the century before Goethe translated Hafiz and coined the idea of *Weltliteratur*, translations such as: *Arabian Nights* (Antoine Galland, 1704–1717); *Zafanarma* (Pétis de la Croix, 1722); the Koran (George Sale, 1734); *Haoqiu Zhuan* (*The Pleasing History*; Wilkinson and Percy, 1761); the *Zend-Avesta* (Anquetil-Duperron, 1771); the *Bhagavadgita* (Charles Wilkins, 1785); *Sakuntala* (William Jones, 1789); *Kalila and Dimna* (*The Fables of Bidpai*; Knatchbull, 1819); and Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (Macan 1829) (Robertson 2015).

The discovery of a world literature beyond the European canon was a steady, century-long process, starting with what Paul Hazard already called a *crise de la conscience européenne*. Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan* of 1819 and his proclamation of *Weltliteratur* are in a way the closure of a century of literary globalization. The titles mentioned here are each of them tips of an iceberg involving the reworking of texts in other European languages, adaptations, and spin-offs. Schubert was engaged in an opera called *Sakuntala*, and the famous Turandot story can be traced back from Schiller's and Carlo Gozzi's versions to a Persian tale collection translated, or perhaps concocted, by the orientalist Pétis de la Croix in 1710, *Les Mille et un jours* (*Hazar u Yek Ruz*). As the theme of Turandot already indicates, much of this material became a popular source of inspiration for nineteenth-century art, such as opera: alongside the national nativism of Wagner's *Ring*, we have the exoticism of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* and Puccini's *Turandot*. Again, re-mediation is a central modality of appropriation.

5 World literature between the new philologies and folklore

While "world literature" was unaffected by the arrival of the new philologies, the non-European material was classified along the taxonomic lines which were operative at the time: either as belonging to the world of oral repertoire (such as the

dom, others already industrializing middle-class societies. To account for this simultaneity, a network analysis of the intellectuals involved appears to be the most promising approach. Men like Walter Scott and Jacob Grimm were central actors, and were in touch, either directly or through at most one intermediary, with most of the European scholars involved, from Iceland to Greece. The Study Platform on Interlocking Nationalisms has undertaken a network analysis on the basis of correspondence and letter-exchanges, visualizations of which may be consulted online at http://ernie.uva.nl (18 August 2020).

Arabian Nights), and hence close to folklore, or else belonging to the world of primeval epic (such as the *Shahnameh*), and as such part of a subsisting category of "ancient" literature.

The category of "ancient" literature had been all-dominant before 1790, as the bedrock of biblical and classical antiquity, overlaid by the modern period after an intervening entr'acte of the "Dark Middle Ages." The new philologies differentiated the modern period into nationally distinct vernacular traditions; these reached back into their medieval roots and originary epics (*Nibelungenlied*, *Beowulf*, etc.), to abut on "ancient" literature at an uneasily conceptualized event horizon (fig. 2).

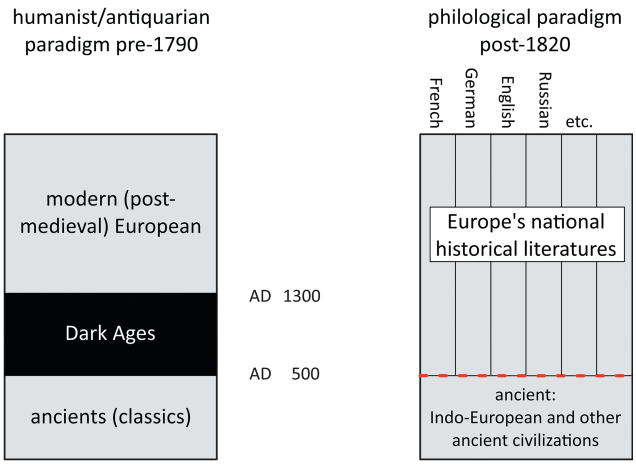


Fig. 2: Antiquarian and philological modes of situating modern European literature(s) globally and chronologically.

To be sure, this model was primarily applied to the modern literatures of Europe, with the non-European literatures largely relegated to a pre-existing, ahistorical container category together with the classics and Biblical Hebrew. The notion of "world literature" as a result combined two asymmetrical canons: a historical, vernacular-European hypercanon and an ahistorically ancient, globally non-Western one. The division now was no longer between ancient and modern literature, but rather between ancient and national literatures; in this model, historicity was predicated to the national traditions of Europe while the rest of the world was either prehistorical or ahistorical.

Thus, the new philologists continued to gravitate around the Gutenberg Comfort Zone, concentrating their focus and activities on *printed literatures in the European languages*. And that comfort zone is still where most of us are happily dwelling.

6 Gutenberg anxieties I: The tangled roots of ancient epics (*Reynard*)

But the new model had a problematic edge between its two asymmetrical halves: how literatures turned from ancient into historical. Two specialisms in particular had to confront problematic material around the edges of the Gutenberg Comfort Zone: the scholars dealing with ancient epic, and the medievalists dealing with the transition from epic to romance. They ran into problems, and in both cases developed a highly interesting way of dealing with those problems.

Ancient epics had a high national prestige, but they were often contested between different successor nations. No single author had written this stuff, so how could any one country claim that it, and no other country, was the true heir to a given ancient epic? Which modern country "owned" *Beowulf* or the Edda? The question was misguided but unavoidable in the nationalist climate of the time, and sparked many a literary-appropriation conflict.

The most telling example of such national-historical antagonism is the feud over who could rightfully claim *Reynard the Fox* (Leerssen 2015). In various new editions and retellings, Reynard was a runaway success in these Romantic decades, and seemed to belong to a variety of literatures. Manuscripts were discovered and edited in many European languages: first in French, then in Latin, German, Flemish, and Low German. After a latency period between 1500 and 1750, all these different variants found their way into printed literary circulation by means of manuscript rediscoveries, editions, and adaptations (fig. 3).

The multilingual sightings of the wily fox led to various conflicting appropriations. Against the French claims that their *Roman de Renart* was the oldest transmitted text, Jacob Grimm argued that the names of the protagonists, Reynard, Isengrimus, Hersinde, and so on, were patently Germanic rather than Romance forms, indicating a Frankish-Germanic origin. The fact that the Reynard material has come down in a very tangled textual descent kept the quarrel going for the entire nineteenth century.

And so, the new national philologies collided with their own event horizon: precisely the materials which were the most highly valorized were also the most elusive and unclassifiable. Indeed, the reason why such ancient materials were so highly valorized was precisely their anonymity, undatability, and even their textually shape-shifting substance. This was a sign at the same time of a text's great antiquity and of its unmediated proximity to the collective *Volksgeist* of the national community. We also notice this when Jacob Grimm attempted to dispute the French claim to seniority in the *Reynard the Fox* claims court. The true origins, he argued, must lie deeper than the known names of the medieval authors

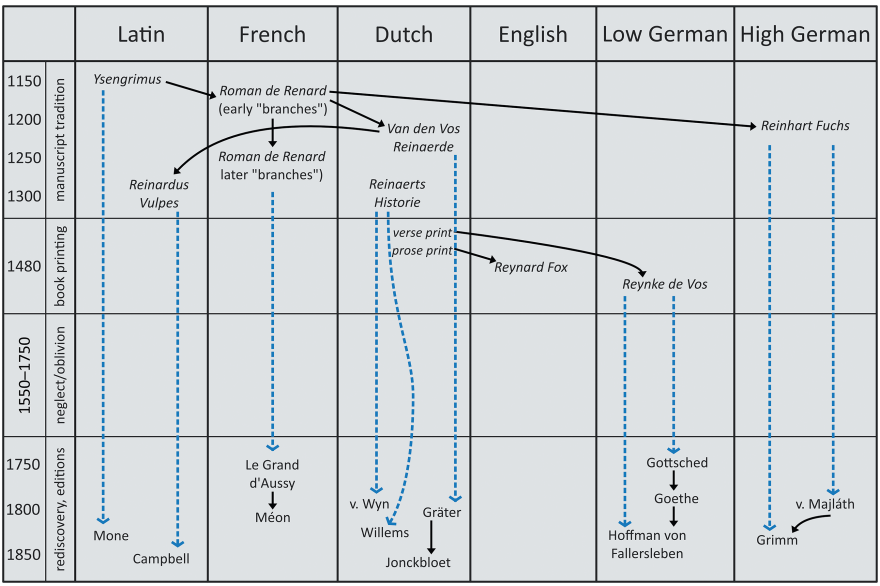


Fig. 3: Medieval variants of the Reynard material and their later print editions.

like Pierre de St.-Cloud or Marie de France (fig. 5). Grimm preferred to explain the wide variety of versions from a collective, oral reservoir of semi-mythical, early-tribal animal tales.

This is where Grimm's unusual multiple talents come to the fore: more than any other scholar of his generation, he was equally at home in the study of written and oral literature. We have noted how the philologists of the period, since Percy and Herder, had been confronted with the importance of balladry, popular poetry, and folk tales; but no one was more innovative than Grimm in placing that material on the philological agenda. He was, after all, the man of folk and fairy tales, German legends, German mythology. In these folkloristic and ethnographical pursuits, Grimm showed a wide-ranging desire to collect tales in all their variability, without any need to reduce them to a master text. It was the entire diversity of variants that intrigued him, with each version as interesting as any other. While Grimm was nothing if not a German chauvinist when it came to written literature, he was in fact much more open-minded when it came to oral material.

In fact, Grimm was more than ready to see oral transmission as something that transcended ethnic borders and that embraced a world greater than just the Germanic race or Europe. In his study of *Reynard the Fox*, he inventorized a narrative *matière* beyond the French–German quarrels in which he was such a stalwart combatant.

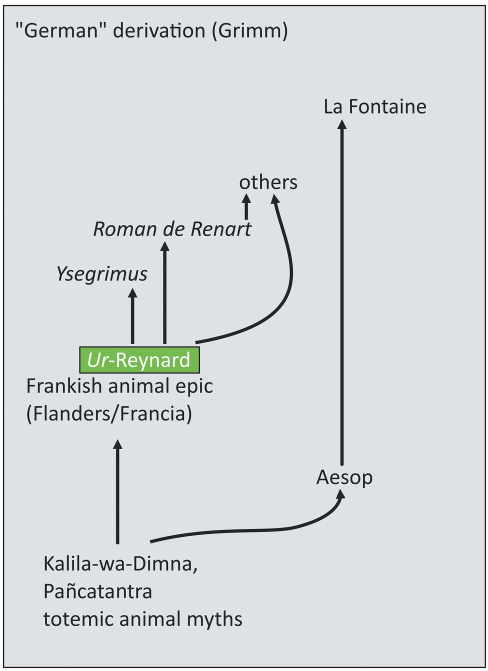


Fig. 4: Reynard *matière* according to Jacob Grimm.

The animal fable, he recognized, derived not just from Aesop or from his putative Frankish-Germanic myths, but from a much deeper and broader mainspring, including Estonian bear fables, the Arabian *Kalila and Dimna* tales, and the Indian *Pañcatantra* (fig. 4). The fact that Grimm sees the Reynard fable as rooted in oral-collective practices allows him to transcend the mutually exclusive national appropriations and even to situate the shifting *sjužet* in a transnational and trans-European cultural ambience. By being rooted in an oral tradition, Reynard is part of world literature.

This trans-European view would continue to dominate the comparatist study of ancient epic. We can think of the comparative work of scholars like H. M. Posnett, the remarkable Cambridge couple Hector and Nora Chadwick, and the Russians Aleksandr Veselovskij (who identified Byzantium as an important transmission zone between the oriental and European literary spheres) and Viktor Žirmunskij. To be sure, their work was undertaken in an imperial-ethnographic worldview characterized by stadialism and still dealing with non-European epic as a form of literary archaeology rather than literary history. Furthermore, the Russian tradition of Veselovskij and Žirmunskij was etiolated under the Stalinist mistrust of studying

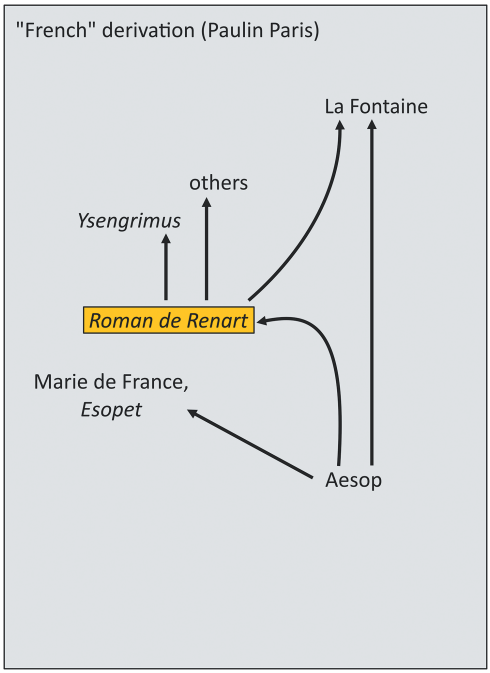


Fig. 5: Reynard matière according to Paulin Paris.

cultural transfers and influences historically (something decried as "formalism" and interpreted as a propensity to bourgeois cosmopolitanism). Žirmunskij, as we know, foreswore "comparativism" during the anti-formalist Ždanov purges of 1948, and abandoned historical questions in favour of typological and ethnographical models; and in the Cold War, such work did not mesh with the writing of literary history that went on in the West.

Even so, the point remains, and is still worth reflecting on, that the study of non-print literature appears to open up a wider, more trans-European and "global" field of vision than the study of print literatures in the modern European languages. Oral and non-print material, be it epic, myth, or folk tale, appears to enjoy a wider and more effortless mode of transnational dissemination than that afforded by print-culture modernity. We know this from the modern non-print media; but it appears to apply to the pre-Gutenberg ones as well. And in fact, some of the best nineteenth-century philologists, like Jacob Grimm and Gaston Paris, showed themselves sensitive to this paradox.

7 Gutenberg anxieties II: The global roots of love

The question of *amour courtois* (tender amorous emotion suddenly inspiring European literature after 1200, and still exercising a major influence on the literary imagination and literary register of the lyric) was an ongoing issue among medievalists ever since the days of Gaston Paris (1839–1903; pupil of Jacob Grimm's pupil Friedrich Diez, and son of Jacob Grimm's adversary Paulin Paris) (Hult 1996; Zink 1996).

The rise of love lyricism in European poetry is part of what Norbert Elias calls the civilizing process, which crucially involves taming the heroic macho aggression of older warrior heroes (Achilles or Siegfried) into something called courtesy. How did Beowulf turn into Sir Galahad? How did berserker warriors turn into chivalric gentlemen? How, in sum, did epic develop into romance? When did troubadours develop an idea called *fin' amor*, something that Dante would call the *dolce stil novo*?

It may well have been the echo of Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*, and his channelling of Hafiz, which alerted Gaston Paris and his medievalist tradition to the possibility of a cultural transfer from the Persian and Arabic traditions. Paris himself, the man who coined the concept of *amour courtois*, debunked older hypotheses by focusing on the experiences of the crusader William of Aquitaine, one of the earliest troubadour poets, and allowed for the possibility that the Crusader presence in the Middle East formed not just a geopolitical battlefield but also a cultural interface. This idea of a transfer from the world of Islam into Europe has remained in force, although more recent theories have moved their focus from the Crusader Kingdoms to al-Andalus and Moorish Spain. Here, early influences of amorous poetry are found in the Galician *cancioneiros* and their *cantar de amigo* poems, and in the figure of Alfonso el Sabio, another aristocratic courtly love troubadour. This is supported by the fact that Alfonso also sponsored a translation of Arabic *Kalila and Dimna* tales. (Menocal 1994; Nykl 1946).

There is something seductive in this. As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, Irish critics have interpreted "Dónal Óg" as a late, popularized manifestation of *pastourelle* lyricism imported from the European *amour courtois* tradition (Ó Tuama 1978); apparently, that source tradition has antecedents reaching beyond the confines of Europe. Be that as it may, it again alerts us to the fact that once we leave the restrictive ambience of print-culture historicism, and the national-historical categories imposed on us by the Gutenberg regime, we become able by the same token also to transcend that wider methodological nationalism called Eurocentrism.[14]

14 An inspiring recent example is Beecroft (2015).

8 Conclusions

Those philologists and comparatists who have worked on earlier, pre-Gutenberg periods have always shown a relative openness to wider, trans-European patterns: medievalists, scholars of ancient epic, and, in recent decades increasingly so, classical scholars. None of them, however, has been able to match the breadth of vision of the folklorists studying oral literature. It seems to me that the only scholarly tradition which has addressed this crux flexibly and sensibly is that other descendant of the Grimm years: folklore, and the study of oral literature. No anxieties here over anonymity, variability, or the lack of a datable moment of genesis: all that scholars have to go by is morphology and at best a history of diffusion. Remarkably enough, in this much more fluid scheme, globalization is not a pious injunction but an obvious starting point. By the late nineteenth century, folklore commentary on the Grimms' fairy tales was already adducing analogues and parallels from all societies and storytelling traditions worldwide. And one of the most triumphant achievements in the study of global literature is, ironically, hardly ever on the radar of comparatists at all. It began as a morphological motif analysis of folk tales, not unlike the narrative morphology attempted in 1928 by Vladimir Propp on the basis of Afanas'ev's Russian fairy-tale collection. Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale*, that foundational text of narratology, is of course a comparatist classic; less celebrated is the fact that in the same year, 1928, Stith Thompson published *The Types of the Folktale*. It was the English translation of a work written in German in 1910 by the Finnish folklorist Antti Aarne: *Verzeichnis der Märchentypen mit Hülfe von Fachgenossen*. *The Types of the Folktale* was republished in 1961 with a classified rubrication system of narrative motifs, and has since become a benchmark for folklore studies worldwide; since its latest revision by Hans-Jörg Uter it is now usually known as the Aarne–Thompson–Uter (or ATU) index. What must impress comparatists (those who do not ignore it, that is) is its truly worldwide taxonomy of narrative tropes and functions, dwarfing our own efforts to come up with a global typology of a genre like the novel. How fatuous is it, comparatists should ask themselves, to develop notions of world literature wholly from within the Gutenberg Comfort Zone, and in apparent heedlessness of anything like the ATU index? Our blind-spot in this regard seems to me to be the result of a regrettable methodological bifurcation between ink literature and non-ink literature, and an ingrained reliance on the textual fixities provided by the author-function and datability.

What conclusions offer themselves on this basis? To begin with: we may want to question our implicit assumption, derived from the world history of technology and economics, that Western modernity is coterminous with globalization. On the contrary, the case outlined here suggests, counter-intuitively and paradox-

ically, that in cultural and literary circulation, the pre- and postmodern media, from orality to cinema and the Internet, allow for a wider transcultural circulation of texts than did the Gutenberg print media (which on the contrary played into a trend of national compartmentalization and Eurocentrism). It is distortive to derive our notions of "world literature" from the Gutenberg Comfort Zone of Europe's nineteenth-century philologists, or to see "world literature" in Nobel-Prize terms – as the Champions League of all those authors worldwide who have achieved status in a Europe-rooted system of print literature.

It would be exciting to liberate our notion of literature and its historicity from two implicit restrictions. One is that the historicity of literature is by default the chronology of literary production. The opposite is true. Texts come to life only after they have left the hands of their authors. It is then only that their coal turns to diamond, their lumpishness to sparkle. Ann Rigney has called this the pro-creativity of texts, their capacity to procreate, to go forth and multiply, to spark off other creative moments in the course of their career. She accordingly focuses on what she calls the "afterlife" or "social life" of texts. In her *Afterlives of Walter Scott*, for instance, Rigney traces the ramifying, self-propelling career path of Scott's imaginative historicism, not just to historical novels elsewhere or into theatrical and operatic adaptations, but wider still: from Highland tourism to the fiery crosses of the Ku Klux Klan, from Bankim Chandra Chatterji to historical re-enactment societies. It would not do to subsume this under the traditional rubric of Scott's "influence" or a reception history, because the afterlife of Scott's novels is traced not just beyond its moment and country of origin, but also beyond its genre of origin, combining the mode of transnationalism with that of intermediality (Rigney 2012). At the same time, such a reception history works with datably documented events in historical time, not just with genres and motifs emerging timelessly, as per the Chadwicks or Žirmunskij, from their anthropological and societal subsoil.

Part of the social life of texts is, as we have seen in many instances, their power of re-mediation. This intermediality is in itself a challenge to the ingrained notion of letting literary studies gravitate to the genres that became dominant after the invention of print, with an emphasis on the novel, theatre, and poetry. These are not the only genres in which our culture can find expression in narrative, dramatic, or lyric form. Other genres range from travel- and history-writing to TV series, folk ballads, and comic strips; or, in a more ancient world, stained-glass windows, mosaics, and manuscript illuminations. The true marker of the procreativity of any given work is its power to negotiate the entire gamut of available genres and media.

What is exciting, in the case of "Guantanamera," "Dónal Óg," or the afterlives of Scott's novels, is not so much where they came from as where they went to. That cultural afterlife, surfing from one medium or genre to another, will be as effortlessly transnational as the narrative of the wily fox. It will easily cross borders and

with only a few intermediary steps establish cultural shortcuts between very different societies. And its precipitation into print is only a stepping-stone along the way.[15]

The cultural life of texts takes place in a truly global, swirling dynamics of communicative exchanges and adaptations.[16] It is this cultural life of texts that brings together the most disparate readerships in a web of inspiration and appreciation, into a polyamorous *Weltliteratur* that would have gladdened Goethe's heart. Of course, the rapid adjustment of cultural production and cultural dissemination to a globalizing post-Gutenberg dispensation has not gone unnoticed by comparatists (Saussy 2006), and indeed this ICLA conference was a sign of that. But comparatists may have to query their ingrained Gutenberg-based assumptions and working methods at a more fundamental level than merely by reviving the notion of *Weltliteratur* in post-colonial terms: as the appropriation of print literature and of Western-canonical genres (novel, theatre, poetry) by post-colonial actors. A true globalization of comparative literature will challenge the primacy of the printed literary media, of production history over reception history, of ink literature over non-ink literature, and will compound the complexity of a transnational approach with that of an intermedial one. Does that challenge amount to yet another "crisis" of comparative literature – such as they tend to be proclaimed with almost comical regularity? I do not think so; to me it looks much more like a really exciting and energizing prospect.

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15 It is instructive in this regard to consider the discussions around the granting of the Nobel Prize to Bob Dylan in 2016: this was the first time that this European accolade from within the very heart of the Gutenberg Comfort Zone was given to a literary practitioner whose work relies crucially on its performativity and non-print dissemination. Those who would see Dylan's lyrics as purely textual-verbal constructs will, quite rightly so, query their literary merit and the wisdom of awarding a Nobel Prize to a pop celebrity on that slim achievement. But the argument cuts both ways: an exclusive emphasis on verbal textuality truncates the importance and powerful appeal of Dylan's songs as, precisely, songs, primarily disseminated in non-print form.

16 For the emergence of "adaptation studies," see Chan (2012). As a solitary example from this very lively and productive worldwide field, I mention Rajagopalan (2009).

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E. V. Ramakrishnan

From Reception to Resistance: Multiple Languages of Indian Modernism

Abstract: The canonical view of modernism as a quintessentially Western cultural phenomenon has been contested over the last few decades by Caribbean, Afro-American, and South Asian critics and social scientists. The present essay examines the trajectory of modernism in some of the Indian languages, like Malayalam, Marathi, Kannada, and Hindi, from the 1940s to the 1960s against the background of these contestations. As a prelude to the modernist turn, the Indian encounter with colonial modernity and its impact are discussed in the opening section of the paper. India's encounter with colonial institutions of power and their conventions of knowledge production resulted in the emergence of new genres of literature and a new critical vocabulary of evaluation. Translation was central to the new sensibility that shaped new forms of poetry and prose. In engaging with the principles of Western literary criticism, Indian authors evolved their own evaluative norms in the context of the new literary forms that redefined the very idea of the literary in Indian languages. This is discussed in relation to trends in Marathi and Malayalam in the first section. The shift from the nationalistic-Romantic to the modernist sensibility is brought out in the second section with examples from the poetry of Agyeya and Gajanand Madhav Muktibodh (both Hindi), and Ayyappa Paniker and K. G. Sankara Pillai (both Malayalam). The trajectory of modernism in fiction is illustrated with the novels *Khassakkinte Itihasam* [The Legends of Khasak], by O. V. Vijayan (Malayalam), and *Samskara*, by U. R. Ananthamurthy (Kannada), in the third section.

Keywords: colonialism, decolonization, Eurocentric discourses, high modernism, modernization, modernism, modernity, reception, resistance, self-criticism, translation

The context of the present study is the current climate of critique of Eurocentric modernity that has generated much enthusiasm among scholars of South Asia. From being a quintessentially European phenomenon exemplified by a few masters such as Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Pablo Picasso, Andre Breton, Sergei Eisenstein, Samuel Beckett, and Tristan Tzara, the pantheon of modernists has been revised to include Caribbean, Latin American, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian modernists in addition to Afro-American, Irish, and African authors. Its transnational and multidisciplinary significance is now understood better.

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The canonical view of modernism as a Western cultural phenomenon, originating from a specific set of historical conditions such as industrial capitalism, the rise of the nation-state and the metropolitan centres of imperial power, and the pervasive dissemination of a new cult of experimentation, is still considered valid in Western scholarship. But increasingly, dissenting voices are heard from Asian, African, Caribbean, and Latin American thinkers on the subject. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, a historian, has this to say on the subject:

> I have tried to argue that modernity is historically a global and conjectural phenomenon, not a virus that spreads from one place to the other. It is located in a series of historical processes that brought hitherto isolated societies into contact, and we must seek its roots in a set of diverse phenomena [...] the Mongol dream of world conquest, European voyages of exploration, activities of Indian textile traders in the diaspora [...] and so forth. (Subrahmanyam 1998, 99–100)

In a detailed essay published in 2001, Susan Friedman opened up the meanings of "modern/modernity/modernism" to show how "periodization, canonization and the naming of the defining characteristics of modernism are all based on a pool of tenets, people and/or events whose selection depends upon pre-existing notions of the period" (2001, 495). By way of illustration, Hugh Kenner uses internationalism as a defining feature of high modernism, thus consecrating Pound, Eliot, and Joyce as modernists and Williams, Faulkner, and Woolf as "provincial" or "regional." The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s never figures in the history of modernism, though Picasso's primitivism and Faulkner's racial narratives are part of its canon. The Afro-American myth-making and its great historical displacements have been largely invisible in the accounts of modernist breakthroughs. Paul Gilory, in his *Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993), traces historical modernity to the racial terror of slavery, black cultural practices (music in particular), politico-philosophical interventions (rights discourses, literary compositions), and economic activities (plantation labour). The trauma of the Middle Passage and the existential crisis occasioned by being an outcast in the country of immigration created a nightmarish sense of history among the Black diaspora that Europe was to go through much later during the world wars. The social reformers of nineteenth-century India, like Jotiba Phule from Pune in western India, recognized that the oppressive caste system in India was comparable to slavery in America, as he explained in his book *Gulamgiri* [Slavery] (1873), inspired by the black revolt against slavery in the US. In fact, his book was dedicated to the black community of America in honour of its heroic struggle.

India remained a colony of Britain for the better part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But from the 1860s, a newly educated elite exposed to the English language and grounded in Western models of modern thought had begun to

redefine what readers expected from literature. This happened in all the major literatures, which numbered more than twenty. These literary traditions went back to the early centuries of the second millennium or even earlier. In his essay on literary modernism in South Asia, Vinay Dharwadker speaks of the "conceptual turbulence" that confronts any attempt to study modernism in this region, originating from the region's complex multilinguality, its long history of literary production long before the colonial encounter with Europe and the colonial context that presides over the advent of the modernist temper. He is right in saying that the arrival of print in South Asia was a defining moment as it led to standardization of the writing systems that "provided the prime material context in which modernist textual practices took shape in South Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries" (Dharwadker 2015, 128). He traces the trajectory of modernism in India through four phases, the first from 1882 to 1922, the second from 1922 to 1950, the third from 1950 to 1980, and the fourth from 1980 to the present. Any such chronology is bound to be arbitrary due to the numerous variables enmeshed in the complex self-fashioning of highly pluralistic Indian society, divided along the lines of caste, religion, and region. In the following discussion, I would like to identify two moments with which to map the trajectory of Indian literatures from modernity to modernism that has evolved in the Indian subcontinent. The first moment belongs to the period between 1860 and 1880, which witnessed the emergence of a public sphere across Indian languages. This enabled modernity to manifest itself in hegemonic structures of power that regulated knowledge and culture. The second moment, which belongs to the period between 1950 and 1970, marked the beginning of modernist writing in the major literary traditions of India. The founding of the nascent nation-state and the formation of linguistic states in India were crucial in shaping the trajectory of modernity and modernism in Indian languages. During this phase of decolonization, a critique of hegemonic narratives of modernity becomes a defining feature of modernism. The modernist movement embodied diverse elements, and it was not confined to the literary field alone. We need to locate the modernity–modernism conjunction in the Indian subcontinent in the massive reorganization of knowledge and power, not to mention the redefinition of literary genres and reinvention of modes of representation, all of which collectively made it possible for the modern subject to emerge. The modernist textual practices contain a complex grid of cognitive filters that help retrieve marginal voices, creatively transforming the indigenous modes of literary expression into a dialogic domain of cultural resistance.

1

Translation and travel, as Peter Kalliney argues, are the prime movers in shaping modernism across the world (2016, 3). The colonial intervention in administrative and educational domains in India resulted in a churning that forced the newly educated upper-caste elite to review their identity in the emerging colonial world. The new genres of literature that appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century were responding to this need to locate oneself in the changing environment of colonial modernity. However, this new writing produced by the educated elites could not be understood or evaluated in terms of the prevailing poetics. This prompted Indian writers to theorize and articulate an evaluative approach to the new forms of the novel, short story, proscenium play, autobiography, biography, travelogue, lyric, and so on based on Western concepts that required them to look at their own traditions from a critical perspective.

The period between the 1860s and 1880s marks a nodal point of colonial modernity, when widespread social reform movements across India to educate women, to stop the archaic custom of sati (widow-burning), to eradicate child marriages, to end the oppressive caste system, and to create legal frameworks for ensuring equality and social justice created a social awakening on a massive scale. Taboos regarding the crossing of the seas now became a thing of the past, enabling Indians to travel to Europe and America. The travelogues became a means of informing and educating the public. Cities such as Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were now centres of culture and education where English education opened up new career options for the upwardly mobile middle-class Indians. This was also the class from which a new group of writers who shaped Indian experiences into novels, lyrics, dramas, autobiographies, and so on emerged. Dharwadker comments that South Asian modernism begins in the late nineteenth century "as an aesthetic outcome of a quest for social reform and self-modernization under colonialism, and not merely as an imitative offshoot of Euro-American *modernismo* or modernism" (2015, 129). His use of the term "modernism" is anachronistic here, as modernism, as a movement in arts and literature, emerged in Indian society only from the 1940s. But he is right in suggesting that the larger process of modernization began in the late nineteenth century.

Modernity and its manifestations could not be explained in terms of prevailing norms of literature. The principles of Sanskrit poetics could neither explain the new literary forms nor interpret their content for a bilingual audience who were familiar with their own literary traditions and had now cultivated a new taste for the great works of English literature. The literary genres such as the novel, the lyric, and autobiography needed new sets of norms that were not available in traditional Indian poetics. The language of "modernity" necessitated a re-

vision of aesthetic norms. R. B. Patankar, a Marathi critic, comments on the shift from Sanskrit theory of literature towards Western theory that "the *rasa* theory was not consciously rejected; it died a natural death because it had no place in the context of new expectations from literature. The scope of the legitimate use of the older concepts like Rasa went on gradually shrinking" (2014, 228).

Modernity, at this stage, manifested itself as a search for critical norms in evaluating literature. Some early examples of literary criticism in Marathi and Malayalam will be briefly discussed here to bring out the nature of the debates that were shaping the literary field. The introduction written by Mahadeo Moreswar Kunte (1835–1888) to his narrative poem on the Maratha ruler Shivaji (1869) is an early example of a new kind of discursive prose. What makes this introduction stand out is the fact that it is written in English. In nineteenth-century India, we very often come across the practice of Indian writers using English to introduce their texts. Rangalal Bandopahyaya, a Bengali poet, wrote a long introduction in English to his heroic poem *Padmini Upakhyan* in 1858. Narmada Shankar, a Gujarati poet, wrote an essay entitled "Kavi ane Kavita" [Poet and Poetry], deploying Hazlitt's arguments in favour of Wordsworth's idea of poetry (Gurjarpadhye 2014, 104) to introduce a new concept of lyric poetry. The text here becomes bilingual in more than one sense: by setting up a comparatist paradigm mediating between two conceptual worlds, articulating it in English; and by addressing a native audience whose taste is being reformed through such interventions. What makes Kunte's commentary relevant to our discussion is that he is conscious of what he is attempting, namely creating a "modern" critical discourse. He is able to confront English from a rootedness in his culture, and he speaks from a felt need to incorporate transnational cosmopolitan ideas into Marathi discourse without surrendering to the hegemony of English. The new discourse evidences how the native languages and cultures in India negotiated modernity from their diverse standpoints. Kunte was an experienced teacher and administrator, and had close relations with many British officials. He was well versed in the Sindhi, Gujarati, Marathi, and English languages. In his introduction, he uses the tenets of romanticism and utilitarianism to project a new poetics that cannot be defined in terms of Sanskrit poetics. His definition of poetry reminds one of Wordsworth's arguments in the preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*:

> Poetry in the largest sense given to it, is that which charms the feelings without offending the understanding. It is essential for a poem to confirm to this definition and fulfil all the conditions it embodies. But its success depends upon the taste and feelings of its readers and the feelings or taste may be refined, pure, or hypercritical or vitiated in the case of a nation as well as an individual. And a work of art therefore may not be properly appreciated. (quoted from Gurjarpadhye 2014, 222)

Kunte is critical of both the Sanskritists and the Anglicists for their lack of involvement in the Marathi language and its literary tradition. He finds that the ordinary rustic people, with their long familiarity with native poetic tradition, may be better at appreciating poetry written in Marathi. One is reminded of Wordsworth's idealization of the rustic community in his search for a new concept of poetry. In Kunte's opinion, literature serves the purpose of bridging the gap between the elites and the masses (Gurjarpadhye 2014, 106). He feels that Western education is disrupting the native taste for poetry. Kunte wants to create a new kind of poetry that will speak to the masses and elevate them morally. As Gurjarpadhye comments, "one finds a hotchpotch of Romanticism, Utilitarianism and Nativism in Kunte's thought. English Romanticism, with its emphasis on simple diction, love of Nature, and distinctions between the Classical and the Romantic is adopted by Kunte while its fascination with the mysterious, the unfamiliar and the irrational does not surface in this scheme" (2014, 109).

This moment of modernity was constituted by institutional changes in the production of knowledge as well as the formation of a public sphere that was shaping public opinion. The new critical discourse on literature is marked by a dialogism that brings the transnational face-to-face with the native. Consequently, the alien tradition is incorporated into the new poetics on terms that are defined by the needs of the new literary genres being shaped by society. The intertextuality of the new genre is what organizes the mutual relation between the native and alien traditions. The reception of European modernity, in the context of colonialism, renders the domain of the literary relative and open-ended, denying absolute power to both colonial modernity and the hegemonic Sanskrit poetics.

This dialogic element becomes evident in the essay on the novel and drama written by Kasinath Balkrishna Marathe (1844–1918) in 1872. This essay has a preface written in English, where Marathe acknowledges his indebtedness to Addison, Scott, and Macaulay. His essay clearly shows the imprint of Western training as he begins by defining the novel. He does not dismiss the ancient classics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. Obviously, he finds merit in these narratives as they had been able to capture the imagination of generations of Indian readers and offer them moral instruction and artistic pleasure. In his attempt to reconcile the principles derived from Addison, Scott, and Macaulay with the role played by ancient classics in Indian society, we can discern Marathe's attempt to evolve a dialogic attitude towards modernism. This is also reflected in the two types of novels he proposes, the first one being "romances" where the characters are real but the story has elements of fantasy and adventure, and the second one being novels where characters are fictional but actions are real. The critical discourse of Kunte and Marathe is characterized by their inherent dialogism and a self-conscious critical attitude that denies authority to either Sanskrit or European po-

etics. It is important to note that they do not endorse an essentialist view of the native poetics, nor do they find it necessary to consecrate their methods with reference to local or regional histories.

What becomes obvious here is that the literary becomes a site of struggle in nineteenth-century India, as the epistemological constructs derived from the West gain increasing legitimacy through new genres like the novel and drama, and also through translation. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Sanskrit cosmopolis came to be replaced by English. Sanskrit, as orientalists testify, was complicit with a colonial imaginary reinforcing India's image as a decadent society, while English penetrated deeper into the domain of education, culture, and polity, and finally into the normative world of aesthetics, breaching the self-validating claims of Sanskrit. Translations from English became the habitus of a new epistemology.

Malayalam, a language spoken in the south of India, is a case in point where modernity impacted literary production in the second half of the nineteenth century. Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* was translated into Malayalam by the editor of a new periodical, Kandathil Varughese Mappila, under the title *Kalahinidamanakam*. This translation uses everyday Malayalam used by the Christian community in Kerala with remarkable dramatic effect. This was at a time when literary Malayalam was heavily loaded with Sanskrit in both prose and poetry. The prestige and power associated with Shakespeare is now deployed in the service of a contest challenging the supremacy of Sanskrit. Here it must be added that the newly emergent class of lower and middle castes and Christians formed the driving force of the translation practices of nineteenth-century Malayalam. In dislodging Sanskrit from its pedestal, the symbolic capital of the Western canon is strategically deployed in the translation of Shakespeare. Translation becomes a mode of self-fashioning in the epistemological context of colonial modernity where the grand narratives of the East and the West confronted each other, mutually reinforcing an essentialist view of India against the contingent, fragmentary, and fluid perspectives of contemporary India as articulated in the nascent forms of the lyric, the novel, the short story, the proscenium play, and so on. These new genres were "translational" to begin with, as their subtexts were dialogically oriented towards the everyday reality of a living society.

The impulse towards modernity shaping the translation of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* can only be understood by unravelling how it critiques the prevailing literary culture and social values. In his introduction to the second impression of *Kalahinidamanakam*, Varughese Mappila claims that his translation is aimed at introducing the dramatic mode of English plays to those who are not familiar with English (Mappila 1977, 22). He had "Indianized" the original settings by making the characters "par-desi" (pan-Indian Hindus). One of the contempo-

rary critics, C. P. Achuta Menon, praised the translation for its effective use of colloquial Malayalam but suggested that the translator should have used verse instead of prose in the translation, and he also wanted more songs in the play. In the introduction to the second impression, Varughese Mappila argued that the play lacked "profound" themes and hence the use of poetry was not justified. He had, he wrote, used "natural" prose, close to the everyday speech of the community, enabling the translation to convey the experiential content of the book. He also dismisses the suggestion that the play should have more songs on the grounds that the theme does not warrant it.

In nineteenth-century Kerala, the popularity of *sangeet natak* was at its peak, and the induction scene of the translation is used by Varughese Mappila to satirize this trend. In the second half of the nineteenth century, most of the languages in India had a tradition of musical theatre which dealt with mythological and historical themes in melodramatic and spectacular manner, with a large number of songs punctuating the action of the play. Varughese Mappila uses his translation of Shakespeare to lampoon this mode of theatrical performance and bring out its excesses. Translation functions here as a self-reflexive mode mediating between the prevailing taste of the feudal class and the critical realism that appeals to the emergent middle class that has a cosmopolitan and secular outlook on reality. The ability of the translation to engage with the real and the contingent, as opposed to the unreal and artificial spectacles that passed for "theatre," points to the inherent dialogism of the translation that "performs" a society pulled between opposing ideas of the "real." Here are two worldviews derived from two aesthetic norms that are brought into a dialogic relation, without being reconciled. The many languages that are played against each other – English vs Sanskrit, the language of *sangeet natak* vs realistic plays, the everyday language of Malayalam vs the stylized language of Shakespeare's verse comedy – enable us to discover the cultural contestations that define the moment of modernity in India in the late nineteenth century.

This can also be illustrated by one of the early Malayalam novels, *Indulekha*, which has become an Indian classic by now. Published in 1889, it was translated into English, within six months of its appearance, by a colonial administrator of Calicut. In the preface to the book, O. Chandu Menon, the author, says that he was in the habit of narrating the stories of English novels he had read to his friends, and for their use he wanted to translate an English novel into Malayalam. He found the task of translation tedious, and decided to write an original Malayalam novel, "more or less after the English fashion" (2011, 74). He told an imaginary story, but in doing so he described "only the ordinary affairs of modern life without introducing any element of the super-natural" (76). The full title of the novel is *Indulekha: A Story Written in the Manner of English Novel*. The reason why this

has become an iconic Indian novel of the nineteenth century is that it stages the cultural contest between Sanskrit and English, between tradition and modernity, creating a dialogic discourse which refuses to reconcile the opposing demands of the two diametrically opposite cultural worlds which have their separate cosmologies. The modernist impulse manifests itself in the nineteenth century in the formation of this dialogic discourse which can bring together multiple cosmologies and shape a critical attitude towards them without essentializing or endorsing their respective claims. There is a built-in ambivalence in this very articulation, but it marks the moment of colonial modernity as a constitutive force of the modern subject in Indian literary traditions.

2

As a rule, Indian critics have used the term "modernist" to denote a phase of innovative experimentation in the mainstream literatures of India in the period between the 1940s and 1970s. The nationalist-Romantic phase of the first three decades of the twentieth century left a rich legacy of poetry and fiction with writers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Premchand, Vallathol Narayana Menon, Subramanya Bharati, Qurratulain Hyder, and so on embodying the aspirations of a nation moving towards freedom under the ideals of Gandhian principles. By the 1940s, dissenting voices could be heard within these literary traditions. The Bengal famine of 1943, the travails of the people during World War II, and the massive communal violence and large-scale displacement of people that accompanied the Partition of India into two nation-states, India and Pakistan: all this resulted in the rejection of idealism and humanism in favour of a dystopian view of the world rooted in violence and brutality. The works of the great modernists such as *The Waste Land* and *Guernica* were not abstract and distant for a new generation of well-read writers who could no more subscribe to the idealism of Gandhi or the optimism of the Socialists. The modernists who rose to prominence in the 1940s spoke of disillusionment, defeat, and alienation to an audience who were visibly disconnected from the great beliefs of liberation and social emancipation.

Agyeya (Sachidananda Hirananda Vatsyayan) is a representative poet of high modernism from Hindi. In his essay "Culture and Environment," he says that "it is not life style alone that has changed, but life itself. Now life is neither urban nor rural, its very structure has been lost. There is nothing that unites it" (1973, 20–21; my trans.). He refers to the alienation of the worker but adds that the problem is more cultural than economic. Since literature is valued by those who value freedom, beauty, and intelligence, the job of correcting the popular taste is vested

with the serious writer. His response to the growing gulf between the elite and the popular is basically one of rejection and negation. He takes a position which is blatantly elitist. He echoes T. S. Eliot when he says that culture is a matter of cultivation of critical taste and cannot be developed through "machine, propaganda, lectures, debates or poets meeting" (Agyeya 1973, 21; my trans.) Differences of class are not primary for the writer because grief, imperfection, and suffering are universal and cut across classes. Agyeya is emphatic that in a society which is largely illiterate and where much of education is carried out in a foreign language, the writer cannot be expected to write for the masses or about the masses. Most of the ideas summarized here are from his book *Trishanku* (first published in 1945). His high modernist approach has been seminal in directing the "New Poetry" (*Nayi Kavita*) of Hindi. He grounds his aesthetic vision in an ahistorical, psychological domain which retreats into bunkers of individualism, resulting in reinforcing the status quo. For him, a poem is a verbal artefact which is meant to provide a refuge from modern society. His modernism has been further mediated by existentialist thought, as his privileging of an ahistorical subjective space has attributes of existential aestheticism. Agyeya maintains that the ultimate creative inspiration for literature comes from the anguish (*vivasatha*) of the writer. His latent Romantic view of a writer as an isolated "creative self," the modernist obsession with the themes of isolation and alienation, and his existentialist concern with extreme moments of self-consciousness collectively define Agyeya's view of the self as solitary and asocial, an interior space which is discontinuous with the common world of discursive speech and communal interaction.

It is the capacity for self-criticism that marks Muktibodh's modernity and his separateness from his contemporaries. Gajanand Madhav Muktibodh (1917–1964) was a poet included in the first major modernist anthology of Hindi poetry, *Tar Saptak* (1943) edited by Agyeya, whose approach to poetry is discussed above. Although Muktibodh began as a high modernist, he developed into an avant-garde poet in the 1950s and early 1960s before his untimely death. His radical views inspired a new generation of Hindi poets, and his poems were widely translated into other Indian languages in the 1960s and 1970s. He was deeply bilingual, as he was born in Jalgaon in Maharashtra, where Marathi is spoken. In his statement in *Tar Saptak*, he says that he was torn between the aesthetic ideals suggested by contemporary Hindi poetry and the human realities presented by Tolstoy and some of the Marathi writers. Emphasizing the migration instinct of the writer, he says that one has to rise above the purely personal and individual in order to realize the multiplicity and plurality of the modern world. In his essay "The Achievements and Limitations of Modern Poetry," he argues that poetic life is an essential part of our daily life and hence the values of poetry cannot contradict those of our common life. Aesthetic questions are relevant because they have a bearing on real life. The

version of modernism championed by Agyeya, discussed above, derived its rationale from the principles propagated by the New Critics and the Anglo-American literary establishment. By the mid-1950s, the revolutionary potential of this high modernism had been domesticated and it had become part of the liberal-conservative consensus of the times. The potentially liberating energies of modernism had been tamed, and it had lost its validity as an oppositional culture. This is where the modernist movement takes on the mantle of resistance.

This can be clearly felt in Muktibodh's essay on "New Poetry and the New Sensibility" (1982, 307), where he regrets that we have come to associate modernism with Europe and America. He wants Indian poets to derive inspiration from the emergent societies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where there has been a new awakening brought about by emancipatory ideologies. He mentions Algeria, Egypt, the Congo, Cuba, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Japan, Indonesia, and Argentina as places where new artistic experiments of significance are taking place (Muktibodh 1982, 309). Obviously, he was convinced that the high modernism of Europe and America had run its course. He was consciously arguing for an avant-garde sensibility that would not be domesticated by the ruling elite in favour of the status quo. He was one of the early poets who revolted against the forces of domestication that had been put in place by the post-colonial nation-state.

Muktibodh's poem "Andhere Meim" (1982, 355–365) spells out the crisis of Indian modernity in a stark idiom riddled with images of despair and negation. Muktibodh had published a book entitled *India: History and Culture* (1962) which was accepted by the government of a province (Madhya Pradesh) as a textbook at the secondary-school level. However, in 1962 the book became controversial with some editors and writers alleging that it offended the sensibility of certain religious communities. They also argued that the book contained obscene passages. Without giving Muktibodh a chance to offer his explanations, the government withdrew the book in an order issued on 19 September 1962. This episode deeply unsettled Muktibodh, and the poem "Andhere Meim" [In the Darkness] was written during this period of persecution by the state and a section of the intelligentsia. Muktibodh saw this event as indicative of the emergence of fascist forces which were out to smother the free spirit of scholarship and creativity. He was able to see that the fragmentation of the self he went through was an effect of the fractured cultural sensibility of society itself.

Muktibodh's poem "Andhere Meim" enacts the dark night of the soul that he must have confronted in his personal life. The narrative identifies the self of the poet as a site of conflict and struggle. Metaphors of violence and confrontation from the inner and outer worlds punctuate the poem. The invisible figure who walks restlessly in the dark chambers of the poet's life is located in a red cave

filled with red frost, bathed in blood-red light. This mysterious figure has luminous eyes, arms reaching to the knees, and a calm face:

> This mysterious figure
> Has got to be my own
> Unachieved expression
> My own unrealized latent
> Light and talents –
> He has got to be
> The very tension of
> The blocked wisdom
> Of my heart the very
> Image of my soul
> The embodiment of
> All my ideals.
> (Muktibodh 1988, 187)

This unexpressed self, which is in rags and has a wound in its chest, is trapped in the cave of guilt, regret, anxiety, and worries. From this private world of horrors he can only escape to the urban hell of squalor and deprivation. It is relevant to recall that Muktibodh had to suppress his identity as a communist when he took up jobs in the government service. The haunted self which retreats into morbidity and the persecuted self which is pursued by authority belong to the same artist who cannot integrate his different selves into a unified vision that will make absolute expression possible. Several passages in the poem speak of turmoil in the streets, evoking the atmosphere of a mass movement. But such rebellions have been crushed brutally by the state in developing countries. The poet sees the eerie spectacle of a death squad moving through the streets. The strange procession of soldiers, critics, thinkers, scholars, journalists, industrialists, and notorious criminals brings out the sense of siege that has turned the poet's self into a prison. He can articulate himself only by endangering himself. He will have to break out of the prison and mount the difficult cliffs to reach the blue lotus in the mountain stream which is emblematic of the moment of absolute expression he has been seeking. The self's journey involves a rejection of his middle-class self. The fourth section of the poem contains a confessional outburst that traces the social malady afflicting his context to the constricting solipsism of his vision:

> I banished fatherly spirit from my home
> I crushed motherly compassion for the poor folk
> I kept terriers of selfish gains as my pets
> I renounced feeling
> I killed the calls of my heart
> I smashed my intellect

I dislodged my reason
I got bogged down in my own slime
I sacrificed my ideals
My knowledge of good and evil
For my selfish ends
What I have done so far
What have I done? Why have I
Given so little.

(Muktibodh 1988, 200)

This self-criticism is an attempt to resist the domesticating and predatory traits of modernism. He cannot take a self-righteous position blaming the world for all its ills. His passive attitude has precipitated a social catastrophe. The agency of the self is implicated in the revolutionary potential of the mass movement which can speak truth to power. In holding himself responsible for the crisis enveloping contemporary society, he concedes that his true identity lies not in his separateness but in his ability to see himself as part of a larger collective self of that society. This amounts to a rejection of the stance taken by the high modernists, who saw the masses as a threat to culture. The poem is about the spiritual void at the very heart of the liberal humanist ideology that had held sway over Indian intellectuals in the first part of the twentieth century.

In the concluding lines of the last section of the poem, Muktibodh scrutinizes each face, movement, character, the history of each soul, each land and its politics, each human ideal issuing from individual experience, each thought process, and the consequence of each deed. The unexpressed self has to be recovered from the specific reality of the social environment and the felt quality of the life lived. As an avant-garde poet committed to the revolutionary potential of art and social change, Muktibodh recognizes the ability of art to mediate between the individual and the social in achieving a dialogism of understanding where the aesthetics will be directed by a larger ethics of participation and sharing.

What we witness in the shift from Agyeya to Muktibodh is a turning away from high modernism towards a more politically conscious engagement with everyday reality. High modernism had disrupted and renovated the canonical tradition of poetry but kept its distance from the domains of politics and everyday life. This made it incapable of engaging with marginal voices in society. A similar shift is visible in languages like Malayalam and Marathi as well. In Malayalam, Ayyappa Paniker was a pioneer who, like Agyeya, cultivated a hermetic aesthetics that emphasized the distance of art from life. In an article written in 1950 on T. S. Eliot, Paniker underlines the idea that it is not form and prosody which create poetry but the invention of rhythm and resonance that suit emotion. He wants the new poets to follow rhythmic free verse (Paniker 1985b, 30). In another essay on new Malaya-

lam poetry, Paniker argues that the syntax of the poem embodies the ideology of the poet. According to him, the modernist treatment of myth is characterized by a rejection of allegorical and didactic attitudes, complexity of meaning, and diversity of suggestiveness. He feels that the movement towards open forms is a way to assimilate the changing relations between the individual and society. In rejecting conventional metres, a poet asserts his freedom to speak differently, and thereby attests to the fact that each poem has its authentic form, which cannot be approximated to a metre which functions independently of content. Paniker's "Kurukshetram," a poem of 294 lines in five sections published in 1960, heralded the arrival of modernist poetry in Malayalam (2006, 148–156; trans. 1985a, 14–28). What makes the poem an authentic rendering of deeply felt conflicts is its resonant diction and haunting rhythm, which communicates the angst and agitation of a distraught mind. At the heart of the poem is a profound disquiet that cannot be particularized. The metaphor of *kurukshetram* from the *Mahabharata* epic foregrounds the moral crisis of a generation caught in the violence and trauma of sectarian genocide. The poem communicates a deep distrust of all collectivized systems of thought. To him, the entangled wisdom of philosophical systems looks unreal against the endless grind of quotidian suffering. Paniker was able to create a new poetic line and voice through his radical departure from the canonical tradition.

However, by the 1970s, a new generation of poets found Ayyappa Paniker's high modernist idiom distant and unreal. By the end of the 1960s, Indian society was caught in a new crisis of values and ideas. The new generation of modernist poets was aware of the anti-colonial struggles in Africa and resistance movements that were shaping new narrative and lyric voices in Latin America. Poetry now became a radical pursuit that went with activism, and the cosmopolitan voices were now infiltrated by regional inflections that concretized the presence of a region, its history and culture. K. G. Sankara Pillai can be considered a representative voice of this generation of modernists. His early poems, like "Bengal" (1970) were characterized by revolutionary rhetoric (Pillai 2016, 1–11). But soon he develops a more nuanced ironic tone which speaks of greater involvement in issues of ecology, subaltern movements, gender, and oppression, apart from public culture and its distorted worldviews. In the poem "Baldness," he warns that "there is a crocodile living in the swamp of our brain feeding on us" (Pillai 2016, 14). This tone of irony directed at the middle class and its insensitivity becomes strident in his poetry from the mid-1970s onwards. His poem "Kochiyile Vrikshangal" [The Trees of Kochi] deals with pervasive decay and decadence in contemporary Indian society. The organic nature of communitarian solidarity has splintered into consumerist and predatory impulses of alienated and anonymous crowds living in cities. In the poem, the disappearance of trees is seen as "emblematic" of modernity and all that it implies. The octopus-like smoke envelopes everything, in-

cluding “tiny feet long before shoes” (Pillai 2016, 31). However, the middle class that was on the forefront of struggles for reforms and emancipation has now withdrawn into its shells. The poet does not exclude himself from the middle class, and it is this self-critical tone that gives the poem greater moral value. In another significant poem, “Mirrors,” he investigates intersecting points of history, politics, and culture (Pillai 2016, 140–142). The narcotic gaze of the market and gilt-edged neon lights of urban jungles have robbed us of the moral vision that animated the modernity of Kerala in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The crisis of liberal humanism in the wake of globalization has turned the dreams of modernity into the nightmares of a society of exiles who lack a sense of memory and history.

3

In this section, two modernist novels, one by O. V. Vijayan in Malayalam entitled *Khassakkinte Itihasam* [The Legends of Khasak] and the other by U. R. Ananthamurthy in Kannada called *Samskara*, are briefly discussed to bring out the nature of the vision of decolonization embodied in their narratives. O. V. Vijayan’s novel is about a young postgraduate, Ravi, who turns down a fellowship to Princeton for research in astrophysics to go to a remote village on the border of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The new nation-state has initiated a new scheme under which the District Board establishes a school with a single teacher in interior villages to spread literacy among young people. Ravi’s encounters with the inhabitants of the village, its mythic past and struggles of the present, form the background against which Ravi’s metaphysical quest for his own identity and haunting sense of loss and alienation are narrated.

Khasak is a land of stories where oral narratives of various kinds meet to produce a mythopoetic geography of the unreal. Ravi finds himself an outsider who cannot crack open the mystery and mystique of the land which grows on him like an addiction. Allah-Pitcha, the priest of the ancient mosque of the place, finds Nizam Ali as a foundling in the valley of the Chetali mountain that borders on Khasak. Nizam Ali, much to Allah-Pitcha’s consternation, grows up to be a rebel and a disbeliever and becomes a trade union activist. He is obviously in love with Maimuna, the hauntingly beautiful daughter of Allah-Pitcha, his benefactor. In the figure of Maimuna, Vijayan has created a woman endowed with otherworldly charm: “Maimoona walked with power and abundance, sleeves rolled up to bare her arms, revealing the translucent skin beneath which the blue veins were a gorgeous filigree. Often Maimoona turned her charms on her pursuers, reducing them to blushing juveniles. She was the sacrificial mare no one could

lasso" (Vijayan 1994, 25). She is given in marriage to Chakru, the diver who wandered in the nearby villages to retrieve materials lost in the depth of wells. He dies while diving into the interior of a deep well.

Meanwhile, Nizam Ali's life has gone through many ups and down. He had become a successful entrepreneur after setting up a beedi-manufacturing unit, but disappears after Maimoona is married off to Chakru, the diver. He reappears, becomes a beedi worker again, then a trade unionist, and is arrested for leading a strike. In the police cell, he has a supernatural visitation and is ordained to become the Khazi of Khasak. His fight against Allah-Pitcha continues, but now he is a lost soul who wanders among the memorial stones of the burial ground and the dilapidated buildings of the mosque. There are other fascinating characters, like Sivaraman Nair, the feudal landlord who is unable to tame his wayward wife; Madhavn Nair, a philosopher-companion to Ravi who is a tailor in real life; Appukkili, whose stunted body makes him an overgrown kid; Kuppuvachan, who perennially spreads gossip about the people around him; and the many travellers who keep coming and going. Ravi's past is shrouded in mystery, but there are hints about his incestuous relations with his stepmother. He is fleeing from himself and is not able to find peace with himself, even in this remote village where the past appears distant.

Vijayan had begun to write the novel around 1956 when he was a card-holding communist. His original project was to narrate a story against the background of peasant struggles in this part of Kerala. But as he wrote the story, it assumed a different shape. Meanwhile, in 1958 he moved to Delhi, where he found employment as a journalist and a cartoonist in newspapers. Later, he became a renowned cartoonist whose cartoons regularly appeared in the *International Herald Tribune* and many such publications. He says in one of his memoirs:

> I had left for Delhi, with many doubts, in 1958. Strike in Poznań, the attack on Hungary and the execution of Imre Nagy – all this unsettled me and destroyed the monolithic quality of my political belief. But it was still not time for gaining something meaningful from this collapse. I developed the sense of openness to confront this loss of belief, after years of ideological monotony. I still had to wait for the holistic intimacy that combines laughter, grief, and meditation. It was through these long years of waiting that I found the form for *Khasak*, after much effort. (Vijayan 2010, 29; my trans.)

We need to read this modernist novel as an act of resistance against such monologic/monolithic belief systems. That modernity had taken on the mantle of absolute faith that brooks no dissent in post-colonial societies such as India complicated the act of searching for alternative belief systems.

Khasak was premodern and postmodern at the same time as it defied the instrumental rationality of the state apparatus with its plurality and polyphony of beliefs and customs. Its illiteracy was a challenge to the nation-state, but it also

allowed the people to retain their fuzzy identities where religious identities were not sharp or deep. It is significant that in the original Malayalam, the novelist does not use the words "Hindus" or "Muslims" anywhere. He writes: "The Ravuthars and Ezhavas of Khasak offered regular prayers to the spirit of the Sheikh living there" (Vijayan 2001, 17; my trans.). Modernity demands adherence to taxonomies of the state where one's sense of being multiple and plural is lost to the monologic sense of being this or that. In a revealing scene in the original Malayalam, there is a discussion in the local teashop about the new school being set up by the District Board. The young Khazi, Nizam Ali, supports the school, whereas Allah-Picha is opposed to it. The conversation in the teashop goes like this:

> "The Sheikh's is the truth", they said.
> "Then, is Mollacka a lie?"
> "Mollacka is also truth".
> "How can that be?"
> "Truths are many".
> (Vijayan 1994, 38)

This passage obviously suggests that Khasak does not subscribe to an essentialist sense of reality. Modernity as embodied in the nascent nation-state has lost this ability to hold on to a dialogic sense of contingency and flux where the act of living can easily accommodate contradictions. Ravi's own training as a scholar does not prepare him to accept the truth of Khasak. He is pulled in opposite directions and cannot decide for himself what to choose. At the end of the novel, we find him willingly choosing death, which marks an inability to hold on to a meaningful sense of unified self.

U. R. Ananthamurthy's *Samskara* is a novel set in a traditional Brahmin village, where Praneshacharya has been living the ascetic life of a priest, nursing his sick wife, for years. Now a crisis in the form of the contagious plague afflicts the village, and the first to die is Naranappa, who has lived the life of a heretic. Now Praneshacharya is called upon to decide who will perform his last rites. His traditional knowledge is put to the test, and he goes to the temple in the forest for prayers in search of an answer. On his way back, he meets Chandri, who was Naranappa's low-caste mistress. He loses his self-control and enters into sexual relations with her in the forest. Now he is back in the village but finds that he has transgressed from the preordained ways of a Brahmin priest. He is more like his opponent, Naranappa, and has no authority to decide on his fate. The moment of sexual transgression makes him an outcaste, and he leaves the village and begins to wander aimlessly. The author writes:

> The Acharya felt not only remorse, but a lightness in the thought that he was now a free man, relieved of his responsibility to lead the way, relieved of all authority. 'What manner

> of man am I? I am just like you – a soul driven by lust and hate – is this my first lesson in humility? [...] I am sin, my work is sin, my soul is sin, my birth is sin.' No, no, even that is a lie. Must forget all words learned by heart, the heart may flow free like a child's. (Ananthamurthy 2004, 78)

He has now lost his authority to address the Brahmin community. In the outside world, he is a lost man who cannot find his path.

He is befriended by a trickster called Putta who has no moral scruples but is worldly-wise. Praneshacharya is helplessly dependent on him as he wanders through forests and villages, fairs and festivals, and markets and roadside hotels. He cannot go back to his traditional world of certainties where dharma and adharma were clearly defined. He is not equipped to survive in the large world outside, as he is an outsider there too. He says: "Even to the point of doubting who I really am, I have become several persons on a single day" (Ananthamurthy 2004, 123). At the end of the novel, Praneshacharya does not know where he is headed:

> He will travel for another four or five hours. Then, after that, what?
> Praneshacharya waited, anxious, expectant. (Ananthamurthy 2004, 138)

As in *The Legends of Khasak*, the protagonist has no society to go back to. The novel is a critique of tradition as a way of life, as an epistemological construct that directs one's right conduct.

D. R. Nagaraj, a well-known Kannada critic, has argued that *Samskara* is unable to represent the cosmology of the non-Brahminic world that Praneshacharya breaks into. His attempt to transform himself into a modern man fails because the novel remains true to his former self and cannot find the imaginative resources to represent his transformed self. Nagaraj comments:

> The lyrical intensity of the novel is a product of the truthfulness of the vision of his cosmology. It is true that the cosmology of the Brahmin caste presented in the novel is an imaginative distillation of Lohia and Lawrence. Sartre also seeps in – in large quantities. But the critique of the caste system offered by this amalgam is much sharper and more insightful than the ones offered by nationalist Navodaya writers such as Shivarama Karanth. (Nagaraj 2010, 226)

The argument that the novel remains powerful at the level of realism but breaks down when it tries to move to a symbolist plane also shows the crisis of modernity at the epistemological level. The Brahmin community remains the only "knowable community" in the novel, and it is unable to realize the cosmology of the non-Brahmin communities. The "modernity" of Indian society is largely a creation of the upper caste, and it has not evolved the means and resources to represent the other in the novelistic narrative.

Samskara was written while the author was in England, when he was researching the British novels of the 1930s. In an autobiographical essay, Ananthamurthy has mentioned that he happened to watch Bergman's *Seventh Seal* while in England, in the company of Malcolm Bradbury, his research supervisor. He did not understand the film fully, but its images stirred something latent in him and he went back to an old manuscript he had, and rewrote the novel in a feverish pitch in a matter of weeks. He writes:

> It was a partly understood haunting experience – such experiences can trigger off your creativity. The spiritual crisis of the hero came through and I remember I had remarked to Professor Bradbury that a European had to create the medieval times from his reading and scholarship, but for an Indian writer it was an immediate experience – an aspect of the living memory. (Ananthamurthy 2014, 39)

Several historical epochs coexist in the consciousness of an Indian writer, facilitating his dialogue with tradition. The character Putta in *Samskara* is inspired by the gypsy of the *Seventh Seal.* And the crisis of Praneshacharya was in fact the author's own crisis as a modern Indian. The plague and the episode of sexual transgression in the novel, which may remind us of Camus or Lawrence, become metaphors for the crisis of modernity as he perceived it. Ananthamurthy feels that the modernizers, which includes the communists, the champions of private enterprise, and the revivalists, do not have access to the soul of India, which has to be located in its complex tradition, which has been renovated from time to time. *Samskara* is an attempt to retrieve tradition as usable past while rejecting its baggage of discrimination against lower castes and women. It is the lower-caste woman who enables Praneshacharya to see tradition in all its traumatic oppression. His state of disintegration is the price he pays as a modern Indian for his inability to reconcile the present with the past. Ananthamurthy writes:

> Our future as a nation is therefore threatened either with the waste of *unused* past, or of regression, similar to what we see in Iran. No magic can prevent such happenings. A truly critical insider would have boundless compassion for the poor and disinherited India, would passionately engage himself with the present in all its confusion of values, and only with such a mind and heart would he know what is usable in the rich past of India for a creative present. (Ananthamurthy 2014, 43; emphasis in original)

Both *Legends of Khasak* and *Samskara* go back to the Indian village and probe its creative potential to confront its problems of modernity, not from the perspective of modernizers who have no sense of the past, but from the collective memory of lived traditions.

In the above discussion, texts from Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, and Kannada have been analysed to bring out the trajectories of modernity and modernism at nodal points of the development of Indian literatures, with reference to the ori-

gins of modern critical discourse, the transformation of modernist Indian poetry from the high modernist mode to an avant-garde mode of resistance, and the novel in its post-colonial moment of self-criticism. At all these points, the cosmopolitan, universalist values were assimilated critically into Indian traditions of modernist thinking on terms set by the indigenous literary traditions. The same dynamics of selection, assimilation, and adaptation are at work in the phase of resistance, as Indian modernism aligns itself with its counterparts in the countries of Asia, Africa, and South America to rediscover its resources of multilingualism and cultural plurality. The subversive potential of the other is what drives Indian modernist explorations in their phase of resistance, where issues of ecology, gender, caste, sexuality, and location have become central to the production and explication of literary texts.

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Waldemar Zacharasiewicz

The Confluence of Ethnic Voices in Urban America

Abstract: The essay first considers the fundamental demographic changes in North America through the arrival of thousands of immigrants from Europe who transformed the urban landscape of the US in the second half of the nineteenth century, which led to the development of ethnic ghettos, inhabited, *inter alia*, by Irish, Jewish, and Italian immigrants. This process provides the social and political contexts for two ambitious modernist novels from the interwar years which capture the arrival of these ethnic groups, the nativist opposition to their presence, and the tensions arising between them in urban America. The challenging experiences of the very large cast in the inclusive urban panorama in John Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* and the narrower segment of the Lower East Side intensely perceived by the sensitive young protagonist until his culminating ordeal in Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* are rendered in narratives which combine many ethnic voices. Their juxtaposition, achieved through an innovative cross-cutting technique, memorably captures the confluence of human accents produced by formerly marginalized or ignored newcomers to the US.

Keywords: melting pot, cultural pluralism, montage, John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, Henry Roth, *Call it Sleep*, phonetic transcription, urban novel in the US, metropolis and ethnic ghettos, immigration and nativist opposition

One major concern of prominent scholars in comparative literature studies has been the wish to remove obstacles to the recognition of the literary potential and poetic power of formerly marginalized or unknown cultures in the global sphere. Scholars and critics have addressed the question "what is world literature?" (Damrosch 2003) and have debated its implications.[1] They have also tried to provide guides and anthologies which reserve space for the manifestations of cultures outside Europe, which for several centuries has fulfilled a hegemonic role, though some of its outstanding minds spoke of the universality of the poetic spirit and suggested ways to avoid a Eurocentric bias. Despite the reflections of J. G. Herder and J. W. Goethe, the domination of the languages of the cultures of Europe – including the US, which in its primarily anglophone literary output is an integral part of the hegemonic North Atlantic culture – is apparent in the *de facto* control of the book

1 See also Damrosch (2009); Dimock and Buell (2007).

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market and the frequency with which texts in the major European languages are translated and internationally disseminated.

Yet the initial shift and first steps in the process of opening up the narrowly circumscribed circle of canonical European texts may be seen in the early refutation of a notorious quip by a British essayist concerning the emerging literature of anglophone America. In 1819, Sidney Smith posed the rhetorical question in the *Edinburgh Review*: "Who in the four corners of the world reads an American book?" Washington Irving's *Sketch Book* a few months later proved him wrong, as this book, published on both sides of the Atlantic, was read widely and taken up by translators, for instance, in Germany. While the following decades saw a rapidly growing interest in the young republic, which appealed to many who were dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions in Europe and settled in the New World, the revision of earlier reservations concerning the literary output of North America took much longer. The reflections of some anglophone authors, for instance of an expatriate such as Henry James, reveal some obstacles on this path. But by the end of World War I, one hundred years after Smith's dismissive comment, a significant change could not be overlooked, namely that a number of American fiction writers caught the attention of readers worldwide. This development prompted a shift of focus in the public, which was mirrored in the award of major prizes, including the Nobel Prize in literature, to writers from the US. After Sinclair Lewis became a Nobel Prize laureate in 1930, Eugene O'Neill, Pearl Buck, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, and then various ethnic writers such as Saul Bellow, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Toni Morrison received this high accolade. The fictional worlds which the new American authors, who prepared the way for this recognition after World War I, presented in their texts also included the voices of recent immigrants from less appreciated ethnic groups and countries who had arrived on the shores of the US. Their inclusion in urban fiction composed in the 1920s and 1930s was the result of demographic factors and of literary developments which had their origin and context in the radical transformation of American society in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century.

Waves of immigrants had arrived in the western hemisphere and had contributed to the rapid growth of cities and the formation of ethnic neighbourhoods, the increasingly overcrowded ghettos housing new arrivals from eastern and southern Europe. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, many German immigrants had arrived and settled, preferably both in the cities on the Atlantic seaboard and in the Midwest, and the failed revolution of 1848 had brought up to another 700,000 of them to America. The Irish famine of the late 1840s had similarly motivated the journey of hundreds of thousands of Irish individuals to the US, where they were apparently less welcome than the Germans. This massive influx to urban

locations removed any chance that Thomas Jefferson's vision of an agrarian America, "a country of husbandmen," and a society free of the corruptions of urban life, would be feasible. But the eulogy of America as an asylum for those exploited in Europe, permitting them to live peacefully side-by-side in a country that gave them a chance to earn their living, provided in Michel-Guillaume-Jean de Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* (1981 [1782]), clearly anticipated the magnetic attraction in the late nineteenth century for those trying to find shelter and better prospects for their lives – and realizing the mythical success story of "from rags to riches."

The arrival of hundreds of thousands of east European Jews fleeing the pogroms in Tsarist Russia after 1882, of course, quickly changed the urban environments, and the waves of immigration from Italy and the Balkans ultimately transformed the American urban landscape in the following decades. The seemingly unlimited supply of immigrants for the labour force was a significant factor in the rapid process of industrialization, with increased productivity, in the wake of the Civil War and in the rise of the US, led by several of the "robber barons," to a leading position among the imperial powers. The downside of this evolution was the growth of overcrowded ghettos with serious health problems for those toiling in sweatshops, and a spate of labour disputes with violent confrontations between employees and employers. The warnings by social reformers, who documented the unbearable exploitation of underpaid workers and their miserable existence in unhygienic dumbbell apartments,[2] began to impress upon fiction writers associated with the concept of "moral realism" the need to confront these issues. And a number of writers developed empathy with those deprived of the necessities of life, and eventually gave them a voice.

This process was facilitated by a parallel social and literary development. The swift transformation of American society after the Civil War seems to have triggered the inclination – and even the need – to depict more stable conditions and social realities ostensibly retained in rural areas, and a nostalgia for former customs. It gave rise to the so-called local-colour movement, which on US soil engendered several distinct manifestations, representing the peculiarities of different regions of the country.[3] In the representation of everyday life in the regions, the local-colour movement admitted the use of the vernacular, the regional idioms,

2 See Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (1909 [ca. 1890]), or Henry George, *Progress and Poverty* (1932 [1879]) on the wide gap between the rich and the have-nots.

3 The nostalgic representation of the antebellum in the American South with an emphasis on the alleged good qualities of plantation society led the way (Thomas Nelson Page, *In Old Virginia*; 1887), but the depiction of the lot of individuals in rural New England (Mary W. Freeman, Sarah Orne Jewett) similarly appealed to a large readership. The rendition of the experiences of pio-

and thus paved the way for the inclusion of other voices – including those of the growing number of immigrants from various parts of Europe.

Among the prominent "moral realists," William Dean Howells had been greatly affected by the disappointing trends in society and politics, which prompted his shift towards the ideas of "social realism," manifest in his critical panorama of urban life with its conflicts in *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890). This urban novel depicts the vitality but also the grave social problems of late nineteenth-century America, which are illustrated, for instance, by the visit Howells's alter ego Basil March pays to the miserable lodgings of the old radical German intellectual Lindau, who later loses his life as a sympathetic bystander in a violent labour dispute. It was also Howells who encouraged and supported ethnic writers, enabling, for instance, Abraham Cahan to publish the account of the serious problems of acculturation faced by members of his own ethnic and cultural group, the Jews from Tsarist Russia, in *Yekl*: *A Tale of the New York Ghetto* (1896) and in other stories capturing the challenges and temptations for new immigrants to abandon the restrictions of an orthodox code of behaviour. Cahan, who as a journalist and longtime editor of *The Jewish Forward*, an important ethnic newspaper which contributed significantly to the integration of the hundreds of thousands of Ashkenazi Jews into American society, was also to illustrate the chances and the costs of this process in a quasi-autobiographical novel entitled *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1966 [1917]).[4]

His desired goal of attending an American college eludes him, as does the satisfaction yearned for by the central character of another important urban novel, Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1970 [1900]), whose earlier failure to get a job in Chicago after an illness was due not least to the seemingly endless supply of immigrants for the labour market. It had caused unemployment and a decrease in wages, which fuelled the criticism of the growing number of nativists who resented the arrival of up to 1.3 million migrants per year. This was the number of immigrants in 1907, the peak year, who largely came through Ellis Island, which had replaced Castle Garden in 1892 as the point of arrival for processing millions

neers and adventurers in the Far West, where the frontier was gradually being closed (see fiction by Bret Harte and Mark Twain) and the narratives of the plight of the farmers in the hard-hit Midwest, which had little to do with bucolic pleasures (see the stories by Hamlin Garland), equally left their mark on the imagination of contemporary readers. See also Rhode (1975).

4 It relates the material success of a former religious student who, having emigrated from Lithuania to New York, manages to become a millionaire in the textile business, but who continues to reflect on his frustrated desire to achieve a secularized version of his religious calling by attending an American college. On the career and the motivations of its author, see Chametzky (1977).

of newcomers. The agitation of the nativists for a cap on the admission of foreigners, documented in the work of the Dillingham Commission (1907–1911) and increased during World War I, when a wave of patriotism branded all hyphenated Americans as suspect, finally led to the adoption of the Quota Laws of 1921 and 1924. They suspended for the next two decades the alternative option of the continued admission of immigrants, earlier deemed feasible in the confident belief that the country could absorb and integrate the many immigrants seeking a new home in the US.[5]

The idea of a fusion of the new arrivals of various ethnic and cultural strains had been memorably presented in a play by the British dramatist of Jewish descent Israel Zangwill, which had been successfully staged in 1908, entitled *The Melting Pot* (Zangwill 1925 [1908/1909]). It had celebrated America as "God's Crucible." This concept had found many advocates, with the title of the play as a term quickly entering everyday speech. But it also provoked vehement criticism by some spokesmen of ethnic groups, who argued for the retention of ethnic identities and the preservation of their heritage and of distinct voices. One of them, Horace M. Kallen, in a series of articles published under the title "Democracy vs. the Melting Pot" in 1915 (the argument is elaborated in Kallen 1924), promoted a concept which anticipated the notion of "cultural pluralism." It was to re-emerge in the 1950s, and resembles ideas which the debates on "multiculturalism" made familiar in the US in the following decades through various images, such as the "salad bowl."

These early debates and the documentation of nightmarish conditions experienced by immigrant labour, and the adoption and application of the Quota Laws to ensure a limitation on the influx of foreigners, provide the political and social context for the two texts with which this essay is concerned: first with John Dos Passos's novel *Manhattan Transfer* (1953 [1925]) and second with Henry Roth's novel *Call It Sleep* (1977 [1934]).

As a major text and one of "the great urban classics" (Bradbury 1984, 82), *Manhattan Transfer* has been the subject of many analyses and has elicited diverse responses and appreciations. J. P. Sartre (1938) spoke of the book as "an authorless novel" with "characterless characters" (1938; quoted following Bradbury 1984, 83), while Bradbury described it as a "real breakthrough to modern style" (1984, 82). Its documentary nature has been stressed, and its presentation of a "comprehensive mosaic" is related by critics and scholars to the naturalistic impetus but also to new artistic conceptions, turning the "collectivist novel" into an artefact shaped by cubism (Hurm 1991, 226–237). The book strikingly documents and visualizes the me-

5 On the development of immigration and attitudes in the US, see Higham (1981 [1955]).

tropolis, which had undergone a dramatic transformation. Among the more than 120 named characters in this remarkable synoptic novel (Schmidt von Bardeleben 1967, 45), which offers a kaleidoscopic panorama of the city, are representatives of many ethnic groups, and their voices can be distinctly heard. Figures from more than a dozen nations and ethnic groups appear or are referred to in the depiction of Manhattan and the adjacent boroughs of the metropolis, and the different accents of quite a few are rendered in phonetic orthography.

But the novel also expresses the fears, anxieties, and annoyance of the "natives," the nativists, a sizeable segment of American society. They are, *inter alia*, reflected in an episode in which the reservations of long-standing citizens concerning the increasing presence and power of the Jews and the Irish in the metropolis are articulated in conversations, such as the following statement by Jefferson Merivale, the uncle of one of the main characters, Jimmy Herf, about the transformation of New York: "City's overrun with kikes and low Irish ... In ten years a Christian won't be able to make a living ... these dirty kikes and shanty Irish that we make voters before they can even talk English" (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 101–102). There can be no doubt that people of many backgrounds populate *Manhattan Transfer*, with immigrant Jews, Irish, Germans, Italians, and francophones playing a significant role in several strands of the action. They reappear quite frequently in the text, which seems to document the development of the multifaceted city from 1897 to about 1924. The fact that more than half of the population of the city was foreign-born and many of them – perhaps two million people – were "crammed" into the limited space of Manhattan island, and often living in overcrowded tenements on the Lower East Side, is reflected in the transcription of the different languages spoken in the heterogeneous urban space (Hurm 1991, 213–217). The author, himself the illegitimate son of a Portuguese immigrant who, as the lawyer for a corporation, had acquired wealth as a self-made man, represented their voices in his novel, his third published work of long fiction.

The continuing attraction of the metropolis is evident from the outset in the various arrivals which occur in the first of the three sections of the novel: Bud Korpenning, a boy from the country, comes on a ferry; Jimmy Herf in a boat (from Europe?) with his sickly mother; and two "foreigners," a cabin and a mess boy, Congo Jake and Emile, arrive on another ship – all full of expectations and hope for a glorious future (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 3–5, 66–71, 20–21). They expect the realization of their dreams, which the two debate in their dialect, when they enter the country through its major port, through which millions of immigrants had already come. The fact that these hopes are frustrated in the majority of cases, most dramatically in the fate of Bud, who after a series of defeats finally, as early as the end of the first section of the novel, commits suicide by jumping from

Brooklyn Bridge, conveys a pessimistic outlook (124–126). At the end of the novel, Jimmy Herf decides to turn his back on the metropolis, which has defeated so many in the collectivist novel (402–404). Through the depiction of the dismal failure of characters who flounder and go under as victims of the brutal forces at work in the city, a bleak vision of human loss and of the destructive power of the urban environment is mediated. This mood is enhanced by the presence of figures prophesying doom.

But the many instances of defeat and scenes of ugliness, death, and destruction are juxtaposed with signs of vitality manifesting a remarkable energy inherent in the cityscape. This is seen not least in the depiction of the skyscrapers, which at that time began to dot the skyline of Manhattan. There were more than four hundred high-rises in Manhattan in 1920, and hundreds more were under construction (Hurm 1991, 217). And it is certainly the visual quality of the urban environment to which John Dos Passos, himself a talented draughtsman with a keen sense of colour, who temporarily thought that he might make a career as a painter,[6] responds with fascination, and which he captures vividly in this novel. The skyscrapers also achieve a symbolic function in the text, which transmits a certain vigour and a baffling energy in the metropolis, which some critics have regarded as the true protagonist of the book.

The ceaseless motion of urban traffic, the geographical mobility of a number of important characters who appear as social transients, and the movement of the various means of transportation from which passengers view the panorama reflect the kinetic power manifest in the urban world. Ellen Thatcher's ride in the bus down Fifth Avenue on a Sunday afternoon provides ample evidence of the author's capturing of this dimension of the city, its various sounds and smells: "She climbed up onto a Washington Square bus. Sunday afternoon Fifth Avenue filed by rosily dustily jerkily …" (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 137–138).

But the primary aesthetic innovation of the novel, for which it is famous, is its narrative technique, its composition as a collage of segments and fragments. The book is made up of countless scenes and episodes involving scores of individuals, seemingly arbitrarily put together, ostensibly without transitions.

In this context, it is very instructive to study the genesis of this novel, feasible since the deposition of its drafts at the University of Virginia in the 1970s.[7] The researcher in the Alderman Library is intrigued by the evidence that the author

6 See Ludington (1980, 101–102) on Dos Passos taking a drawing course in Spain as early as 1916, and his regular painting in Greenwich Village in 1922 and 1923 (222–223). See "Processional," the cover of Freudenberg and Fake (1975).

7 John Dos Passos Estate. John Dos Passos Collection 5950. Boxes 24–25. University of Virginia, Charlottesville.

began the novel in a fairly conventional way, composing drafts in exercise books, which follow the fortunes of a number of characters in traditional fashion. It was only during the genesis of the novel that Dos Passos evolved the method of cutting up the narrative strands which focus on several major characters, and of intercalating them, thus achieving the effect of a montage. It compels the reader to assemble the puzzle of segments of the life stories of the more important figures.

The researcher thus finds, for instance, an exercise book with the title "The Book of the Milkman." It contains a narrative presenting the beginning of the story of Gus McNiel, an Irishman, who delivers milk on the West Side of Manhattan early in the morning. He confesses to the barman in the saloon he enters: "Boy, I got a thoist on me" (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 46). After having his beer, he dreamingly reflects in the appropriate idiom on the possible realization of his hope to move westward and acquire land for himself and his young wife, whose charm is praised by the barman. Gus then anticipates a conversation with her about this project: "Look here Nellie, you wouldn't moind moving West would yez?" (47). While he is daydreaming, he fails to notice an approaching train and soon afterwards has an accident on a level crossing "with a freight train backing down on Eleventh Ave" (50). The report of this accident provides the first promising case for a professional, whom one would nowadays call an ambulance-chaser, the young lawyer George Baldwin. He profits greatly from the ensuing damages suit against the railroad and begins his rise towards prominence.

The cutting technique used in the novel represents a significant innovation in the depiction of a metropolis in fiction. Critics have looked for earlier instances of the application of such a method, and have referred to the inclusion of unconnected short scenes in books on World War I in which a montage-like technique is used, and to its employment in experimental poetry – one recalls T. S. Eliot's use of this technique – and in drama. Observers have also related this practice to its application in films. They have alluded to Eisenstein's *Panzerkreuzer Potemkin*, also produced in 1925, though the primacy of Dos Passos is apparent, as his encounter with the film directors Pudovkin and Eisenstein occurred only during his journey to Soviet Russia in 1928.[8]

While the author in *Manhattan Transfer* renders the conversations of Gus, the Irish American figure, and other recurring and named immigrant characters in their specific variants of the vernacular, there are also scenes in which unnamed immigrant figures appear, as in the concluding segment of the first chapter of section 1 of the novel.

8 See Ludington (1980, 270). Christian Mair (1985, 62, 237) refers to Holger Klein's discovery of relevant techniques in texts from the Great War.

> A small bearded bandylegged man in a derby walked up Allen Street, up the sunstriped tunnel hung with skyblue and smokedsalmon and mustardyellow quilts littered with second hand gingerbread-colored furniture. He walked with his cold hands clasped over the tails of his frockcoat, picking his way among packing boxes and scuttling children. [...] At a yellow-painted drugstore at the corner of Canal, he stopped and stared abstractedly at a face on a green advertising card. It was a highbrowed cleanshaven distinguished face with arched eyebrows and a bushy moustache, the face of a man who had money in the bank [...] [he] looked for a long time into the dollarproud eyes of King C. Gillette. (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 10–11)

The "bearded bandylegged man" is then observed as he enters his dumbbell apartment on the Lower East Side, and, following his scrutiny of the advertisement, "he clipped the long brown locks of his beard. Then he started shaving very carefully with a new nicklebright safety razor" and began trimming his moustache. The effect of this operation, prompted by the impression of "the dollarproud eyes of King C. Gillette," and the "dollarbland smile" with which he faces his returning family, shocks his wife and daughters. Their eyes "were popping out of their heads. 'Mommer ... it's popper,' the biggest one yelled," while his wife laments the transformation of the father, who has thus abandoned the outward signs of his heritage, assimilating himself to the appearance of the society in the host country. "'Oyoy! Oyoy!' she moaned rocking back and forth" (11).

As it is centred on Manhattan, it is no surprise that the beginning of the movement of upper-middle-class members to suburbia, which was gradually taking place, is not represented in this synoptic novel.[9] But the residences of the affluent on Park Avenue are included, such as, for instance, that of Congo, whose broad foreign accent is exactly transcribed. After serving in the war and having returned with an artificial limb, he becomes a successful bootlegger during Prohibition, and, under the name of Armand Duval, has become a millionaire and resides among the wealthy (382–384).

Among the major characters of the novel, several do not represent new immigrant groups, for instance, Jimmy Herf and Ellen Thatcher, who becomes a successful actress and later marries but eventually divorces Jimmy. An episode

9 Hurm (1991) criticizes this omission, but also notices the absence of ethnic working class communities in the novel (esp. 223–225). But in depicting the precarious existence of individuals such as Anna Cohen, who toils in a sweatshop and near the end of the book loses the only capital she has, her youthful appearance, in a fire (Dos Passos 1953 [1925], 398), Dos Passos's panorama is more inclusive than Hurm grants in his study.

linked to Ellen's birth in the first section of the novel[10] deserves comment as it may shed light on the perception of specific groups of immigrants in the aftermath of World War I. Here the author arranges for an encounter between Ed Thatcher, just as he is leaving the hospital ward where his wife Susie has been suffering from post-natal depression, and a jubilant father of German American origin. "The chubby man turned on him, delight bubbling through his thick voice. 'Congradulade me, congradulade me; mein vife has giben birth to a poy'" (7–8). He suggests to Thatcher that they drink a glass of Kulmbacher beer to celebrate the births of their children, but then he leaves the saloon and Thatcher has to foot the bill for both of them.

In the course of the revision from draft 1 to draft 2, and then to the published version, the characterization of this man, a printer from Frankfurt, who was first called Silverman, then Zilch, and eventually Markus Antonius Zucher, is "sharpened." His foreign accent and hybrid diction are increasingly stressed in the narrative. His suggestion to Thatcher is made more explicit in the final version, underlining his straightforward invitation extended to Mr Thatcher: "Vill yous allow me sir to invite you to drink a congradulation drink mit me?" (8). In the conversation, the stout German also describes his goal, and proudly announces the name of his newborn son: "A man vat is ambeetious must take chances. Ambeetions is vat I came here from Frankfort mit at the age of tvelf years, und now that I haf a son to vork for ... Ach, his name shall be Vilhelm after the mighty Kaiser" (10).[11] Considering the disastrous reputation Wilhelm had after the campaign of George Creel's Committee on Public Information, the deception of the weak Ed Thatcher by the bossy foreigner seems to be in line with the dramatically deteriorating image of the Germans in the course of the Great War and its aftermath.[12] It seems to the attentive reader indirectly to mark a regression of the author to a position he had avoided in his two earlier war novels (*One Man's Initiation* and *Three Soldiers*; Dos Passos 1920 [1917], 1921). In these narratives, he had distanced himself from cliché-ridden stereotypes of the Germans, but in this passage of *Manhattan Transfer* he adopted a practice he otherwise eschewed when allowing numerous foreign voices to make themselves heard in the collectivist novel.

10 Das Passos drafted this narrative in a notebook apparently acquired in Italy in the Comune di S. Gimignano.

11 See my essay based on research with the John Dos Passos papers in Charlottesville in 1979, originally published in German in 1987, reprinted in Zacharasiewicz (2010, 219–221). Lois Hughson (1976) had anticipated my discovery of Dos Passos's cutting up of straightforward narrative strands.

12 See Zacharasiewicz (2007, 80–89).

In the dubious conduct of many middle-class individuals with long-established entitlement to citizenship, Dos Passos exposes the decline of morals, a deplorable fact the author does not explicate to the reader by authorial intrusions. He can allow it to sink in through the juxtaposition of scenes from various walks of life and the extensive use of metaphors of fire, the deluge, and the symbolic evocation of other catastrophes. Recurrent images of the city associated with powerful mechanical objects such as a steamroller, and repeated allusions to urban locations referred to in the Bible as scenes of destruction – Nineveh, Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah – and the description of life-threatening events – fires and conflagrations killing or maiming individuals – produce a negative atmosphere. It is enhanced by the voice of prophets of doom. An awareness of the pervasive corruption leads to the final decision of Jimmy Herf to turn his back on the metropolis which has defeated so many in this book.

After his breakthrough with *Manhattan Transfer*, Dos Passos expanded the scope of the fictional rendition of his country in further books. He later combined them into a trilogy entitled *U.S.A.*, which exposes the corruption of the original utopian vision prevalent in the country as a whole and not only in the metropolis. Taking his narrative experimentation further, Dos Passos offers a combination of four components in his chronicle of the US from 1900 to the 1930s: the narratives with the life stories of a number of fictional characters, and separately factual biographies of actual public figures; in the "Newsreel" sections, a collage of headlines and popular songs is given; and in the passages labelled "Camera Eye" (a misleading term), the subjective impressions of a very sensitive figure are provided – with his special sense for colours and his painterly talent, this is fairly obviously an alter ego of the author.

The new introduction composed by Dos Passos for the trilogy in 1938 focuses on a solitary young man who walks through the cities, eager to register everything, "with greedy eyes" and "greedy ears" (Dos Passos 1996 [1938], 1). He captures the most significant material in every corner of the country, from Seattle to San Diego, and from New Orleans to the Quinnipiac, with his survey culminating in the authorial assertion that "mostly U.S.A. is the speech of the people" (Dos Passos 1996 [1938], 3). This confluence of the voices of the people is mediated in the daring combination of the four strategies mentioned before, while the pessimistic account of the wholesale disappointment of original hopes and of widespread corruption through material success and the disintegration of society is conveyed through formal experiments first begun in *Manhattan Transfer*.

In the following years, John Dos Passos dissociated himself from the ideology of the radical Left, and in the opening volume of another trilogy[13] he rendered the insight of a formerly naive young Communist who realizes that he has been betrayed by the Party. Dos Passos's relatively early break with the Party was not followed by other writers who were preoccupied with the indigence of so many workers and the severe problems faced by new arrivals in the overcrowded American cities.[14] This was also true of Henry Roth, who struggled with the ideological burden he had embraced to the detriment of his creative energy, which seems to have paralysed him after his first major achievement as a writer.

The ideology of proletarian writers was a major factor in his life, but his first – and for more than half a century his only published – novel *Call it Sleep* (published in December 1934) does not reflect this orientation. In *Call it Sleep*, which comprises four books with all together fifty-six chapters, Roth captures the multilingual character of the metropolis as perceived by one young boy. His thoughts and feelings bear witness to the deep desire for some higher order and purity in a bleak world that is beset by numerous problems and infested with conflict and violence. The novel depicts the reality of immigrant lives in Greater New York – first in Brownsville (now Eastern Brooklyn), then on the Lower East Side of Manhattan – and includes the tensions between ethnic groups, also stressing the borders between the various ethnic neighbourhoods. But the novel does not present a full panorama of the metropolis. In contrast to the inclusiveness of the dramatis personae from many ethnic groups in Dos Passos's novel with its combination of numerous distinct perspectives, Roth's novel provides the limited perspective of one individual who grows up in these surroundings. Only in two chapters of the book does it go beyond the boy's perceptions, introducing inside views of other characters, for instance that of Reb Yidel Pankower. The novel also covers only less than three years, and not a quarter of a century as John Dos Passos's collectivist novel does. Yet it employs other methods to evoke a sense of the multicultural and multilingual character of the city. Its author originally intended, as Werner Sollors highlights in his illuminating long essay on the novel, which also draws on a multiplicity of pertinent studies, to describe the "entire

13 *Adventures of a Young Man* (Dos Passos 1939) was the first book of the trilogy later entitled *District of Columbia* and completed in 1952.

14 With the end of the boom years and the advent of the Great Depression, Marxist ideas shaped many narrative texts labelled proletarian literature. Michael Gold's *Jews without Money* (1984 [1930]) also captures the conflicts between various ethnic groups in urban settings. The same is true of James Farrell's *Studs Lonigan* trilogy (1938 [1932–1935]), which captures the drab and claustrophobic background of lower-middle-class quarters on the South Side of Chicago and includes street fights between individuals from different ethnic gangs.

trajectory" of the central figure from "ghetto child to Greenwich village," important stages also in the author's own life (Sollors 1996, 158).[15]

In the "Prologue," an omniscient narrator introduces the immigrant Jewish family in May 1907, the year when immigration to the US peaked, and relates how they are reunited at Ellis Island, where the father meets them. The remaining chapters convey in detail the impressions of his young son, David Schearl. Albert Schearl preceded his wife and his son as an emigrant from Galicia, and has partly assimilated during his residence in "the golden land" (according to a commonplace, the US in Jewish discourse). He has shaved his beard and is thus not immediately recognized by his wife, which provokes his anger, fed also by the clumsiness and conspicuous appearance of his wife Genya and their little son when they arrive in New York. A brief reference in their dialogue, rendered in the text in English, shows that it takes place in Yiddish: "'And this is the Golden Land.' She spoke in Yiddish" (Roth 1977 [1934], 11). Their halting conversation ends with her timid question: "'Gehen vir voinen du? In New York?' 'Nein. Bronzeville. Ich hud dir schoin geschriben'" (16).[16]

The reader gradually becomes aware of the fact that everything that follows and is experienced by David is transliterated from Yiddish, the language used in the home of the Schearls. It is there that the boy, who from the outset fears his irascible, embittered father and clings to his gentle mother, converses with her, primarily in the kitchen. While their communication in their small apartment is constantly in Yiddish, which is otherwise rendered in standard English, David among the children in the street employs the dialect of the New York district in which they live. Repeatedly the narrative voice indicates such shifts in the language used. Some words and phrases from Yiddish selectively inserted in the English text, which is in accordance with the language norms, remind the reader of this fact and confirm the sense of the transmission of conversation and thoughts in another language. In some communications, for instance those with David's aunt Bertha, broken English is used. Repeatedly, the co-presence of the two languages causes misunderstandings, as interlingual homophones confuse the boy, who misconstrues, for instance, a reference to a religious "altar" as an allusion to "an old man," its Yiddish homophone; a number of similar comical effects are thus achieved.[17]

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15 After the rediscovery of his complex novel, a first study on the forgotten author was published by Bonnie Lyons (1976).

16 This prologue was written only after Roth had finished book 4 of the novel, and seems to intertextually relate to the opening of Abraham Cahan's *Yekl.* See Sollors (1996, 140), with reference to Roth's interview conducted by William Freedman, published in 1975, and Ferraro (1993, 95–97).

17 See Wirth-Nesher (1991); Sollors (1996, 131–137) focuses on the range of languages used in the book.

The events of the novel, which take place over less than three years, from the time that the boy gradually approaches his sixth birthday onwards to the age of eight, are rendered as they are perceived by the boy. Trying to preserve his intimacy with his mother, he watches with great unease intruders and threats to the very precarious peace in his home. Such a menace is Joe Luter,[18] a fellow-countryman of the boy's father Albert, who pretends friendship with Albert but is clearly immediately erotically attracted to the mild wife of his difficult, choleric fellow-worker in the printer's shop.

The impressions and emotions of the very perceptive boy, who is endowed with a very lively imagination, are largely mediated through "figural narration" (for the term, see Stanzel 1987 [1984]), with extensive use of "free indirect discourse," or, to put it in the terms coined by Dorrit Cohn (1978), through "narrated monologue." But at times, the boy's reactions are also mediated through "psychonarration," as his complex feelings are at times expressed with the help of phrases beyond his capacity, vocabulary, and comprehension. This is especially true of the final sequence (Roth 1977 [1934], 407–430), a tour de force in which poetic language is used to render the dramatic scene when David electrocutes himself by placing his father's zinc milk ladle in a crack in the trolley-car tracks. It is significant that this passage is juxtaposed – as will be demonstrated in detail later – with a collage of voices in several tongues, Yiddish, German, Irish, and Italian. This fusion of languages reflects the excited reaction of the largely anonymous urban immigrants who have noted the electric discharge and "fear and grieve" for the child who has fallen unconscious onto the cobblestones.

The consistency with which, in the bulk of the novel, Roth keeps to the perspective of the boy, who as a solitary child is initiated into the brutal reality of urban life and is full of anxieties and fears, makes the novel a remarkable achievement in the realm of high modernist fiction. Critics have naturally linked Roth's novel to James Joyce's *Ulysses*; Roth's extended reading of Joyce in the home of his mentor and sometime lover Eda Lou Walton inspired him, as did his reading of T. S. Eliot's poetry. Roth's autobiographical piece of 1977, "Itinerant Ithacan," demonstrates this protracted process of inspiration.[19]

18 Some critics have read David's unease, and especially his conflicted relationship with his father, in terms of an Oedipal family romance, though Roth had only a very limited knowledge of Freud's theory at the time. Ferraro (1993, 88, 102–103) has argued that Roth's Freudianism derived from Eugene O'Neill, whose play *The Great God Brown* (1936 [1926]) Roth had seen and whose psychodrama of father-mother-son families had a significant impact on him, which he indirectly admitted.

19 See Roth (1987, 197–199, 210), and the discussion below. One might also include John Dos Passos's novel in the genealogy of this rendition of urban voices and sounds.

David is highly alert to the use and effect of language, which strongly affects him. He listens attentively to the idiom of people whom he encounters or observes, and the author transcribes their diverse utterances. Long quotes from overheard dialogues of and with outsiders augment the boy's individual perceptions, some of them quite disconcerting, for outside their apartment in the Jewish quarter, David also gets into various scrapes, which cause intense emotions and even give him nightmares.

It is in this district that he panics after some unfortunate minor incident and runs away from the scene of a quarrel between boys in which he hit and hurt another boy. It is there that the polyglot environment of the metropolis is brought home to him as people whom he asks for help cannot understand his plea: "'I – I'm losted,' he sobbed, finding his breath at last, 'Aaa! I'm losted.' [...] 'Don't you know where you live?' [...] 'A hunner 'n' twenny six Boddeh Stritt'" (Roth 1977 [1934], 98). When he is taken to a police station by an old lady, the Irish American cops have difficulties in grasping the address he gives them but pronounced differently ("Boddeh Street," "Barhdee St."; 99). They cannot identify his address either, but try to console him with a gift: "'We'll get ye yer mother an' yer chawklit cake too!' [...] 'Mama!' He moaned. 'Mama! Mama!'" (102). "'But look what oiv got fer ye.' [...] 'How does that suit ye?' He began crying again. 'Hey–! Arrh, yer a quair one! Here I've gone an' got ye chawklit cake – in a beer saloon of all the damn places – an' gotten ye apples, and there y'are cryin all over the precinct!'" (103). David there painfully and desperately experiences his inability to communicate when he has thus moved outside the circumference of his ethnic neighbourhood. He suffers until his beloved mother's arrival in the police station sets his fears at rest.

The machinations of such a plotter as Joe Luter, who after getting Albert to the Jewish theatre and thus away from his home, resents Genya Schearl's avoidance of his attentions, eventually provoke Albert's fury in the printing shop. This disappointment results in Albert's final renunciation of his job as a printer, leading to his adoption of the role of a milkman. These events disconcert the boy and pose additional problems for him when his parents move to the crowded ethnic ghetto on the Lower East Side. It is there that David is later compelled to assist his father by protecting the load of milk bottles against theft, something he fails to do, which prompts a violent confrontation of his father with the thieves and threats of punishment for the boy (273–279). It is also in this district that the boy has frightening encounters with boys from other ethnic communities which aggravate his problems.[20]

20 In this context Mario Materassi, Roth's Italian translator and a productive scholar in his own right, has argued that Henry Roth must have compounded two time levels of his own experience

In *Call It Sleep*, the boy's range of experiences has meanwhile been further extended when his Aunt Bertha temporarily moves into their apartment on the Lower East Side, from where she takes the boy on several outings (145–147). But the presence of his aunt, who provokes the fury of the irascible Albert Schearl with indiscreet and rash comments, has a much more important consequence. It later offers an opportunity for David to eavesdrop on a tense conversation between his aunt and his mother about the reasons for her marrying the difficult and unromantic Albert Schearl, even though she had been an avid reader of (German) romances (161–163, 190–202).

The code-switching to a language the boy does not understand puzzles him while he senses the tension and strain of his beloved mother:

> 'Listen to me, Bertha,' his mother said in a suddenly strained voice [...] 'Do you really want to hear?' [...] when she spoke again her words had fused into that alien, aggravating tongue that David could never fathom [...] 'Hush!' she said warningly and again blotted out import under a screen of Polish ... (192–193)

The boy's fragmentary perception of the extended conversation between mother and aunt, partly in Yiddish and partly in Polish, to him "an alien, aggravating language," reveals to him the passionate love affair of his mother as the young Genya Krollman with a "Christian organist" in her Galician village: "A goy, Aunt Bertha had said, an 'orghaneest,' What was an 'orghaneest'?" (194).

This affair ended tragically as the organist married a rich older woman and not his true love. Genya's deep humiliation and severe treatment by her parents, especially her father, an orthodox Jewish rabbi, led to her swift acceptance of so incompatible a partner as Albert Schearl. David's imagination dwells upon this story, which is enhanced through Genya's nostalgic acquisition of a painting with blue cornflowers which hangs on the wall of their apartment, and the story haunts him. Later he transforms it into a dramatic narrative of his own illegitimacy, which before the final crisis shocks the Jewish rabbi, Reb Yidel Pankower, at the heder to which David is sent a little later.

It is the language of the Hebrew Bible which impresses him most after he has begun attending this school (book 3, "The Coal"). His awareness of the religious sphere, its rituals and regulations, affects him, and the recital of a passage from

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when describing the life of his alter ego. He suggests that the author must have transferred various disturbing encounters with other ethnicities in East Harlem, where his family moved from the Lower East Side, to this milieu in Lower Manhattan. The young Henry Roth had been relocated from a fairly homogeneous Jewish quarter to a neighbourhood that was primarily Irish American. This move overshadows the experience of Ira Stigman, the protagonist of the tetralogy entitled *Mercy of a Rude Stream* (Roth 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998), which was completed and published after a long silence, lasting half a century, after his first novel.

the Prophet Isaiah in Hebrew about the cleansing of the Prophet's lips with a burning coal, explained by the rabbi in Yiddish and rendered in literal English, moves him deeply.

> 'Now!' resumed the rabbi. [...] 'But when Isaiah saw the Almighty in His majesty, and His terrible light – woe me! he cried, What shall I do! I am lost!' [...]
>
> 'But just when Isaiah let out this cry – I am unclean – one of the angels flew to the altar and with tongs drew out a fiery coal. Understand? With tongs. And with that coal, down he flew to Isaiah and with the coal touched his lips – Here!' The rabbi's fingers stabbed the air. 'You are clean!' (224)

Through the words of the prophets, the holy text sinks in and evokes in David images of purification, the cleansing of the Prophet for which he himself yearns in the bleak, dirty, and vulgar world of the ethnic ghetto. This desire increases especially following his guilt when he has acted like a naive procurer for his new Polish American friend Leo, who was eager to "play bad" with David's new cousins, the step-daughters of Aunt Bertha.

Before this dramatic complication, David becomes a witness in the ghetto to various confrontations between adults, for instance between an Italian American street cleaner and a Jewish American butcher. The latter intervenes when the street cleaner has swept away the fire Jewish boys have lit to burn their ritual material after Passover – the chumitz – and has mixed it with muck and horse dung.

> 'Wadda you wa-an?' the street cleaner stopped angrily [...] 'You no tella me waddaduh push! I cleanuh dis street. Dey no makuh duh fiuh hea!' His intricate gestures jig-sawed space.
>
> 'No? I ken't tell you, ha? Verstinkeneh Goy!' The butcher planted himself directly before the mound upon the shovel. 'Now moof!' [...]
>
> 'You vanna push me?' he [the butcher] roared. 'I'll zebreak you het.'
>
> 'Vai a fanculo te!' The sweeper threw down the shovel. 'Come on! Jew bast!' (240–241)

David registers the Yiddish phrases of the angry butcher and the Italian expletives of the street cleaner in which the fury of the antagonists in the confrontation is expressed. Fleeing from the scene of this conflict, David walks towards the docks on the East River. There he is exposed to the guile of street urchins of another ethnic group, who might have beaten him up for his crossing the borders of his ethnic neighbourhood. But, conscious of his predicament, he denies that he is one of the "sheenies" [Jews] (246). They spare him and instead show him "magic," make him drop a sheet-zinc sword on the live electric wire under the tracks of the trolley and thus cause a strong electric discharge: "terrific light bellowed out of iron lips" (249). This incident, of course, makes him associate his reading of a passage in the Prophet Isaiah with the world of technology and gives him an idea when his personal problems culminate.

The final crisis – in the long penultimate chapter 21 of book 4 of *Call It Sleep* (407–430) – is prepared and then brought about by the encounter of the solitary David yearning for companionship outside his home with the slightly older Leo Dugovka. This precocious Catholic Polish American boy is a semi-orphan who is self-confident and free from any restrictions (297–302). David is eager to cultivate cross-ethnic friendship with Leo, who carelessly plays with a kite on the roofs and possesses skates that David yearns to possess. In exchange for various gifts – eventually also a damaged rosary – and other promises, David falls into the trap of arranging a meeting of Leo with the two teenage daughters of Aunt Bertha's widowed partner, with one of whom Leo actually "plays bad" (353). This intrigue, which naturally infuriates Aunt Bertha's husband when the other girl informs their step-mother, causes an extremely dangerous situation and literally triggers a paroxysm in Albert Schearl. He had already been infuriated by the visit of the confused Rabbi Yidel Pankower, who wanted to get to the truth about the strange rambling fantasy of the boy about his being the illegitimate son of a Christian "organist" (384–385). Following the accusation by Bertha's husband that David was responsible for the molestation of his daughter Esther by Leo, and David's confession of his involvement in the intrigue, Albert Schearl's fury knows no bounds (391–398). He violently beats David, who also drops the cross of the rosary given him by Leo, and thus furnishes his father with further evidence of his apostasy, and seemingly of his illegitimacy. Albert might have killed David if his mother and Aunt Bertha had not restrained and prevented Albert from executing his announced wish.

David makes his escape from Albert's fury onto the streets. After discovering the zinc milk ladle of his father, and intensely aware of the crude and ugly world which is also manifest in the savage and tough language full of obscenities he overhears in his temporary shelter, he rushes to the tram tracks in the desire to purify himself and the world of the guilt and dross he has become aware of (406). He has come to associate the electric charge with the God of the prophets and expects cleansing power from this brilliant arc of light.

In the culminating episode, David puts the zinc ladle into the crack in the car tracks and onto the live electric wire, and causes a violent electric discharge which throws him unconscious upon the cobblestones. His thoughts when losing consciousness through his self-electrocution are captured in poetic language rich in associations with religious ritual and medieval legends.

Power!
Power like a paw, titanic power,
ripped through the earth and slammed
against his body and shackled him

where he stood. Power! Incredible,
barbaric power! A blast, siren of light
within him, rending, quaking, fusing his
brain and blood to a fountain of flame,
vast rockets in a searing spray! Power!
The hawk of radiance raking him with
talons of fire, battering his skull with
a beak of fire, braying his body with
pinions of intolerable light. And he
writhed without motion in the clutch of
a fatal glory, and his brain swelled
and dilated till it dwarfed the galaxies
in a bubble of refulgence – Recoiled, the
last screaming nerve clawing for survival.
He kicked – once. Terrific rams of dark-
ness collided; out of their shock space
toppled into havoc. A thin scream wobbled
through the spirals of oblivion, fell like
a brand on water, his-s-s-s-s-ed –

(417)

Yet, as was hinted before, this experience verbalized in elevated language is juxtaposed with the confluence of multiple voices. They had been introduced prior to the accident, setting side-by-side "down-and-dirty street witticisms and a surreal, blasphemous spirituality" (Ferraro 1993, 114) in the depiction of a bar with its barflies and prostitutes. Now the verbal reactions of many people alarmed by the discharge and soon aware of the victim of this event, the seemingly lifeless body of the child, are rendered in dramatic detail. The reader is bombarded with a sequence of utterances, some tough and vulgar, but then with increasingly mild and concerned voices of immigrants from various countries: voices shouting in Yiddish, Italian, German, or in Irish dialect, calling for help.

'Christ, it's a kid!'
'Yea!'
'Don't touch 'im!' 'Who's got a stick!'
'A stick!' 'A stick, fer Jesus sake!'
'Mike! The shovel! Where's yer fuck'n' shov-'
'Back in Call-'
'Oy sis a kind –'
'Get Pete's crutch! Hey Pete!'
'Aaa! Who touched yer hump, yuh gimpty fu-'
'Do sompt'n! Meester! Meester!'
'Yuh crummy bastard, I saw yuh sneakin' –' The hunchback whirled, swung away on his crutches. 'Fuck yiz!'

'Oy! Oy vai! Oy vai! Oy vai!'
'Git a cop!'
'An embillance – go cull-oy!'
'Don't touch 'im!'
'Bambino! Madre mia!'
'Mary. It's jus' a kid!'
'Helftz! Helftz! Helftz Yeedin! Rotivit!'
(418–419)

In this densely and dynamic polyethnic panorama of excited humanity from many walks of life, echoes of episodes set in an urban scene in James Joyce's *Ulysses* are unmistakable. Henry Roth's autobiographical pieces from 1977 and the following years, especially "Itinerant Ithacan," reveal the personal inspiration the young prospective author found through the reading of "the alchemy of language that transmuted the sludge ["that diurnal Dublin grubbiness"] into something noble" in this modernist masterpiece. He had this opportunity while sharing for several years in Greenwich Village the home, life, and love of a bohemian academic from New York University: Eda Lou Walton, to whom he then also dedicated his novel.[21] Immersing himself in the reading of Joyce's novel, whose earlier *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* had, no doubt, also kindled his imagination when offering his narrative investigation of young David's gradual perception of the complex world through the various epiphanies that he experiences, he learnt how to "transmut[e] meanness into literature" (Roth 1987, 198–199). And Roth's reminiscence also pays tribute to another classic of modernist literature which similarly stimulated the imagination of the student as he was "conning" [a deliberate archaism – studying attentively] T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* while sensing the multiple noises – "the normal drone of the city" just outside the tiny apartment in the Village (Roth 1987, 197).

It is remarkable in this context that a study of the manuscript held in the New York Public Library, and made up of blue and pink examination booklets of New York University, reveals that Roth when drafting his novel had not used from the outset the montage technique which the reader also encounters in T. S. Eliot's avant-garde poetry. Just like John Dos Passos in his composition of *Manhattan Transfer*, Roth "wrote sequential prose sections that he then cut up and inserted into each other,"[22] a practice which has reminded critics of film editing, but which associates him closely both with Eliot and Dos Passos.

21 See Roth (1987, 192–220, esp. 197–199).

22 See the evidence provided by Sollors (1996, 177), who pays tribute to Thomas Ferraro's "illuminating analysis of Roth's crosscutting technique" in a long chapter of his *Ethnic Passages: Literary Immigrants in Twentieth Century America* (1993, 113–118). Sollors (1996, 128, 132, 166,

In this dramatic scene in the penultimate chapter of Roth's novel, the largely unnamed bystanders include two customers in the saloon, a trolley-car motorman and streetcar passengers, prostitutes, peddlers, and Salvation Army singers. They express their deep concern at the accident and try to take emergency measures; their voices eventually register the survival – or perhaps the resurrection – of the victim of the electrocution, who has been pushed off the tracks with a broom and later regains consciousness. Again, the processes in his waking consciousness are expressed through "psycho-narration" (Cohn's term) with allusions to religious ritual and medieval legends (Roth 1977 [1934], 423–428).

David thus gradually comes to after a policeman has intervened and given first aid, and then an ambulance arrives, and it is found that only one of David's shoes has been burned by the strong discharge. The boy can give the address of his home and is taken there, to his over-anxious and then jubilant mother, and the now remorseful father (433–439). While his recent powerful experience still shapes David's thoughts and memories, he sinks into the sleep referred to in the title of the novel. The phrase has been variously interpreted by many academic readers, who have offered more than a dozen different interpretations of its import, and the passage has rightly been called "a masterpiece at sustaining ambiguity" (Sollors 1996, 156). But it seems safe to claim that the general direction is towards a temporary resolution of the serious problems of David's nuclear family.

Thus, the novel of the painful growth of a young, extremely sensitive immigrant boy, who has suffered intensely because of his father's problematic character and the vulgar and crude urges in his environment, seems to end on a fairly positive note. Some critics[23] have even seen in David's individual passion, survival, and spiritual rebirth a type of Christ, and in the urban novel with its multilingual and multicultural features a merging of "Yiddish/Hebrew/Jewish" and "English/Christian" traditions.

We have thus noted that Roth chose a procedure very different from John Dos Passos in his experimental novel when he adopted the perspective of one young boy to capture the quality of the life of immigrants in the overcrowded

176–180) utilized Irit Manskleid-Makowsky's analysis (1978) of the "little studied manuscript of the novel."

23 Cf. Wirth-Nesher (1991). She points out that the kid, whose well-being the assembled immigrants in the penultimate chapter of the novel hope for, may be linked to the (animal) kid that is sacrificed in the Passover celebration. It is chanted about in the song (a kind of nursery rhyme) recited in the other holy tongue encountered, Aramaic, in the heder David attends. This kid was killed to mark the door jambs of the Israelites, who would thus be spared by the "angel of death," which the Almighty finally destroyed. The suffering of the boy would thus appear as a kind of sacrifice, redeeming the past sins of his parents.

ghettos of the metropolis. But both authors show in their fiction that they were able to watch and listen carefully to the voices of the various ethnic groups to which their own backgrounds linked them. Like his compatriot, who was ten years older, Roth succumbed to the appeal of radical political ideas. But in contrast to Dos Passos, he felt bound by the tenets of the Communist party after his first novel, *Call It Sleep*. The highly critical reception of his book by Party ideologues may have contributed to his writer's block, his inability over fifty years to complete another book in which to capture the voices perceived in his urban childhood, youth, and literary apprenticeship. It was only in the 1980s that he was persuaded by a European visitor – the Italian scholar and translator Mario Materassi – to collect diverse pieces in *Shifting Landscapes: A Composite* and then begin to revise the massive material he had composed over the decades about another alter ego of his, called Ira Stigman. This eventually filled four volumes, published before his death and posthumously under the titles *Mercy of a Rude Stream: A Star Shines over Mt. Morris Park* (1994), *A Diving Rock on the Hudson* (1995), *From Bondage* (1996), and *Requiem for Harlem* (1998).

John Dos Passos, in contrast, had been prolific after his break with the radical Left, but both his and Henry Roth's reputations as very important fiction writers in the modernist mode rest on their earlier achievements when they – in contrasting ways – captured the confluence of ethnic voices in urban America in the innovative narratives of *Manhattan Transfer* and *U.S.A.*, and *Call It Sleep*, respectively. They seem to have anticipated contemporary trends towards a crossing of boundaries through the inclusion in their ambitious modernist fiction of verbal cultures formerly marginalized or looked-down-upon, and thus might be regarded as harbingers of future attempts to broaden the literary canon to attain a global dimension.

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Peter V. Zima

Ähnlichkeit und Differenz in der Komparatistik

Der Vergleich als Begriffsbestimmung

Abstract: Der gängigen Vorstellung, die literarische Komparatistik habe keine eigne Theorie, wird hier mit einem Entwurf begegnet, der auf dem Gedanken gründet, dass der Vergleich als solcher ein theoretisches Potenzial birgt. Er gestattet es, Erscheinungen wie „Konversationsdrama", „Modernismus" oder „Avantgarde" im interkulturellen Kontext näher zu bestimmen. Dies gilt auch für die Definition von Begriffen wie „Literaturwissenschaft" und „Diskurs", die nur durch einen interkulturellen Vergleich als umfassende, konkrete Begriffsbestimmung ermöglicht wird. Der Vergleich wird hier in seinen beiden Grundformen – als typologischer und genetischer Vergleich – textsoziologisch oder soziosemiotisch aufgefasst und in eine soziolinguistische Situation eingebettet, in der Literatur und Gesellschaft über Sprachstrukturen (Soziolekte und Diskurse) miteinander vermittelt werden.

Keywords: Vergleich, genetischer Vergleich, typologischer Vergleich, Literaturwissenschaft, soziolinguistische Situation, Soziolekt, Diskurs, Modernismus, Avantgarde, Konversationsdrama, Ambivalenz, Konstruktivismus, Essayismus

Einleitung

In einem schon älteren Artikel, der 1973 in einem komparatistischen Sammelband mit dem Titel „Hat die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft eine eigene Theorie?" erschienen ist, verneint der Autor Erwin Koppen diese Frage. Sein Fazit lautet: „Nun, die Antwort kann auf Grund unseres bisherigen Befundes nur negativ sein" (Koppen 1973, 53).

Diese Antwort ist nicht nur enttäuschend, sondern auch erstaunlich, *weil der Vergleich als solcher ein theoretisches Erkenntnispotenzial birgt*. Vergleiche ich beispielsweise Einheitsstaaten mit Bundesstaaten (etwa Frankreich mit Deutschland), kann ich nicht nur Vor- und Nachteile beider Systeme erkennen, sondern zugleich auch Probleme der Verwaltung und der sie ermöglichenden Rechtsprechung besser verstehen. Dies gilt auch für den Vergleich von Sprachen und Literaturen: Man versteht die eigene Sprache besser, wenn man sie kontrastiv mit anderen Sprachen vergleicht. Dazu bemerkt Goethe: „Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen" (Goethe 1968, 13).

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Demnach hat der Vergleich einen *Erkenntniswert, der zum Ausgangspunkt der Theoriebildung werden kann*. Im dritten Teil dieser Betrachtung wird sich zeigen, dass die europäische Avantgarde besser, konkreter verstanden wird, wenn italienische und russische Varianten des Futurismus mit dem französischen Surrealismus konfrontiert werden: Einen Kern von Ähnlichkeiten umgeben Differenzen, die Licht auf ein facettenreiches und doch recht homogenes Phänomen werfen.

Beim theoretischen Potenzial des Vergleichs sollte man nicht stehen bleiben, sondern sollte versuchen, es zu entfalten. Hier werden im *ersten Abschnitt* zwei grundverschiedene *Vergleichstypen* kommentiert, deren theoretische Bedeutung schon in Gerhard R. Kaisers *Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (1980) nachgewiesen und veranschaulicht wurde: der *typologische Vergleich*, der Ähnlichkeiten erkennen lässt, die aus ähnlichen gesellschaftlichen und sprachlichen Situationen ableitbar sind, und der *genetische Vergleich*, der auf Einfluss und Rezeption gründet. Beide Vergleichstypen spielen auch in Soziologie, Politikwissenschaft und Rechtswissenschaft eine wichtige Rolle und sind daher von grundsätzlichem theoretischen Interesse (vgl. Zima 2000).

Im *zweiten Abschnitt* werden die eigentlich theoretischen Grundlagen des Vergleichens umrissen, deren Begrifflichkeit auf die Frage antwortet, in welchem Kontext literarische, sprachliche oder politische Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen aufeinander bezogen werden sollten. Plädiert wird dort für eine soziologische und semiotische (soziosemiotische) Grundlegung der Komparatistik, deren Schlüsselbegriffe – soziolinguistische Situation Soziolekt und Diskurs – es gestatten, die miteinander verglichenen Erscheinungen in Gesellschaft und Sprache einzubetten und zu erklären. Der typologische Vergleich etwa, der von ähnlichen historischen und sozialen Situationen ausgeht, bleibt abstrakt, solange er nicht soziologisch und semiotisch konkretisiert wird.

Im dritten, vierten und fünften Abschnitt soll schließlich deutlich werden, dass die vergleichende Methode wesentlich zur Klärung und konkreteren Bestimmung von literaturwissenschaftlichen, philosophischen und linguistischen Begriffen beitragen kann, indem sie die gesellschaftlichen und sprachlichen Situationen untersucht, in denen Begriffe wie „Avantgarde“ oder „Diskurs“ auftreten: Ihre Bedeutungen überschneiden sich zwar in einem ihnen gemeinsamen Kern (einem gemeinsamen Sem, würde Greimas sagen), aber sie sind dennoch verschieden und nicht als Synonyme zu behandeln. Ihre Differenzen gehören ebenso zu ihrem Verständnis wie ihre Gemeinsamkeiten.

Dies soll hier im Zusammenhang mit drei literarischen und zwei theoretischen Begriffen veranschaulicht werden: „literarische Moderne (Modernismus)“

(Abschn. 1), „Konversationsdrama“ (Abschn. 2), „Avantgarde“ (Abschn. 3) sowie „Literaturwissenschaft“ („critique littéraire“, „literary criticism“) (Abschn. 4) und „Diskurs“ („discours“, „discourse“) (Abschn. 5).

1 Typologischer und genetischer Vergleich: Die literarische Moderne

Da im typologischen Vergleich Texte aufeinander bezogen werden, deren Ähnlichkeiten nicht aus Einflüssen, sondern aus ähnlich gelagerten gesellschaftlichen und sprachlichen Strukturen ableitbar sind, bildet das Typologische den eigentlichen Rahmen des Vergleichs. Denn auch die genetischen Beziehungen, die es vorwiegend mit Einfluss und Rezeption zu tun haben, müssen letztlich auf vergleichbare soziolinguistische Situationen zurückgeführt werden. Dies ist der Grund, warum hier die typologischen Beziehungen den genetischen vorangestellt werden, während der französische Positivismus – etwa der Jean-Maries Carrés (1973) – im Anschluss an Auguste Comte nur Einflüsse als nachweisbare Fakten gelten ließ.

Da es hier primär um die *Frage nach der theoretischen Bedeutung der Komparatistik und des Vergleichs* geht, nach ihrer Bedeutung für die Bestimmung von Begriffen, steht im Folgenden die Frage im Mittelpunkt, wie typologische Vergleiche eine *konkretere Begriffsbestimmung der literarischen Moderne* ermöglichen.

Zur Übereinstimmung der untersuchten Erscheinungen bemerkt der russische Literaturwissenschaftler Viktor Žirmunskij: „Diese Übereinstimmung kann unmöglich Zufall sein. Sie ist vielmehr durch ähnliche soziale Entwicklungen bei den betreffenden Völkern historisch bedingt“ (Žirmunskij 1973, 106). Was ist genau mit „ähnlichen sozialen Entwicklungen“ gemeint?

Sieht man sich die großen Romane von Schriftstellern der Spätmoderne (etwa 1850 bis 1950) an, so ist *eine* soziale Entwicklung bald feststellbar: Es ist der „Zerfall der Werte“, den Hermann Broch in seiner *Schlafwandler*-Trilogie ausführlich kommentiert. Er gibt auch den Grund für den Zerfall an. Es ist die sich konsolidierende Hegemonie der Wirtschaft. Zum „ökonomischen Weltbild“ heißt es in *Die Schlafwandler*: „(...) Wehe! Denn es umfaßt die Welt, es umfaßt alle anderen Werte und rottet sie aus wie ein Heuschreckenschwarm, der über ein Feld zieht“ (Broch 1978, 498). Diesem Urteil schließt sich im britischen Kontext D. H. Lawrence an, wenn er schreibt: „We *must* provide another standard than the pecuniary standard, to measure *all* daily life by“ (Lawrence 1962, 216–317). Das ist freilich leichter gesagt als getan.

Denn trotz dieser Diagnosen und Plädoyers erfasst der Geldstandard als Tauschwert alle Lebensbereiche und lässt kulturelle Werte und die Wörter, die

sie bezeichnen, – Gut und Böse, Wahrheit und Lüge, Freiheit und Unfreiheit – erst ambivalent, später austauschbar, indifferent werden. In den Romanen des Modernismus als Spätmoderne schlägt sich die Krise der Werte als *Ambivalenz*, als Frage ohne Antwort nieder: „Ero io buono o cattivo?", fragt Italo Svevos Held Zeno Cosini (1938, 369), und vermag angesichts seiner eigenen Ambivalenz diese Frage nicht zu beantworten.

Diese Ambivalenz der Werte, Protagonisten, Handlungen und Aussagen stellt in den Romanen Svevos, Brochs, Prousts, Joyces und Musils die *Erzählbarkeit der Welt* in Frage. Wo die Charaktere, ihre Gedanken und Handlungen nicht mehr eindeutig bestimmbar sind, dort wird der Roman als Erzählstruktur unglaubwürdig, weil sich Autoren und ihre Erzähler nicht über eine soziale und sprachliche Situation hinwegsetzen können, in der Ambivalenz herrscht und die gesamte Begrifflichkeit erfasst.

In einem kurzen Vergleich von Epos und Roman geht Musil auf die in der Gesellschaft verloren gegangene Eindeutigkeit ein: „Das Problem entsteht natürlich erst im Roman. Im Epos, auch im wirklich epischen Roman, ergibt sich der Charakter aus der Handlung. D. h. die Charaktere waren viel unverrückbarer in die Handlungen eingebettet, weil auch diese viel eindeutiger waren." (Musil 1978, 1941)

An Beispielen für den Nexus von Ambivalenz, Unentscheidbarkeit und Handlungsunfähigkeit fehlt es in Musils Roman *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* nicht: „Jedesmal, wenn Diotima sich beinahe schon für eine solche Idee entschieden hätte, mußte sie bemerken, daß es auch etwas Großes wäre, das Gegenteil davon zu verwirklichen" (Musil 1978, Bd. 1, 229). Aus diesen Dilemmasituationen geht das essayistische Nachdenken über Widersprüche und unvereinbare Möglichkeiten hervor. Es unterbricht oder bremst die Handlung, und die Erzählung tritt auf der Stelle.

Von Musil wird sie selbst als vom Kommerz, vom „pecuniary standard" erfasster Wert problematisiert: „Äußerlich ist die gegenwärtige Krise des Romans so in Erscheinung getreten: Wir wollen uns nichts mehr erzählen lassen, betrachten das nur noch als Zeitvertreib. Für das, was bleibt, suchen nicht ‚wir', aber unsere Fachleute eine neue Gestalt. Das Neue erzählt uns die Zeitung, das gern Gehörte betrachten wir als Kitsch" (Musil 1978, Bd. 8, 1412.). Es ist zur Ware verkommen: als „Spannung", „Erotik" oder „Heimat". Seine (unsere) Ambivalenz besteht darin, dass wir es einerseits gern hören, andererseits als Kitsch und Ware ablehnen.

Auf diese Krise oder Unglaubwürdigkeit des linearen, anekdotischen Erzählens reagieren Erzähler der Spätmoderne wie Musil, Broch, Kafka und Proust mit Agnostizismus, Essayismus, Konstruktivismus und einer fragmentarischen Schreibweise. Ähnlich wie die anderen Modernisten hat Musil einen essayistischen Roman

geschrieben, dessen Autor unablässig sein eigenes Schreiben, Erzählen reflektiert, ohne in der Erzählung voranzukommen. „?Paradoxon: den Roman schreiben, den man nicht schreiben kann“ (Musil 1978, Bd. 7, 876.), heißt es in den nachgelassenen Fragmenten.

Auch Kafka stößt auf das Problem der Ambivalenz und setzt wie Musil einen agnostischen Erzähler ein, der weiß, dass er seine Welt unablässig konstruieren und rekonstruieren muss und dass seine Konstruktionen kaum jemals der Wirklichkeit entsprechen. Die Iustitia, die ihm der Maler Titorelli auf einem seiner Bilder zeigt, könnte ebenso gut die Göttin der Jagd sein:

> Um die Figur der Gerechtigkeit aber blieb es bis auf eine unmerkliche Tönung hell, in dieser Helligkeit schien die Figur besonders vorzudringen, sie erinnerte kaum mehr an die Göttin der Gerechtigkeit, aber auch nicht an die des Sieges, sie sah jetzt vielmehr vollkommen wie die Göttin der Jagd aus (Kafka 1964, 108).

So verwandeln sich unter Einwirkung der Ambivalenz die auf Gemälden symbolisierten Werte in ihr Gegenteil, werden fragwürdig, ja nichtig.

Wie Musil und die anderen Modernisten reagiert Kafka auf die herrschende Ambivalenz mit Agnostizismus, Essayismus und Konstruktivismus. Sein Erzähler, der K. von Szene zu Szene begleitet, versucht, sich mit Hilfe unzähliger Hypothesen und Konstruktionen der enigmatischen Wirklichkeit anzunähern, bis sein Diskurs in der bekannten Parabel „Vor dem Gesetz“ ausmündet. In ihr bleibt alles in der Schwebe: die Beschaffenheit der Justiz und des Gesetzes, die Schuld oder Unschuld des Angeklagten, die Erkennbarkeit und Erzählbarkeit der Wirklichkeit sowie der Ausgang der Erzählung. Das Romanfragment nimmt einen hypothetisch-konstruktivistischen und essayistischen Charakter an. Es wird zu einem *roman-essai* im Sinne von Proust.

Wie Musil zweifelt auch Proust (vgl. Zima 1980/2002) an seinen Fähigkeiten als Romancier und notiert in seinen *Cahiers*: „Faut-il en faire un roman, une étude philosophique, suis-je romancier?“ (Proust 1976, 61). Auch sein Roman *A la recherche du temps perdu* stellt eine prekäre Synthese aus Erzählung und Essay dar, in der die narrative Syntax immer wieder von essayistischen, reflektierenden Einschüben unterbrochen, geschwächt wird.

Die Unterbrechung entspricht aber Prousts reflektierter und im Roman kommentierter Absicht: Sein fiktiver Romancier Bergotte verzichtet auf das anekdotische Erzählen und wird deshalb vom mondänen, konventionell denkenden Marquis de Norpois gerügt: „Jamais on ne trouve dans ses romans sans muscles ce qu’on pourrait nommer la charpente. Pas d’action – ou si peu – mais surtout pas de portée“ (Proust 1989, 464). Gegen diese Art von *Action*-Roman ergreift Prousts Ich-Erzähler Partei für Bergotte und bereitet seinen *roman-essai* vor, den er später – in

Le Temps retrouvé – in Angriff nimmt. Wie Musil „will er sich nichts mehr erzählen lassen“: denn für ihn wie für Musil ist Literatur kein „Zeitvertreib“.

Welche theoretische Bedeutung hat nun dieser typologische Vergleich verschiedener modernistischer Autoren? *Er trägt zur Konzeptualisierung eines wesentlichen Aspekts der literarischen Moderne bei.* Aus ihrem zentralen Problem der *Ambivalenz* sind folgende Begriffe ableitbar: *agnostischer Erzähler, Schwächung der narrativen Syntax, Essayismus und Konstruktivismus*. Letzterer geht einher mit der Ablehnung der realistischen Illusion (Balzacscher Prägung), dass der Romandiskurs der Wirklichkeit entspricht und der Romancier sie nur wiedergibt, „registriert“ (de Balzac 1965, 52).

Freilich gelangen Modernisten wie Proust, Musil, Svevo und Kafka auf verschiedenen Wegen zum Problem der Ambivalenz und zum experimentellen, essayistischen Roman: Während bei Musil die Erkenntnis der Ambivalenz aus der Ideologiekritik hervorgeht (der Pazifismus führt zum Krieg), wird sie bei Kafka aus einer minutiösen Analyse des juristischen Soziolekts (vgl. Keller 1977, 65–66) gewonnen und bei Proust aus den Peripetien der mondänen Konversation und den Zweideutigkeiten des Causeurs. Diese *Differenzen* sind insofern von Interesse, als sie schließlich – paradoxerweise – in die diesen Autoren *gemeinsame spätmoderne Problematik* münden, zu deren Wesenszügen auch der essayistische Roman gehört, der aus der Ambivalenz-Problematik hervorgeht.

Diese betrifft auch die Beziehung zwischen dem typologischen und dem genetischen Vergleich. Denn die hier vorgeschlagene typologische Konstruktion bietet eine Erklärung für *Nietzsches Wirkung* in der gesamten literarischen Spätmoderne. Die Spuren seines Denkens sind nicht nur in den Werken Prousts, Musils, Brochs und Kafkas zu beobachten; sein Einfluss ist auch bei Autoren wie André Gide, Pío Baroja, Gabriele D’Annunzio und D. H. Lawrence nicht zu übersehen (vgl. Zima, 2011, Kap. 4).

Er ergänzt insofern den hier skizzierten typologischen Kontext, als Nietzsche *der Denker par excellence der Ambivalenz ist. Davon zeugt seine Kritik des metaphysischen Denkens*, das von eindeutigen (binären) Gegensätzen strukturiert wird: „Der Grundglaube der Metaphysiker ist der Glaube an die Gegensätze der Werte.“ Etwas später folgt der Satz, der das Kernproblem der Spätmoderne (als Modernismus) umreißt:

> Es wäre sogar noch möglich, daß *was* den Wert jener guten und verehrten Dinge ausmacht, gerade darin bestünde, mit jenen schlimmen, scheinbar entgegengesetzten Dingen auf verfängliche Weise verwandt, verknüpft, verhäkelt, vielleicht gar wesensgleich zu sein. Vielleicht! Aber wer ist willens, sich um solche gefährliche Vielleichts zu kümmern! (Nietzsche 1980, 568).

Die Schriftsteller der Spätmoderne sind es: Sie können sich mit Svevo und Kafka vorstellen, dass jemand zugleich gut und böse ist, dass die Iustitia zugleich eine Göttin der Jagd ist und dass, wie Musil zeigt, der Pazifismus zum Krieg führen kann. In *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* steht der Name des Pazifisten Friedel Feuermaul für diese Ambivalenz als strukturierendes Prinzip. Mit Nietzsche erforschen die Modernisten diese Ambivalenzen, statt Protagonisten eindeutige Rollen zuzuteilen, die ein lineares Erzählen ermöglichen würden.

Die im typologischen Vergleich erkennbaren Aspekte der Ambivalenz lässt auch den Einfluss von Freuds Psychoanalyse in der literarischen Moderne plausibel erscheinen. Im psychologischen Bereich wurde der Ambivalenz-Begriff von Eugen Bleuler geprägt, der drei Arten von Ambivalenz unterscheidet: die affektive, die intellektuelle und die des Willens. Dass starke ambivalente Regungen, die aus dem Unbewussten hervorgehen, die Einheit des Subjekts in Frage stellen und eine „multiple Persönlichkeit" zur Folge haben können, wird von Freud in seinem Vortrag „Die Libidotheorie und der Narzißmus" (1917) bestätigt, in dem er sich auf Bleuler beruft. Von der Ambivalenz sagt Freud: „Wir meinen damit die Richtung entgegengesetzter, zärtlicher und feindseliger, Gefühle gegen dieselbe Person" (Freud 1982, 412).

Das Problem der ambivalenten Regungen, der multiplen Persönlichkeit und der Einheit des Subjekts wird nicht nur in Svevos *La coscienza di Zeno*, einer Parodie der Psychoanalyse, analysiert, sondern auch in den Romanen Prousts und Musils. Während Zeno Cosini immer wieder über seine ambivalente Haltung seinem Vater gegenüber nachdenkt, beherrschen in Musils Roman nicht nur die widerstreitenden Gefühle dem Vater gegenüber mehrere Kapitel, sondern auch androgyne Vorstellungen und Mythen. Wie Nietzsches Philosophie wird Freuds Psychoanalyse von spätmodernen Schriftstellern rezipiert, weil sie Probleme antizipiert und zusammenfasst, mit denen auch sie sich auseinandersetzen. So sind Wirkung und Einfluss im typologischen Kontext zu erklären, und der genetische Vergleich ergänzt und konkretisiert den typologischen.

2 Soziolinguistische Situation, Soziolekt und Diskurs als theoretische Grundlagen des Vergleichs: Das Konversationsdrama

Analog zur literarischen Moderne, deren Begriffsbestimmung in einem typologischen und einem genetischen Vergleich konkretisiert werden kann, nimmt das Konversationsdrama schärfere Konturen in einem interkulturellen typologischen

Vergleich an. Als erster wies Peter Szondi auf die schwach ausgeprägte Handlungsstruktur des Konversationsdramas hin:

> Die Verabsolutierung des Dialogs zur Konversation rächt sich nicht nur qualitativ, sondern auch dramaturgisch. Indem die Konversation zwischen den Menschen schwebt, statt sie zu verbinden, wird sie unverbindlich (...). Sie hat keinen subjektiven Ursprung und kein objektives Ziel: sie führt nicht weiter, geht in keine Tat über (Szondi 1959, 88).

Im Folgenden soll ein typologischer Vergleich von Oscar Wildes und Hugo von Hofmannsthals Konversationsdramen im soziosemiotischen Kontext das Problem der *mondänen Konversation* konkretisieren und zugleich diesen Dramentypus im Hinblick auf Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen von Wildes und Hofmannsthals Texten und Kontexten näher bestimmen.

Es soll gezeigt werden: (a) dass eine enge funktionale Verbindung zwischen der Londoner und der Wiener Mußeklasse der Jahrhundertwende, der *leisure class* im Sinne von Thorstein Veblen, und dem *Soziolekt der Konversation* aufgezeigt werden kann, (b) dass diese Konversation die sprachliche Substanz von Wildes und Hofmannsthals Dramen ausmacht, (c) dass sich diese Substanz auch auf die Dramenstruktur – vor allem auf den Dialog – auswirkt und (d) dass die typologischen Ähnlichkeiten, die Wildes und Hofmannsthals Dramen miteinander verbinden, nicht wesentliche Differenzen verdecken sollten.

Den soziologischen Kontext bildet Veblens Theorie der *leisure class*, der *Mußeklasse*, die Veblen in seinem bekannten Werk *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899, dt. *Theorie der feinen Leute* 1958) entwickelt hat. Er untersucht das Prestigestreben der amerikanischen Oberschicht, das in demonstrativem Konsum („Geltungskonsum“ oder „conspicuous consumption“) und Müßiggang zum Ausdruck kommt, und zeigt, dass die Angehörigen der Mußeklasse nicht *in* der Wirtschaft tätig sind, sondern mehrheitlich als Rentiers *von* der Wirtschaft leben: von Aktien, Obligationen und Pfandbriefen.

Sowohl im London der Jahrhundertwende als auch im Wien der untergehenden Donaumonarchie gab es eine solche Mußeklasse, deren Angehörige – Kunstliebhaber, Mäzene und Causeurs – ausreichend Zeit hatten, in Salongesellschaften die mondäne Konversation zu pflegen. So wird die Konversation zum Soziolekt, zur Gruppensprache dieser Klasse. Sie dient nicht primär der Kommunikation als Information, sondern soll das mondäne Prestige des narzisstischen Redners in den Augen seiner Gesprächspartner steigern und die Gesellschaft unterhalten.

Das zugleich narzisstische und soziale Element bringt Abel Hermant zur Sprache, wenn er über den mondänen Redner und eine Dame der Salongesellschaft schreibt: „Sie besaß das Vokabular des Philosophen und war deshalb für den Causeur interessant“ (1931, 137). Pierre Bourdieu würde sagen, dass sie den

Causeur mit kulturellem und (spezifisch) *linguistischem Kapital* versorgte. Primär geht es also darum, narzisstisch zu glänzen, nicht zu kommunizieren.

Diese Überlegungen führen mitten in die Welt Oscar Wildes und Hugo von Hofmannsthals. Zu seinem Roman *The Picture of Dorian Gray* bemerkt Oscar Wilde, er sei „all conversation and no action. My people sit in chairs and chatter." (Wilde 1977, 154). Dies gilt in noch stärkerem Maße für seine Dramen, in denen die Konversation mit ihren Parodien, Paradoxien und Andeutungen den dramatischen Dialog und die aus ihm hervorgehende vorwärts drängende Handlung sekundär werden lässt. Sie wird vom „witty talk" verdrängt: „ALGERNON: (...) Really, if the lower orders don't set us a good example, what on earth is the use of them? They seem, as a class, to have absolutely no sense of moral responsibility" (Wilde 1954, 254).

Dieser Satz enthält eine der vielen Paradoxien, die die mondäne Konversation prägen und zugleich deren „wit" oder „Witz" ausmachen: Die sozialen Verhältnisse werden hier umgekehrt, weil nicht die Oberschicht die führende Funktion der Elite erfüllt, sondern die Verantwortung für das gesellschaftliche Geschehen der Unterschicht aufbürdet. In diesem Fall ist aber nicht nur die Sprache als Rhetorik von Bedeutung, sondern auch die Tatsache, dass sie auf die *soziale Passivität der Mußeklasse* hinweist, die der *vita activa* eine Absage erteilt hat. Dies ist der eigentliche Grund, warum im mondänen Drama der handlungsfördernde Dialog von der Konversation an den Rand des Geschehens abgedrängt wird.

Dieser Vorgang ist auch in Hofmannsthals Lustspielen zu beobachten: etwa in *Der Schwierige*. Zunächst fällt auf, dass die Angehörigen der Mußeklasse danach beurteilt werden, ob sie die Kunst der Konversation beherrschen oder nicht: „STANI: Das ist ja ihr großer Charme, daß sie eine Konversation hat. Weißt du, das brauch ich absolut: eine Frau die mich fixieren soll, die muß außer ihrer absoluten Hingebung auch eine Konversation haben" (von Hofmannsthal 1979, 354).

Von besonderer Bedeutung scheint im Vergleich zu Wilde die Tatsache zu sein, dass die Konversation in Hofmannsthals Drama *beim Namen genannt und kritisch kommentiert* wird, etwa von der Hauptfigur Hans Karl: „(...) Mir kommt bei der Konversation auf die Länge alles Gescheite dumm und noch eher das Dumme gescheit vor" (Hofmannsthal 1979, 340).

An dieser Stelle macht sich eine sprachliche Wende bemerkbar, die man bei Wilde vergeblich suchte. Die Konversation wird selbstkritisch und der Diskurs *selbstreflexiv*. Dadurch wird der dramatische Dialog, der durch die sich verselbständigende Konversation zur Atrophie verurteilt wurde, weiter geschwächt, weil das Drama – ähnlich wie der moderne Roman – stellenweise ins Essayistische oder ins Essayistisch-Reflexive übergeht – etwa in Musils Theaterstück *Die Schwärmer*, das Bianca Cetti Marinoni als essayistisches Drama liest (Cetti Marinoni 1992).

Was zeigt nun der Vergleich? Er zeigt erstens, wie Sprache und Gesellschaft zusammenhängen und wie Literatur als Sprachkunst aus gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen hervorgeht und auf sie reagiert. Er zeigt zweitens, dass Literatur und Gesellschaft noch am ehesten *über die Sprache* miteinander zu vermitteln sind. Schließlich lässt er die Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen erkennen, die Wildes und Hofmannsthals Konversationsdramen einerseits verbinden, andererseits trennen.

Es gehört zu der *Begriffsbestimmung des Konversationsdramas, Ähnlichkeiten und Abweichungen aufeinander zu beziehen, um ein Gesamtbild dieser zugleich literarischen und gesellschaftlichen Erscheinungen in den Blick zu bekommen.* Denn die Differenzen, die Hofmannsthals Theaterstücke von denen Wildes trennen, sind für eine konkrete Begriffsbestimmung ebenso wichtig wie die Ähnlichkeiten. Wie sind sie zu erklären?

Sie hängen mit den verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen und sprachlichen Verhältnissen zusammen, in die die *leisure class* und ihr *Soziolekt* in London und in Wien eingebettet sind. Während in Großbritannien die herrschende Schicht, eine Synthese aus Adel und Großbürgertum, um 1900 selten in ihrer Daseinsberechtigung in Frage gestellt wird (bisweilen ist von der „deferential attitude towards the aristocracy" die Rede), regen sich in der Donaumonarchie nationalistische, sozialistische und anarchistische Widerstände, die Gesellschaftskritik als Sprachkritik ermöglichen. Die Kritik richtet sich – vor allem bei Fritz Mauthner und Karl Kraus – gegen die Entwertung der Sprache durch Kommerz und Ideologie im Journalismus.

Von ihr zeugt auch Hofmannsthals berühmter „Chandos-Brief", in dem es u. a. heißt: „Die abstrakten Worte, deren sich doch die Zunge naturgemäß bedienen muß, um irgendwelches Urteil an den Tag zu geben, zerfielen mir im Munde wie modrige Pilze" (Hofmannsthal 1979, 12). Das Konversationsdrama ist nicht nur ein virtuoses Spiel mit der Sprache, sondern auch *Sprachkritik*, die wie die spätmodernen Romane auf die Krise der Gesellschaft und ihrer Sprachen reagiert.

3 Kontrastiver Vergleich als Konstruktion: Die Avantgarde

Im vorigen Abschnitt sollte deutlich geworden sein, dass die *Wechselbeziehung von Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen* wesentlich zur Begriffsbestimmung eines Phänomens wie das Konversationsdrama gehört. Im Folgenden sollen verschiedene europäische Avantgarde-Bewegungen punktuell miteinander verglichen, und es soll der Frage nachgegangen werden, ob sich trotz aller – vor allem politischer – Differenzen ein gemeinsamer Kern ausmachen lässt. Die Hervorhebung der Diffe-

renzen lässt ein kontrastives Verfahren entstehen, das zugleich eine soziologische Konstruktion ist: Sie soll zeigen, dass grundverschiedene und politisch unvereinbare literarische Bewegungen ähnliche Ästhetiken und Stilistiken entwickeln können.

Auf allgemeinster, gattungstheoretischer Ebene fällt auf, dass nahezu alle europäischen Avantgarden das *Manifest* als Textsorte bevorzugen. Das Manifest ist eine militante Gattung, deren Entstehung in Militär und Politik Walter Fähnders nachzeichnet: „Das Manifest stammt aus dem politischen Bereich und hat seit den ersten bekannten Wortbelegen in der Frühen Neuzeit die Hauptbedeutung von Staats- oder Herrschaftserklärung, z. B. als Kriegserklärung“ (Fähnders 2011, 240). Bekanntlich stammt auch die Bezeichnung „Avantgarde“ („Vorhut“) aus dem militärischen Bereich.

Tatsächlich hören sich einige Manifeste des italienischen Futurismus wie Kriegserklärungen an die institutionalisierte Kunst oder Literatur an, der diese Avantgarde mit einer Revolution droht. Denn das avantgardistische Manifest knüpft – nicht nur der Form nach – auch an das *Kommunistische Manifest* von Marx und Engels an. Wie dieses erste revolutionäre Manifest begehrt es gegen die bürgerlichen Verhältnisse auf; jedoch nicht so sehr gegen Kapitalismus und Klassenherrschaft, sondern gegen die Kunst des Bildungsbürgertums: gegen die museale Kunst der Kenner und Dilettanten, der Philologen und Professoren, der Konservatoren und Salonkünstler.

So heißt es beispielsweise in Marinettis erstem „Manifest des Futurismus“ aus dem Jahr 1909:

> Von Italien aus schleudern wir unser Manifest voll mitreißender und zündender Heftigkeit in die Welt, mit dem wir heute den ‚*Futurismus*‘ gründen, denn wir wollen dieses Land von dem Krebsgeschwür der Professoren, Archäologen, Fremdenführer und Antiquare befreien. – Schon zu lange ist Italien ein Markt von Trödlern. Wir wollen es von den unzähligen Museen befreien, die es wie zahllose Friedhöfe über und über bedecken (Marinetti 1995, 5).

Analog dazu geht es im thematischen Bereich darum, die traditionellen, vor allem die romantischen Formen und Stereotypen durch radikale Spracherneuerung zu verabschieden. Bekannt ist Marinettis Text aus dem Jahre 1909, der den polemischen Titel trägt: „Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna!“ [Tod dem Mondschein!] (Marinetti 1995, 7–11).

Nahezu alle europäischen Avantgarden treffen sich in einem wesentlichen Punkt: Sie nehmen sich vor, das Wort aus den Zwängen der Syntax zu befreien, und stellen dadurch die harmonische Einheit des klassischen Kunstwerks in Frage, die den vom Bildungsbürgertum verehrten Klassizismus symbolisiert. Im „Technischen Manifest der futuristischen Literatur“ heißt es beispielsweise: „MAN MUSS

DIE SYNTAX DADURCH ZERSTÖREN, DASS MAN DIE SUBSTANTIVE AUFS GERATEWOHL ANORDNET, SO WIE SIE ENTSTEHEN“ (Marinetti 1995, 24).

Marinettis programmatischem Aufruf, der aus einer sprachlichen Situation hervorgeht, in der kommerzialisierte und ideologische Stereotypen die literarische Kreativität bedrohen, entsprechen die „neuen Prinzipien des Schaffens“, die russische Futuristen wie David Burljuk, Vladimir Majakovskij, Velimir Chlebnikov und Alexander Kručonych verkünden: „Wir haben aufgehört, Wortbau und Wortsprache nach grammatischen Regeln zu betrachten, wir haben begonnen, in den Buchstaben nur *Wegweiser für Wörter* zu sehen. Wir haben die Syntax erschüttert.“ (Burljuk et al. 1995, 71). Auch hier geht es also um eine „Befreiung des Wortes“, um „parole in libertà“, wie es bei Marinetti heißt. Es geht – wie schon bei Mallarmé (1998, 228–229) – um eine Kampfansage an die „universelle Reportage“: an die entstehenden Massenmedien und ihre vom Kommerz entstellte Sprache.

Bekannter noch als die futuristischen Polemiken gegen Form, Grammatik und Syntax sind die surrealistischen Experimente mit dem „automatischen Schreiben“ (der „écriture automatique“), das den Impulsen des Unbewussten gehorcht und ohne Interpunktion und Syntax auskommt. In diesem Kontext ist André Bretons Definition des Surrealismus zu lesen: „Reiner psychischer Automatismus, durch den man mündlich oder schriftlich oder auf jede andere Weise den wirklichen Ablauf des Denkens auszudrücken sucht. Denk-Diktat ohne jede Kontrolle durch die Vernunft, jenseits jeder ästhetischen oder ethischen Überlegung“ (Breton 1996, 26). Der surrealistische Entdecker des Unbewussten, der mit Freuds Psychoanalyse vertraut war, abstrahiert in dieser Passage (und in seinen Manifesten insgesamt) von allen tradierten Normen und Werten. Wie Marinetti und die russischen Futuristen verabschiedet er die gesamte bürgerliche Vergangenheit, vor allem die Kunst des Bildungsbürgertums.

Ähnlich wie Breton äußern sich die britischen Vorticisten: „Unser Vortext hat keine Angst vor der Vergangenheit, er hat ihre Existenz vergessen“ (Vortex 1995, 101). Auch der Vorticismus versucht, mit allen überlieferten Formen und Werten zu brechen; auch er revoltiert gegen die herkömmliche Syntax, gegen klassizistische und romantische Klischees.

Die Revolte ist im Rahmen einer soziolinguistischen Situation zu erklären, in der kommerzielle Sprachen und Ideologien die Wörter entwerten und dadurch auch die sie einsetzenden literarischen Gattungen unglaubwürdig werden lassen. Die Avantgarden reagieren nicht nur auf den „Zerfall der Werte“ (Broch), sondern auch und vor allem auf seine Folgen im sprachlichen Bereich. Sie reagieren auf dieselbe sprachliche Situation wie die Existentialisten, nur mit anderen Mitteln.

Diese sprachliche Situation beschreibt Sartre in einem Aufsatz über Brice Parain, in dem er von der „Sprache der kranken Wörter“ spricht: „Parain befasst sich mit der Sprache von 1940, nicht mit der Sprache als Universalerscheinung. Es

geht um die Sprache der kranken Wörter, in der ‚Friede' Aggression, ‚Freiheit' Unterdrückung und ‚Sozialismus' Regime der Ungleichheit bedeuten" (Sartre 1946, 236). Sartre nimmt hier – wie George Orwell – die ideologischen Soziolekte linker und rechter Provenienz aufs Korn, die in der Zeit des kalten Krieges das Wort in Propagandaschlachten instrumentalisieren und schließlich die Sprache als ganze auszehren. (Vgl. Orwell 1949, 25: „WAR IS PEACE – FREEDOM IS SLAVERY – IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH.)

Vor diesem Hintergrund kristallisiert sich der gemeinsame Nenner der europäischen Avantgarden heraus. Es ist *die radikale Kritik einer von Ideologie und Kommerz depravierten Sprache, der ein ästhetisch-stilistischer Bruch mit tradierten Formen entspricht*. Doch dieser gemeinsame Nenner verdeckt die Heterogenität der Gruppen, die gegen das Bildungsbürgertum und seine kanonisierten Gattungen aufbegehren. Es handelt sich in allen Fällen um die – stets zerstrittenen – Intellektuellen Europas, die sich nach 1900 als Revolutionäre des Wortes den politischen Revolutionären anschließen und versuchen, im Bündnis mit ihnen oder als ihre Konkurrenten die bürgerliche Ordnung zu zerschlagen. Dazu bemerkt Nikolaj Gorlov: „Die Futuristen, die die alte Lebensart hassten, hassten auch die alte Sprache" (Gorlov 1975, 175).

Dies gilt für alle europäischen Avantgarde-Bewegungen; aber der Hass der russischen und der italienischen Futuristen, der französischen Surrealisten und der britischen Vorticisten geht aus *sehr unterschiedlichen ideologischen Impulsen* hervor. Während die russischen Futuristen immer wieder versuchten, mit ihrer Sprachkritik einen Beitrag zur marxistisch-leninistischen Revolution zu leisten (Tynjanov 1967, 69), profilierten sich Marinetti und seine Weggefährten als Verbündete – zweitweise sogar als Konkurrenten – von Mussolinis Faschisten. Im Gegensatz dazu definierten sich André Breton (1935, 1971) und Louis Aragon – trotz aller Konflikte mit der französischen KP – als Revolutionäre im Sinne der proletarischen Revolution (Janin 1966). Andere Avantgarden wie der deutsche Expressionismus und der Vorticismus sind von einer politischen Ambivalenz geprägt, die u. a. in den Expressionismusdebatten zwischen Georg Lukács, Ernst Bloch und Bertolt Brecht zum Ausdruck kam (Schmitt 1973).

Somit haben wir es im Bereich der Avantgarde mit einer formalen und ästhetischen Homogenität zu tun (Sprachkritik, Ablehnung tradierter Formen, Suche nach neuen Verfahren), die mit der *politischen Heterogenität* der verschiedenen Bewegungen kontrastiert. Doch sogar diese Heterogenität gründet auf einer – ebenfalls politischen – Gemeinsamkeit: auf dem Kampf der kritischen Intellektuellen gegen ein Bildungsbürgertum, das, wie Marcuse später sagen wird, seine Ideale verraten hat (Marcuse 1970, 82–83). Der Kampf der kritischen Intellektuellen wird von verschiedenen, auch unvereinbaren Ideologien angeheizt: den fa-

schistischen, den nationalsozialistischen, den marxistischen, den marxistisch-leninistischen und den anarchistischen.

Bei näherem Hinsehen zeigt sich (und dies ist das dekonstruktivistische Moment in dieser Argumentation), dass sich die ideologische Heterogenität auch im ästhetischen Bereich niederschlägt. Im Gegensatz zu den Surrealisten und den russischen Futuristen führen die italienischen Futuristen die moderne Technik (Flugtechnik und Maschinen aller Art) gegen die alten Bildungs- und Kulturideale ins Feld. Dadurch unterscheiden sie sich erheblich von einem Surrealisten wie André Breton, dem die moderne Welt nicht geheuer ist: „Ce monde dans lequel je subis ce que je subis (n'y allez pas voir), ce monde moderne, enfin, diable, que voulez-vous que j'y fasse" (Breton 1969, 62). Nicht zufällig beruft sich Breton auf Baudelaire und die deutsch-französischen Romantik im Sinne von E. T. A. Hoffmann und Gérard de Nerval. Dadurch gibt er eine Bindung an die Vergangenheit zu, die sowohl den italienischen Futuristen als auch den britischen Vorticisten suspekt gewesen wäre.

Wie im Existenzialismus greifen Homogenität und Heterogenität, Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen in der historischen Avantgarde ineinander, konkretisieren und erklären einander. Die künstlerischen Verfahren der Avantgarden sind zwar ähnlich, gehen aber aus verschiedenen politischen Positionen hervor, die auch Differenzen im ästhetischen Bereich zeitigen. Diese Positionen können zwar dem gemeinsamen Nenner „Sprachkritik und ästhetische Revolution" subsumiert und auf den Kampf der kritischen Intellektuellen gegen das Bildungsbürgertum bezogen werden; die Gruppe der kritischen Intellektuellen ist aber so heterogen, dass ihre Angehörigen im Zweiten Weltkrieg gegeneinander antreten.

Insgesamt wird deutlich, dass erst im typologischen Vergleich, der ein Abwägen von Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen mit sich bringt, nicht nur der Kern eines Phänomens wie „Avantgarde" sichtbar wird, sondern auch seine Komplexität, sein Facettenreichtum. Insofern ist ein komparatistisches Verfahren beim Versuch einer Begriffsbestimmung literarischer Erscheinungen wie „Romantik", „Realismus" oder „Avantgarde" kaum zu vermeiden. Wer versuchen wollte, die Avantgarde mit dem italienischen Futurismus zu identifizieren, würde sich selbst dazu verurteilen, die Bedeutung des Unbewussten und der Romantik im Surrealismus zu übersehen.

Nicht übersehen sollte man die Tatsache, dass jeder Vergleich auf *Selektionen* gründet und daher stets eine *Konstruktion* ist. Stellt man nicht Futurismus und Surrealismus in den Mittelpunkt der Betrachtungen, sondern den deutschen Expressionismus und den tschechischen Poetismus (etwa Karel Teiges), gelangt man zu einer etwas anderen Begriffsbestimmung. Doch die Konstruktionen überschneiden sich und ergänzen einander; sie lassen die angestrebte Definition nicht zerfallen – wie Vertreter der Dekonstruktion annehmen könnten.

4 Literaturwissenschaft – Critique littéraire – Literary criticism

Der interkulturelle Vergleich, der Begriffe wie „Literaturwissenschaft“, „Critique littéraire“ und „Literary criticism“ zum Gegenstand hat, lässt nicht nur kulturelle und sprachliche Differenzen erkennen, sondern auch einen gemeinsamen Kern, der mit dem Begriff *Literaturtheorie* umschrieben werden könnte. Er trägt außerdem zu einem besseren Verständnis der literaturwissenschaftlichen Tätigkeit (im deutschen, niederländischen oder slawischen Sinne) und zu einer konkreteren Bestimmung des Verhältnisses von „Literaturwissenschaft“ und „Literaturkritik“ bei.

Die deutsche sprachliche Situation wurde im philologischen Bereich in den 1960er und 70er Jahren von vier literaturwissenschaftlichen Soziolekten oder Gruppensprachen beherrscht: von der Rezeptions- und Wirkungsästhetik der Konstanzer Philologen Hans Robert Jauß und Wolfgang Iser, von der ost- und westdeutschen marxistischen Literaturwissenschaft (Robert Weimanns, Gert Mattenklotts), vom Kritischen Rationalismus, von dem beispielsweise Karl Eibls Buch *Kritisch-rationale Literaturwissenschaft* (1976) zeugt, und verschiedenen Varianten der Semiotik (Götz Wienold, *Semiotik der Literatur*, 1972; Winfried Nöth, *Dynamik semiotischer Systeme*, 1977).

Die Nähe dieser Gruppensprachen zu Marxismus, Kritischem Rationalismus und Semiotik lassen bereits ihren wissenschaftlichen Charakter oder zumindest ihre wissenschaftlichen Prätentionen erkennen. Jauß verteidigte zwar immer die hermeneutische Ausrichtung seiner Rezeptionstheorie, gab aber nie den wissenschaftlichen Anspruch auf. Ihn veranschaulicht sein 1969 veröffentlichter Aufsatz „Paradigmawechsel in der Literaturwissenschaft“ (Jauß 1969, 56), in dem Kuhns Paradigmabegriff auf die Entwicklung der Literaturwissenschaft angewandt wird. Jedenfalls wurde in der sprachlichen Situation dieser Zeit der wissenschaftliche Auftrag philologischer Forschung von niemandem in Frage gestellt.

Vor allem dachte niemand daran – jedenfalls nicht im universitären Bereich – die Literaturwissenschaft in der *Literaturkritik* aufgehen zu lassen. Denn Literaturwissenschaft und Literaturkritik sind im deutschen Sprachbereich *unterschiedlich institutionalisiert*. Literaturkritik (etwa im Sinne von Marcel Reich-Ranicki) erhebt keinerlei Anspruch auf Wissenschaftlichkeit, und ihre Diskurse fanden nie Eingang in literaturwissenschaftliche Zeitschriften. Die Organe der Literaturkritik waren und sind Zeitungen und literarische Zeitschriften. In dieser Hinsicht entsprechen die deutschen Bezeichnungen „Literaturkritik“ und „Literaturwissenschaft“ sowohl auf sprachlicher als auch auf institutioneller Ebene der Terminologie der slawischen Länder und der Niederlande. Analog zum deutschen Terminus „Literaturwis-

senschaft“ wurde in Russland die Bezeichnung „literaturovedennie“ („literaturoved“ = Literaturwissenschaftler) eingeführt, in Tschechien die Bezeichnung „literární věda“ („literární vědec“ = Literaturwissenschaftler) (vgl. Zelenka 2002). Der serbo-kroatische Ausdruck „znanost o književnosti“ (oder: „književnost“) entspricht weitgehend diesen Bezeichnungen, die möglicherweise auf deutsche Einflüsse zurückzuführen sind, deren Ursprung aber auch im Streben der russischen Formalisten nach Wissenschaftlichkeit im Sinne der Naturwissenschaften zu suchen ist (Bachtin 1979, 109–11).

Auch in den Niederlanden ist analog zu „Literaturwissenschaft“ von „literatuurwetenschap“ die Rede (van Heusden und Jongeneel 1993). Auch dort ist – wie übrigens in den slawischen Ländern – Literaturkritik als besondere, wertende Diskursart anders institutionalisiert als Literaturwissenschaft. In allen diesen Ländern ist Literaturkritik – zusammen mit Literatur – *Gegenstand* einer z. T. empirisch orientierten Literaturwissenschaft.

Insgesamt zeigt sich, dass „Wissenschaftlichkeit“ in ihren verschiedenen, z. T. widersprüchlichen Definitionen das Objekt oder Ziel der literaturwissenschaftlichen Diskurse im deutschen, niederländischen und slawischen Sprachraum ist. Insofern heben sich die Diskurse in diesen Sprach- und Kulturbereichen schroff von denen der Literaturkritik ab, die einen wertenden, auch ästhetischen, nicht jedoch wissenschaftlichen Anspruch erhebt.

Nach Jan Mukařovský und Felix Vodička ist es die Hauptaufgabe des Literaturkritikers, die geltende ästhetische Norm auf literarische Texte anzuwenden, um auf diese Art zeitgemäße (dieser Norm entsprechende) ästhetische Objekte zu konstituieren. Dieser ästhetische Prozess in seiner Gesamtheit ist aber Gegenstand der von den beiden Strukturalisten entwickelten semiotischen Kunst- und Literaturwissenschaft (Vodička 1976, 92). Inwiefern diese wertfrei (werturteilsfrei) im Sinne von Max Weber sein kann oder zu sein hat, ist eine ganz andere Frage (Zima 2020, Kap. 9).

Beim Übergang von der deutschen, slawischen und niederländischen sprachlichen Situation in den englischen und romanischen Kulturbereich kommt es zu einem semantischen Bruch, den die „Literaturwissenschaft“ in ihrer mittel- und osteuropäischen Bedeutung nicht überlebt. Insofern ist sie nicht mit einer international etablierten Wissenschaft wie der Physik oder der Informatik zu vergleichen.

Im Englischen und in den romanischen Sprachen gibt es keine Synonyme für „Literaturwissenschaft“, weil Bezeichnungen wie „literary science“, „science littéraire“, „ciencia literaria“ oder „scienza letteraria“ nicht üblich sind. (Die Frage ist nicht, ob diese Ausdrücke irgendwo – möglicherweise in Übersetzungen – vorkommen, sondern welche Termini herrschend oder gebräuchlich sind.) Eingebürgert haben sich hingegen die Bezeichnungen „literary criticism“, „critique littéraire“,

„crítica literaria“ und „critica letteraria“, die nicht eindeutig und scharf von Bezeichnungen wie „literary theory“ oder „théorie de la littérature“ zu trennen sind.

Auf begrifflicher Ebene sieht es so aus, dass „théorie de la littérature“ oder „literary theory“ sowohl im französischen als auch im englischen Sprachbereich der „critique littéraire“ oder dem „literary criticism“ subsumierbar ist, nicht jedoch umgekehrt.

Dies lassen neuere französische Einführungen in die Literaturwissenschaft bzw. „critique littéraire“, „théorie de la littérature“ erkennen, in denen neben Schriftstellern wie Proust, Saintre-Beuve und Sartre auch Theoretiker wie Gaston Bachelard, Charles Mauron, Roman Jakobson und Roland Barthes kommentiert werden.[1] Fabrice Thumerel spricht im dritten Kapitel von den „drei Kritiken“, „les trois critiques“: „la critique journalistique“, „la critique universitaire“, „la critique d’écrivain“ (1998, 101). Die Relevanzkriterien und Klassifikationen seines Diskurses entsprechen weitgehend denen Jérôme Rogers: Wie Roger bringt er letztlich alle Diskurse über Literatur in einer Klasse unter, die er freilich unterteilt (vgl. auch Poulet 1986 *La Conscience critique*).

Der deutschen, niederländischen oder slawischen Literaturwissenschaft ist eine solche Taxonomie fremd, weil in Mittel- und Osteuropa (ähnlich wie in Skandinavien) der Gegensatz zwischen Literaturkritik und Literaturwissenschaft dahingehend interpretiert wird, das Literaturkritik nicht Partnerin oder Konkurrentin der universitären Literaturwissenschaft ist, sondern deren *Gegenstand*.

Nun mag man einwenden, dass die „Schule von Bordeaux“ (Escarpit, Estivals, Zalamansky et al.) eine ähnliche Einstellung zur Literaturkritik hatte wie etwa die deutschen Literaturwissenschaftler. Sie wird in Frankreich jedoch nicht der „critique littéraire“ zugerechnet, sondern der *Soziologie* (vgl. Escarpit et al. 1970, 29–41). So ist auch der Gegensatz zwischen den Ausdrücken „sociologie de la littérature“ und „sociocritique“ zu verstehen: Die eine will Soziologie sein, die andere „critique littéraire“, d. h. nicht Wissenschaft im sozialwissenschaftlichen Sinne (vgl. Duchet 1979 und Zima 1985/2000).

Im anglo-amerikanischen Bereich sieht die institutionelle und sprachliche Situation ähnlich aus: In einem seiner frühen Bände spricht Terry Eagleton von „Categories for a Materialist Criticism“ (vgl. Eagleton 1978, 44–63). Dies bedeutet konkret: Die materialistische Dialektik wird dem „literary criticism“ zugerechnet – ähnlich wie in Frankreich, Italien oder Spanien, wo häufig von einer „critique marxiste“ oder eine „crítica marxista“ die Rede ist. (Damit ist in diesem Fall nicht

1 Vgl. Jérôme Roger *La Critique littéraire*, Paris, Dunod, 1997. Besonders aufschlussreich in dieser Hinsicht ist das Buch von Fabrice Thumerel, das ebenfalls den Titel *La Critique littéraire* trägt (vgl. Thumerel 1998).

einfach „marxistische Gesellschaftskritik“ gemeint, sondern „marxistische Literaturwissenschaft bzw. Literaturkritik“.) Dass zwischen „literary theory“ und „literary criticism“ kein Gegensatz konstruiert wird, zeigt Eagletons Buch als ganzes, in dem zwischen F. R. Leavis’ „criticism“ und dem „Marxist criticism“ kein institutioneller Unterschied gemacht wird (Eagleton 1978, 44–63).

Dies ist wohl kein Zufall, denn trotz aller Unterschiede, die den Idealisten und Ästheten Leavis vom marxistischen Materialisten Eagleton trennen, verbindet sie ein kritisches Anliegen: die seit Carlyle und Ruskin aktuelle Kritik des bürgerlichen Utilitarismus, der bei Eagleton als kapitalistische Ideologie kritisiert wird. Weder Leavis noch Eagleton erscheint der „criticism“ als empirische oder gar wertfreie Wissenschaft im Sinne von Alphons Silbermann, Hans Norbert Fügen, Norbert Groeben oder Siegfried J. Schmidt (vgl. Schmidt 1991).

Im Übergang von Leavis zu Raymond Williams und Eagleton kommt es im „criticism“ zwar zu einer materialistischen Wende, er versteht sich aber weiterhin primär als Kritik und nicht als Wissenschaft. Eine deutlichere Abgrenzung zwischen „literary criticism“ und „literary theory“ macht sich in Eagletons *Literary Theory. An Introduction* (1983) und vor allem in *After Theory* (2003) bemerkbar, wo Theorie stillschweigend mit Literaturtheorie identifiziert wird.

Dass es schließlich zu einer Fusion der beiden Bezeichnungen „literary criticism“ und „literary theory“ kommen kann, lässt der Titel erkennen, den der Londoner Verlag der englischen Übersetzung meines Buches über die Dekonstruktion gab: *Deconstruction and Critical Theory* (vgl. Zima 2002). „Critical Theory“ bedeutet in diesem Fall nicht, wie deutschsprachige Leser vermuten könnten, „Kritische Theorie“, sondern „literary theory“ als „criticism“. Es ist nicht ganz einfach, aus diesem terminologischen Labyrinth, das aufgrund interkultureller Interferenzen noch verwirrender wirkt, hinauszufinden.

Den entscheidenden Schritt, durch den sich der anglo-amerikanische „criticism“ von der mittel- und osteuropäischen Literaturwissenschaft entfernt, tut der amerikanische Dekonstruktivist Geoffrey H. Hartman, wenn er den „literary critic“ als Schriftsteller auffasst. Er plädiert für ein „synthesizing criticism“ „(...) that would combine art and philosophy“ (Hartman 1980, 38). Sein Vorbild ist Jacques Derridas *Glas*, eine philosophisch-literarische Textcollage, in der Hegel und Jean Genet in einer Hegel-Parodie miteinander konfrontiert werden.

Das Problem, das sich hier abzeichnet, sollte nicht unterschätzt werden: denn die anglo-amerikanischen und französischen Diskurse des „criticism“ und der „critique“ zeugen nicht nur von einer anderen soziolinguistischen Situation und von anders institutionalisierten Soziolekten: Sie sind auch anders strukturiert. Während der Gegenstand literaturwissenschaftlicher Diskurse im deutschen oder mittel-osteuropäischen Sinn „die wissenschaftliche Darstellung der Literatur“ ist (im Rahmen erzähltheoretischer, semiotischer, phänomenologischer oder soziolo-

gischer Modelle), ist der Gegenstand von Hartmans Diskurs das „kreative Schreiben“ als „synthesizing criticism“.

Das ist nicht weiter erstaunlich, denn Hartman steht in einer angloamerikanischen Tradition, deren Programm der „New Critic“ Ransom prägnant zusammenfasste, als er schrieb: „Ich bin der Ansicht, dass Dichtung auf revolutionäre Art mit der Konvention der logischen Rede bricht (...)“ (Ransom 1941, 280). Für so manchen Vertreter des New Criticism oder der amerikanischen Dekonstruktion gelten diese Aussagen über die Dichtung auch für den „criticism“.

Abschließend kann festgehalten werden, dass „Literaturwissenschaft“ im deutschen, niederländischen oder slawischen Sinne im Englischen und Französischen noch am ehesten mit „literary theory“ oder „théorie de la littérature“ übersetzt werden kann.[2] Der interkulturelle Vergleich zeigt, dass die Bezeichnungen „literary criticism“ und „critique littéraire“ die Grenzen zwischen Literaturwissenschaft und Literaturkritik verwischen und dazu angetan sind, Missverständnisse zu zeitigen.

5 Diskurs – Discourse – Discours

Im Falle von „Diskurs“ ist die gesellschaftliche und sprachliche Situation anders beschaffen als im Falle von „Literaturwissenschaft“. Sowohl im Deutschen als auch im Französischen, Englischen und Italienischen hat das Wort „Diskurs“, „discourse“, „discours“ oder „discorso“ zwei Bedeutungen: Es bedeutet sowohl „Rede“ als auch „Gespräch“. Von dieser *Doppelbedeutung des Wortes* kann man sich in verschiedenen Wörterbüchern überzeugen. So findet man beispielsweise im *Großen Duden* die folgende Definition von „Diskurs“: „methodisch aufgebaute Abhandlung über ein [wissenschaftliches] Thema; Gedankenaustausch, Unterhaltung“. Komplementär dazu heißt es im *Oxford Advanced Dictionary*: „speech, lecture, sermon, treatise; (old use) conversation“. Auf eine Bedeutungsvielfalt stößt man im *Petit Robert*; sie kann aber auch im Rahmen des Gegensatzes *Rede/Gespräch* unterteilt werden: „Propos que l’on tient (...), conversation, dialogue, entretien (...); développement oratoire fait devant une réunion de personnes (...) exposé, traité [als Beispiel wird angeführt: Descartes’ *Discours de la méthode*].“ Im italienischen Bereich könnte man Machiavellis *Discorsi* nennen (Machiavelli 1976, 1981).

Es fällt auf, dass hier *Diskurs als Rede* im Vordergrund steht, nicht Diskurs als Gespräch. Dieser Sprachgebrauch herrscht auch in der französischen Diskursse-

2 Vgl. Kibédi-Varga, Hg. 1981: *Théorie de la littérature*: Dieser Band enthält ausschließlich literaturwissenschaftliche Beiträge.

miotik vor, die sich fast ausschließlich mit dem Diskurs als Rede, als semantisch-syntaktischer und narrativer Struktur befasst – im Unterschied etwa zur angloamerikanischen „conversation analysis“ (Aijmer 1996). Sie wendet sich gegen ältere Versuche, etwa eines Zelig Harris, den Diskurs empiristisch als Verkettung von Sätzen aufzufassen, weil dabei die semantische Basis und die narrative Struktur des Diskurses aus dem Blickfeld verschwinden. Sie ist eine transphrastische, über einzelne Sätze hinausgehende Betrachtungsweise (Harris 1952).

Die Anliegen der Pariser semiotischen Schule (L’Ecole de Paris: Algirdas Julien Greimas, Jean-Claude Coquet, Joseph Courtés, Erik Landowski et al.) können als eine Kritik an Harris’ interphrastischer Auffassung des Diskurses verstanden werden. In diesem Kontext sind die folgenden Bemerkungen von Jean-Claude Coquet zu verstehen: „Wenn wir neue Ursachen der erkenntnistheoretischen und methodologischen Verwirrung vermeiden wollen, sollten wir den Bereich des Interphrastischen (Z. Harris) vom Bereich des Transphrastischen (semiotischen) Unterscheiden“ (Coquet 1982, 33).

Dass hier nicht Wortklauberei oder Haarspalterei im Spiel ist, lässt eine Anmerkung von Nicolas Ruwet zu Harris’ Ansatz erkennen: „Harris klammert bewusst alle semantischen und vor allem pragmatischen Überlegungen aus“ (Ruwet 1975, 310). Dies bedeutet, dass die semantische Basis des Diskurses unberücksichtigt bleibt. Es sind jedoch die semantischen Entscheidungen des Diskurssubjekts – Relevanzkriterien, Selektionen und Klassifikationen, – die einem Diskurs seine Richtung vorgeben, seine Teleologie. Daher kann Greimas in einem Gespräch mit Hans-George Ruprecht feststellen: „Das Paradigmatische ist es, das das Syntagmatische organisiert“ [C’est le paradigmatique qui organise le syntagmatique] (Greimas, bei Ruprecht 1984, 9).

Es ist hier nicht der Ort, die Strukturale Semiotik und ihren Diskursbegriff mitsamt der *Tiefenstruktur* (*structure profonde*), dem *semiotischen Viereck* (*carré sémiotique*) und dem *Akatntenmodell* darzustellen. Die hier skizzierten Grundgedanken dieser Semiotik und ihre Kritik an Harris sollten lediglich eine Vorstellung vom Diskurs als Rede: als *semantisch-narrativer Struktur* vermitteln.

Wichtig ist noch der Zusatz, dass in der gesamten französischen Semiotik dieser Diskursbegriff vorherrscht. Davon zeugt z. B. Jean-Michel Adams Buch *Linguistique textuelle* mit seinem Untertitel *Des genres de discours aux textes* ebenso wie Dominique Maingueneaus *Initiation aux méthodes de l’analyse du discours*. In diesem Buch wird der Diskurs als „transphrastische Struktur“ („structure transphrastique“) definiert. Diese Definition ist für den gesamten französischen Sprachraum repräsentativ und unterscheidet ihn von anderen Sprachräumen und ihren soziolinguistischen Situationen.

Denn wesentlich für die komparatistische Betrachtung ist der Umstand, dass sich vor allem im deutschen Sprachraum Jürgen Habermas’ Diskurstheorie durch-

gesetzt hat, in der „Diskurs“ auf kommunikativer Ebene als *Gespräch* definiert wird. In diesem Gespräch sollen – nach Habermas – Legitimationsansprüche rivalisierender Annahmen und Hypothesen überprüft werden. Dadurch kommt es zu einer *interkulturell bedingten Spaltung des Diskursbegriffes*, die weitgehend dem in den Wörterbüchern kommentierten semantischen Dualismus entspricht. Sie hat für zahlreiche Vieldeutigkeiten und Verwirrungen gesorgt, die mit den Missverständnissen zu vergleichen sind, die immer von neuem im Spannungsverhältnis von „Literaturwissenschaft“ und „literary criticism“ bzw. „critique littéraire“ entstehen.

Charakteristisch für Habermas’ kommunikative Auffassung des Diskursbegriffs ist eine Textpassage aus *Erläuterungen zur Diskursethik*, in der u. a. zu lesen ist, „daß Diskurse, in denen ja problematische Geltungsansprüche als Hypothesen behandelt werden, eine Art reflexiv gewordenen kommunikativen Handelns darstellen“ (Habermas 1992, 17). Geltungsansprüche von Argumenten sollen demnach in einem Gespräch auf ihre Haltbarkeit hin überprüft werden.

An anderer Stelle ist in Habermas’ Werk von „Diskursteilnehmern“ die Rede und davon, „daß nur die Normen Geltung beanspruchen dürfen, die die Zustimmung aller Betroffenen als Teilnehmer eines praktischen Diskurses finden (oder finden könnten)“ (Habermas 1983, 103). Der Ausdruck „Teilnehmer eines praktischen Diskurses“ bestätigt, dass Habermas unter „Diskurs“ ein klärendes Gespräch versteht – und nicht etwa eine Rede als semantisch-narrative Struktur.

In der deutschsprachigen Welt hat sich (außer in der Romanistik) diese Auffassung des Diskursbegriffs weitgehend durchgesetzt. So ist beispielsweise beim Soziologen Armin Nassehi, der keineswegs als Habermas-Schüler zu verstehen ist, von einer „Diskursarena“ die Rede, und es wird stillschweigend angenommen, dass in dieser Arena zahlreiche Sprecher am Diskurs teilnehmen: „Der Sinn der Arena ist dann die Arena selbst: Der Diskurs erhöht die Authentizität der Sprecher dadurch, dass ihre Inkommensurabilität wechselseitig anerkannt wird (...)“ (Nassehi 2006, 62).

Auch in der deutschen *Diskursforschung* dominiert die kommunikative oder dialogische Auffassung des Diskursbegriffs. Auch dort ist von „Diskursarenen“ (Keller 2010, 79) die Rede und von „Sprecherpositionen“ innerhalb des Diskurses als Kommunikation: „Potentielle Sprecher müssen eine Karriere, Ausbildung, Sozialisation durchlaufen, um innerhalb des Diskurses und der dort verfügbaren Sprecherpositionen sprechen zu können (mit ungleich verteilten Chancen auf Gehör)“ (Keller 2012, 99). Auch dieser Text folgt Habermas’ Auffassung des Diskurses als „Gespräch“ oder „Diskussion“.

Diese Auffassung kommt auch in einem Kommentar zum „Utopiediskurs in der Weimarer Republik“ von Rüdiger Graf zum Ausdruck: „Zum Utopiediskurs in der Weimarer Republik gehörten damit zum Beispiel alle Texte, die Utopien for-

mulierten, sich über das Phänomen des Utopischen positiv oder negativ äußerten oder ein neues Verständnis des Utopiebegriffs vorschlugen“ (Graf 2006, 84). Abermals wird der Diskurs als *Diskussion*, d. h. als ein Miteinander und Gegeneinander von Reden, von Diskursen im Sinne der französischen Semiotik aufgefasst.

Aber nicht nur Habermas, sondern auch Foucault, der den Diskurs (reichlich vage) als Verkettung von *Aussagen* (*énoncés*) – also als *Rede* – auffasst, nimmt eine Schlüsselposition in der sprachlichen Situation Deutschlands ein; und so ist es zu erklären, dass die beiden Diskursbegriffe – Diskurs als Gespräch und Diskurs als Rede – im deutschsprachigen Raum miteinander konkurrieren und bisweilen durcheinander geraten. Dies ist einer der Gründe, weshalb „es in den Kultur- und Sozialwissenschaften bislang keine einhellige Auffassung gibt, was unter einem Diskurs zu verstehen ist“, wie Franz X. Eder (2006, 11) zu Recht bemerkt.

Da im englischen Sprachbereich sowohl Foucault und die französische Semiotik (von Saussure bis Barthes und Greimas) als auch Habermas’ Werk recht intensiv rezipiert werden, nimmt es nicht wunder, dass sowohl in Großbritannien als auch in den USA die beiden Begriffe koexistieren. Mehr noch: sie koexistieren in einem Werk, wie die folgenden Bemerkungen zu Norman Faircloughs „Critical Discourse Analysis“ (CDA) zeigen werden.

„I see discourses as ways of representing aspects of the world“, heißt es etwa bei Fairclough in *Analysing Discourse*, und eine ergänzende Definition findet sich im Schlusswort zu diesem Buch: „Discourses are diverse representations of social life which are inherently positioned – differently positioned social actors ‚see‘ and represent social life in different ways, different discourses“ (Fairclough 2003, 206). Hier wird Diskurs als „Rede“ im Sinne von Foucault und in Übereinstimmung mit der Strukturalen Semiotik aufgefasst nach dem Motto: jedem seine Rede als Weltsicht oder Weltbetrachtung

In einem anderen Werk spricht Fairclough nicht so sehr als Foucault-Leser und Semiotiker, sondern fasst „Diskurs“ in Übereinstimmung mit Habermas als „Gespräch“ auf: „The examples so far have been of face-to-face discourse but a not inconsiderable proportion of discourse in contemporary society actually involves participants who are separated in place and time“ (Fairclough 2015, 78). Diese Feststellung ist zweifellos richtig und in Zeiten von Pandemien, in denen virtuelle Kommunikation den Alltag beherrscht (etwa in universitären „Webinaren“) auch hochaktuell.

Aber was ist mit dem Diskurs-Begriff geschehen? Er hat einen Bedeutungswandel durchgemacht, den Fairclough nirgends kommentiert: *Aus der Rede wurde das Gespräch im Sinne von Habermas.* In einem zusammen mit Isabella Fairclough verfassten Werk wird wiederum die semiotische Definition angeboten: „Discourses are ways of representing aspects of the world which can generally be identified with

different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors (e.g. different political parties)“ (Fairclough 2012, 82).

Dies bedeutet, dass bei Fairclough insgesamt mindestens *drei Definitionen* von „Diskurs“ koexistieren: 1. Diskurs als Rede eines individuellen Aussagesubjekts; 2. Diskurs als Rede eines Kollektivsubjekts (z. B. Partei) und 3. Diskurs als Gespräch. Da die drei Diskursvarianten nicht aufeinander bezogen werden, kann man Reiner Keller nur zustimmen, wen er feststellt: „Der Begriff des Diskurses bezieht sich deswegen selbst innerhalb des engeren Feldes der Diskursforschung auf sehr Unterschiedliches (...)“ (Keller 2011, 9).

Allein im englischen Sprachbereich wird diese Diagnose bestätigt, weil hier Diskurs auch sehr allgemein als *Diskurstyp* aufgefasst wird, etwa als juristischer Diskurs: „(...) Legal language is the institutional discourse sine qua non (...)“ (Simpson 2019, 33).

Immerhin trägt eine komparatistische Betrachtungsweise zur Klärung des Begriffs bei, indem sie 1. seine diversen Definitionen mit sprachlichen und kulturellen Situationen verknüpft, 2. diese Definitionen in soziolinguistischen Kontexten erklärt und 3. eine (stets hypothetische) Definition vorschlägt: *Diskurs als Rede oder (genauer) semantisch-syntaktische und narrative Struktur und als Gespräch in den verschiedensten Formen.*

6 Die theoretische Bedeutung des Vergleichs und der Komparatistik

Von der Komparatistik behauptet Erwin Koppen, sie habe keine eigene Theorie (vgl. Einleitung). In dieser Betrachtung sollte gezeigt werden, dass die Komparatistik (auch die nicht-literarische) als Soziosemiotik denkbar ist, die soziologische und semiotische Theorien und Methoden anwendet. Zugleich sollte deutlich werden, dass mit Hilfe dieser Theorien und mit Hilfe des Vergleichs Begriffe wie „literarische Moderne“ („Modernismus“), „Konversationsdrama“, „Avantgarde“, „Literaturwissenschaft“ oder „Diskurs“ konkreter, d. h. im interkulturellen Kontext, im Hinblick auf Ähnlichkeiten und Differenzen bestimmt werden können.

Wer versucht, eine literarische Periode wie die Romantik ausschließlich im Rahmen einer Nationalphilologie, etwa im germanistischen oder anglistischen Zusammenhang, zu bestimmen, wird niemals von „der Romantik“, bestenfalls von der „deutschen“ oder „englischen Romantik“ sprechen können. Zugleich wird er Aspekte der deutschen Romantik ausblenden müssen, die auf die Wirkung französischer Autoren – etwa Jean-Jacques Rousseaus – in Deutschland oder England

zurückzuführen sind – es sei denn, dass er doch noch über den nationalen Bereich hinausgeht und komparatistisch argumentiert (dies ist häufig der Fall).

Als „theorielos" oder mit anspruchsvoller Theorie unvereinbar wird die Komparatistik von manchen Wissenschaftlern direkt oder indirekt in Frage gestellt. Der Soziologe Niklas Luhmann stellt sie zumindest indirekt in Frage, wenn er bemerkt:

> Wie im alltäglichen Sprachgebrauch ist es auch in der Soziologie ganz üblich, von italienischer Gesellschaft, spanischer Gesellschaft usw. zu sprechen, obwohl Namen wie Italien oder Spanien in einer Theorie schon aus methodologischen Gründen nicht verwendet werden sollten (Luhmann 1997, 158).

Dieser Satz ist nicht nur deshalb problematisch, weil er alle Komparatistiken – von der Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft und Sprachwissenschaft bis zur Vergleichenden Soziologie und Politikwissenschaft – aus dem theoretisch-wissenschaftlichen Bereich ausschließt, sondern auch deshalb, weil er eine interkulturelle Begriffsbildung, wie sie hier skizziert wurde, vorab disqualifiziert.

Wie sollen Erscheinungen wie „Klassik" oder „Romantik", die es im europäischen Sinne weder in China noch in Japan gibt, als interkulturelle und zugleich kulturell spezifische Erscheinungen definiert werden, wenn über die Unterschiede zwischen französischer und deutscher „Klassik" nichts ausgesagt werden darf, weil die Adjektive „französisch" und „deutsch" tabuisiert sind? Was geschieht mit der Vergleichenden Verfassungslehre oder mit der Vergleichenden Föderalismusforschung, die das Phänomen „Föderalismus" nur mit Hilfe von Vergleichen – z. B. zwischen den USA, der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und der Russischen Föderation – begrifflich erfassen kann?

„Wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen", bemerkt Goethe (vgl. Einleitung). Mit „fremden Sprachen" befasst sich u. a. die Vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft. Wie soll sie aber verfahren, wenn die Verwendung von Namen wie „Italien" und „Spanien" verboten wird? Sie wird nicht einmal auf die sprachliche Vielfalt Spaniens (oder Italiens) hinweisen können. Auch der rudimentäre Hinweis, dass Katalanisch auch in Andorra gesprochen wird, wird in einer Theorie nicht mehr erlaubt sein.

Man wird daher Luhmanns These umkehren und behaupten müssen, *dass Namen wie Italien und Spanien in der theoretischen Begriffsbildung unvermeidlich sind*. Zugleich wird man mit dem Romanisten Ulrich Schulz-Buschhaus auch von der „Unvermeidlichkeit der Komparatistik" (Schulz-Buschhaus 1979, 235) sprechen. Ihre Unvermeidlichkeit sollte in diesem Artikel nachgewiesen werden.

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3 Towards a New World Literature

Dana Bönisch

Geopoetics and Global Warfare in the Twenty-First Century

Abstract: In the age of global terrorism and drone warfare, the materialities and medialities of war become intertwined in new ways – and a new kind of "world literature" emerges in the twisted coordinates of violent connectedness. This article considers three novels dealing with the so-called War on Terror in a specific way: Thomas Lehr's *September* (2010), Kevin Powers's *The Yellow Birds* (2013), and David Mitchell's *The Bone Clocks* (2014) all produce different modes of vision and different forms of globality. My reading of these texts is framed by a new understanding of geopoetics: drawing on, among others, the work of Michel Serres and his philosophy of relationality, it argues that fiction's response to simplifying narratives and visual regimes is informed by a topological concept of space that collapses metrical distance.

Keywords: drone warfare, geography, geopoetics, post-9/11 literature, topology, War on Terror, war writing

The first decade of the twenty-first century and its dispersed and complex wars have often been framed by theories of the iconic and the medial. Almost automatically, they have been discussed in similar terms to both the Gulf War of the 1990s (of which, famously, Baudrillard claimed that it "did not take place") and the terrorist spectacle of 9/11; that is, as being orchestrated to generate iconic images, while, at the same time, actually rendering suffering and violence invisible. What has been frequently overlooked in these catchy analyses is the fact that visuality (a term that focuses on practices of seeing rather than the circulation of images) and recent warfare have a much more complex relationship that also calls for a rethinking of spatial theory.

"Visuality [as] techno-culturally mediated vision [plays] a strategic role [...] in linking and de-linking 'sight' and 'site' in late modern war through the spatialities of targeting and the virtualization of violence," writes the visual theorist Derek Gregory (2010, 68). It is precisely this reciprocal entanglement and isolation of visuality and space that, as I will argue, also informs a poetics of late modern warfare. In this article, I will focus on novels set in the last Iraq War.

"We fight them over there so we don't have to fight them here": this was, famously, George W. Bush's retrospective justification for extending the so-called War on Terror to Iraq. After it became clear that the reports about weapons of mass destruction were false, the invasion – which had already happened – had to

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be legitimized again, and what was more convenient than invoking 9/11 and a terrorist threat, even though there was no connection between Al-Qaeda and Iraq? In Bush's dichotomous reasoning, the signifiers "us" and "them" (which are, of course, arbitrary in themselves) are mapped onto a binary opposition of places, while at the same time Islamist terrorism – ("them") – is merged with the nation state of Iraq ("over there"). This is a simple example of a rhetoric of separation that is both spatial and constructs otherness – a situation that is not remotely new.

From the catapult to the crossbow, from the assault rifle to the long-range missile, the history of war instruments is marked by the attempt to increase distance from the enemy while decreasing one's own risk of dying. Carl Schmitt, in *Der Nomos der Erde* (1950), conceives this spatial-technological complex alongside the question of symmetry and the lawfulness of war: aerial war cannot be a *bellum iustum* because it is not "bounded" any more and because its objective is destruction. Ironically, even for Schmitt, who served the National Socialist regime, attempts to legitimate such a war compel us "die Diskriminierung des Gegners ins Abgründige zu treiben" [to push the discrimination of the enemy to new levels]. He adds a historical reference to the prohibition of crossbows by Pope Innocent II in 1134. Killing at a distance was deemed morally objectionable – with a crucial exception: against non-Christian enemies, long-range weapons were still "selbstverständlich benutzt [...], weil der Krieg gegen eine solche Art von Feinden von selbst ein gerechter Krieg war" [used as if it were a matter of course, because the war against such enemies was automatically a just war] (Schmitt 299; my translations). This combination of distant killing and excluding narratives is, in a way, still operative in the "War on Terror."

According to Edward Said, the same discursive patterns that he analysed with regard to colonial constructions in *Orientalism* (1978) und *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) continue in the Iraq War and its rhetorical preparation:

> Without a well-organised sense that the people over there were not like "us' and didn't appreciate "our" values – the very core of traditional orientalist dogma – there would have been no war. The American advisers to the Pentagon and the White House use the same clichés, the same demeaning stereotypes, the same justifications for power and violence [...] as the scholars enlisted by the Dutch conquerors of Malaysia and Indonesia, the British armies of India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, West Africa, the French armies of Indochina and North Africa. (Said 2003)

Orientalist and colonialist stereotyping typically produces a fiction of, in the terms of Justin Edwards, "full knowability": it is not only us against them, but "we" also know how "they" work: "A colonist discourse [...] distances the 'other' and generates stereotypes to suggest that he or she is entirely knowable and therefore subjectable" (2008, 18).

In spatial theory, for example in Michel de Certeau's work, a view from above onto the complex textures of the city is often associated with such a violent, imposing, simplifying form of knowledge and narrative. In Cairo, under French rule, this powerful nexus was in action quite literally: as Derek Gregory points out, the French colonizers' first step was to impose what he calls a scopic regime on the city: raised platforms, optical instruments of control, grids – and a European cartographic representation.

Today, visuality and the "view from above" are linked to physical violence in an even more literal way. In drone warfare, the image *is* the weapon, or a crucial part of it; and "full knowledge" (or, in military lingo, good "intelligence") about the targeted persons is deadly in a very direct sense (and, contrary to what the semantics of the precision weapon suggests, also for civilians who happen to be around them). At the same time, warfare has become truly global: drones targeting a square metre in Yemen or Afghanistan are piloted from Arizona or Nevada. Such a highly technologized war certainly takes a combination of increased distance, visualization, and reductive narratives to its extreme.

For Emmanuel Levinas, ethics is grounded in the direct encounter with the face of the other. What is an ethical response to warfare, then, in the age of the screen and electronic information? To what extent and how do fictional texts question, counter, or feed on its effects? Analyses of war writing often work with the presumption, or come to the conclusion, that "war eludes representation." This seems short-sighted to me on many levels, one being the implication that other things and events do not elude representation. Rather, especially with regard to late modern warfare, we might ask how the martial technologies of representation, both showing and acting, are mimicked or sabotaged in narrative structures. In addition to that, I will argue that the response to simplifying narratives and their cross-relations with visual regimes can be framed by the concept of topology and narrative modes of proximity.

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In Thomas Lehr's *September: Fata Morgana*, a kind of long prose poem on four lives affected by 9/11 and the Iraq War, a techno-military view from above is set against a ground-level vision:

> über eine von den Infrarotkameras in Grün-Grau-Tönen wiedergegebene bewegte Bodenaufnahme huschen [...] niedergeduckte / Objekte / in Moosgrün Jadegrün Schilfgrün plötzlich gesprenkelt von madenähnlichen weißen Schemen (je heller desto wärmer) [...] auf der Erde / endet die Distanz wird / alles wirklich [...] zerreißen Palmstämme Lastwagen die Körper einiger Hundert Soldaten einer Saddam-Elitedivision und auch [...] der alte marineblaue VW und sein Besitzer ein vierzigjähriger Gärtner der alle zwei Wochen von Baghdad

> aus hierher fuhr […] am nächsten Tag muss man / durch das Visier der Panzer / wieder klar sehen was man tötet […] die abgerissenen Beine Arme Köpfe (Lehr 2010, 354)

> [cowering objects / can be seen moss-green jade-green rush-green suddenly sprinkled with maggot-like whitish spectres (the brighter the warmer) (…) on the ground / distance stops (…) everything is torn to pieces the trunks of palm trees trucks tanks the bodies of several hundred soldiers of one of Saddam's elite divisions and also the plantations the toolshed the old navy-blue VW and its owner a 40-year-old gardener who used to drive out here from Baghdad every two weeks (…) on the next day you have to once more see clearly what you're killing / in the sights of the tanks / the torn-off arms legs heads.] (Lehr, trans. Mitchell 2013, 304–305)

The narrative moves from the computerized weapon's vision down to the cataclysmic events on the ground, both contrasting aerial warfare with fighting on the ground and turning the pixellated silhouettes on the screen into complex persons with jobs and relatives. On a macrostructural level, the text works similarly. It links the stories of two father–daughter pairs – Muna and Tarik in Baghdad, Martin and Sabrina in New York – in various ways. The four characters are in symmetric life situations, as both fathers are in their mid-fifties, well respected in their professions and social circles, interested in culture, and open-minded; both daughters are in love for the first time and are about to embark on a career; and, ultimately, both daughters (one definitely, one possibly) lose their lives in the intertwined catastrophes of 9/11 and a suicide attack in Baghdad. They did actually meet at one point: unbeknown to them but not to the reader, they both have a childhood memory of a certain café table in Paris and a girl their age with her father. But, in addition to this one physical encounter, there seems to be a more intangible connection between Muna and Sabrina, who both sometimes address a mysterious sister. When Muna visits the historic excavation sites of Babylon, the famous Ishtar Gate becomes a kind of ghostly point of intersection between the two daughter narratives:

> die einst bemalten Reliefe der Drachen des Marduk und der Stiere des Adad schienen mit den Steinen zu verschwimmen oder auf deren Fugengitter aufzutauchen wie auf einem brüchigen in die Länge gezogenen Koordinatensystem historischer Halluzinationen / ich berühre eines der heiligen Tiere an der Schulter und du / Schwester / gehst in Berlin vom Pergamonaltar her kommend mit einem Engelsschritt nach Babylon durch den Korridor der Jahrhunderte und legst die Hand auf die gleiche Stelle als spiegelten wir uns durch den Stein. (Lehr 2010, 263)

> [the reliefs of the dragons of Marduk and the bulls of Adad that had once been painted seemed to merge with the stones or to appear on the grid of their joins as if on a cracked protracted system of coordinates of historical / hallucinations / I touch one of the sacred animals on the shoulder and you / sister / coming from the Pergamon Altar in Berlin take one angel's step down the corridor of the centuries to Babylon and place your hand on the

> same spot as if we were looking at our reflections through the stone.] (Lehr, trans. Mitchell 2013, 222–223)

The ancient Babylon and its rich culture is an important reference point for the text; in that way, too, it works against dominant media narratives of Iraq as a desolate war zone with a population that, in Judith Butler's terms, is framed as ungrievable and already lost because it does not share a cultural likeness with "ourselves" (see Butler 2010, 36).

Ironically, while what is on display in the Pergamon Museum is the real Ishtar Gate and other parts of the Nineveh palace (others, again, are located at the British Museum in London), there is only a small copy of the former on its original site in Iraq. This chiasmus points to the subtle imperial forms of violence still at work, and it might be one reason why the Ishtar Gate is such a central, albeit easily overlooked (given the text's sheer length and complex web of references) motif in *September*, providing the setting for one of the few ghostly encounters between the characters. Or, more precisely, rather than just providing a setting, the Gate itself seems to become a nodal point outside linear time and metrical space. What, to many reviewers, seemed to be a certain clairvoyance among the characters, could, I think, be read more productively as a topological figure on and referring to the level of the text itself. Significantly, Muna's sensation or imagination of a spatial and temporal instability at Babylon distorts and disrupts a geometric "grid" formed of stones. In the English translation, the emerging spatial form that the latter is then likened to ("einem brüchigen, in die Länge gezogenen Koordinatensystem") becomes a "cracked protracted system of coordinates of historical / hallucinations." I would suggest, though, translating *brüchig* as "fragile" here (if something is *brüchig*, it has not yet cracked, or not necessarily), and *in die Länge gezogen* as "stretched" (and not as the more bureaucratic "protracted"). And what is a "fragile, stretched coordinate system" other than a topological space that collapses stable distance?

I will briefly explain how I understand the term "topology," as many readers will associate it with Heidegger's notion of topology, or topology just as anything relating to space, which is not at all what is meant here. A basic definition of mathematical topology would be that it complicates Euclidean space, space in the common sense, space as a sort of container that we move in – because it does not deal with stable, measurable distances. Rather, it defines closeness as connectivity and relationality. So, what is geographically, topographically distant, can be "close" in terms of topology; the philosopher Michel Serres calls topology "la science de voisinages et déchirures" [the science of nearness and rifts] (1994, 93; trans. Lapidus 1995, 60).

Topologists claim that a doughnut and a coffee cup are, topologically speaking, the same object, because their shapes – in theory – can be stretched into each other without operations of tearing or cutting. Another famous example is the Möbius strip with its turn and twist. As both figures allow no distinction between inside and outside, upside and downside, they point to how topology can be connected to decategorizing logic in other contexts and disciplines. Michel Serres writes:

> Nous ne répondrons plus jamais par oui ou par non aux questions de l'appartenance. Dedans ou dehors? Entre oui et non, zéro et un, une infinité de valeurs apparaissent, et donc une infinité de réponses. Le mathématiciens nomment floue cette rigeur nouvelle: sous-ensembles flous, topologie floue. Qu'ils soient remerciés: nous avions besoin de ce flou depuis de millénaires. (Serres 1980, 87)

> [We will no longer answer with a simple yes or no to questions of belonging. Inside or outside? Between yes and no, between zero and one, an infinite number of values appear, and thus an infinity of responses. Mathematicians call this new rigor "fuzzy": fuzzy subsets, fuzzy topology. They should be thanked: we have needed this fuzziness for millennia.] (Serres, trans. Schehr 1982, 57, modified here)

While Serres's own thinking can be described as topological, he, as in this passage, also short-circuits questions of belonging (and thus, exclusion) with the new fuzziness of twentieth-century mathematics, basically proposing the latter as a blueprint for ethical thought. Another form of topology is the Einstein-Rosen bridge, or wormhole, in general relativity theory, which can be thought of as a shortcut between two points in topological space-time that, in a Cartesian stable coordinate space, are located far away from each other.

With regard to *September*, I would argue that the text works towards such shortcuts or foldings in its core narrative structure, essentially projecting a topological poetics for an ethics in the age of long-distance warfare. But a kind of decategorizing "wormhole" also exists on a more micro-logical, lexical level: for example, both George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein are just referred to as the "PRÄSIDENT" in capital letters, almost never by name, and it is not always easy to decide which one is which (e.g. Lehr 2012, 76, 303). In occupied Baghdad, Saddam's dictatorial architecture is still existent, the old epicentre of power still intact, and merely under the control of a different type of war machinery (Lehr 2012, 439).

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A very different novel, one that is quite unlikely to ever be subsumed under the "post-9/11" rubric, also reflects on Baghdad's urban spatiality during the occupation. In David Mitchell's monumental *The Bone Clocks* (2014), one of the many interwoven storylines focuses on a British war reporter. For Ed Brubeck, the Green

Zone in the heart of the city is not only a heterotopia with a complicated entry system, but also a kind of US-American theme park (or, also, to borrow from the English subtitle of Lehr's *September*, a mirage):

> Three more checkpoints [...] and you find yourself inside the Emerald City – as the Green Zone has inevitably come to be known, a ten-kilometre-square fortress maintained by the US army and its contractors to keep out the reality of post-invasion Iraq and preserve the illusion of a kind of Tampa, Florida, in the Middle East. [...] Black GM Suburbans cruise at the 35 m.p.h. speed limit on the smooth roads; electricity and gasoline flow 24/7; ice-cold Bud is served by bartenders from Mumbai who rename themselves Sam, Scooter and Moe for the benefit of their clientele. (Mitchell 2014, 216)

While repeatedly pointing to this war's close ties to neoliberal privatization and its generally globalized character, the text also presents the inner zone as a kind of cyber-colonial, almost phantasmagorical power centre that is not actually in Iraq; the Green Zone topographically borders with the messiness of the "real" Baghdad, but is, topologically speaking, much closer to the US. It could be argued that a similar, but inverted spatial stretching occurs in long-distance warfare in general:

> A drone circled above us. It would be armed. I thought of its operator, picturing a crew-cut nineteen-year-old called Ryan at a base in Dallas, sucking an ice-cold Frappuccino through a straw. He could open fire on the clinic, kill everyone in and near it, and never smell the cooked meat. To Ryan, we'd be pixelated thermal images on a screen, writhing about a bit, turning from yellow to red to blue. (Mitchell 2014, 233)

The ice-cold Frappuccino and other clichéd markers of Americanism in this passage serve as objective extensions of "Dallas", indicating how two distant places are virtually knotted together, in the non-place that is the drone control room, in a one-way, deadly screen vision. The fact that "Ryan" is actually imagined by a journalist on the ground, who is himself being eyed and turned into electronic information by the drone at this very moment, adds another twist to this spatial-visual complex.

It is worth taking a closer look at this (possibly) topological configuration and how it is situated within the structure of the novel and relates to its themes. Like Lehr's *September*, but maybe in a less didactic way, the novel *The Bone Clocks* collapses distance in different forms. Its storyline not only connects Cambridge, a ski resort in Switzerland, Australia, Iraq, and other places scattered globally; the episodes also span fifty-nine years in the frame narrative, and millennia in the stories-within-the-story, from early antiquity to a dystopian 2043. Taking up the theme and structure of atemporal, global interconnectedness that already informed *Ghostwritten* and *Cloud Atlas*, Mitchell's *The Bone Clocks* is now indeed and unmetaphorically a story of old souls. One of the characters previously lived

as a surgeon-scholar in the eighteenth century, a peasant girl turned wunderkind in nineteenth century Russia, and a male Chinese NHS psychiatrist in Thatcher's England. When a concept of reincarnation, as fanciful as it may be, is played out like this, it necessarily cuts through the categories of ethnicity, class, and gender. Everyone is everything, and no one knows where, as whom, or with what social status they will be born again. Thus, the novel points to arbitrary othering through its own arbitrariness, to simplifying narratives through its inbuilt indefinite biographical complexity – a structure of equality that the logic of drone warfare and a rhetoric of "us against them" inherently ignore.

So, both *September* and *The Bone Clocks* destabilize distance in various ways, but I would argue that there is still a degree of separation at work in both of them. In another novel set in the Iraq War, an even more radical, and quite different, form of topological folding and stretching occurs. In *The Yellow Birds* by Kevin Powers, an author who actually fought in Iraq, the young private John Bartle returns from his deployment right after the official end of the war. The narrative that then unfolds is not a flashback structure embedded in a stable frame narrative, but switches continuously between Richmond, Virginia, and the province of Nineveh, with those two distant territories increasingly merging in a peculiar way. The most obvious variation of this is the protagonist's post-traumatic stress disorder:

> I found myself making strange adjustments to the landscape. We passed over the World War II Veterans Memorial Bridge, which spanned the James, and I stared out at the broad valley below. The sun coming up and a light the color of unripe oranges fell and broke up the mist that hung in the bottomland. [...] It seemed as if I watched myself patrol through the fields along the river in the yellow light, like I had transposed the happenings of that world onto the contours of this one. I looked for where I might find cover in the field. (Powers 2012, 108)

While the war space colonizes his home space in that way, Iraq cannot be experienced as separate and alien any more; or, better, Bartle is equally alienated from both. This is connected to the big rivers in Virginia and Iraq, respectively. At first, the Tigris reminds him of careless childhood days by the James, but the final loss of a sense of belonging concerns both spaces:

> I moved to the edge of the bridge and began firing at anything moving. I saw one man fall in a heap near the bank of the river among the bulrushes and green fields on its edges. In that moment, I disowned the waters of my youth. My memories of them became a useless luxury, their names as foreign as any that could be found in Nineveh: the Tigris or the Chesapeake, the James or the Shatt al Arab. (Powers 2012, 125)

With the act of killing, those signifiers become geographically unanchored; the categories of the known and the unknown do not matter any longer. PTSD is only

one frame for reading this, and I think that there are much more subtle variations of collapsing geographies on other levels. What is very striking, for example, is the role of vegetation and unruly, "natural" spaces in the text. Even though Richmond and Al Tafar[1] are medium-sized cities with more than two hundred thousand inhabitants each, the text does not evoke urban space at all until the very end. What is more, the vegetation of these spaces is described in an eerily similar way: dense shrubbery, orchards, and meadows mark both of them. This not only counters a stereotypical image of Iraq as a dry desert with brown one-story houses – Derek Gregory (2010) writes about those visual constructions in virtual-reality surroundings that were used in military training – but, I would argue, overwrites difference in such a way that the space of vegetation in *The Yellow Birds* becomes *one* topologically folded space, and finally negates Iraq and the US as separate territories completely. While this effect of collapsing geography is certainly destructive for the protagonist, it is productive on a structural and ethical level: the destabilization of "over here" and "over there" points to the arbitrary logic of the war that is built on this binary opposition.

But do the techno-military drone vision and a topological compression in the texts discussed here not actually share a structural similarity, insofar as space in the sense of distance is collapsed in both? One's initial response would be that the two are fundamentally different; but this difference, after a closer look, can only be grasped with the doubleness of "site and sight" that was mentioned earlier. The double movement that Gregory calls a "linking and de-linking of site and sight," in turn, only makes sense when both "sight" and "site" are unfolded further; two different notions of those words, two different types of vision and place are implied here. Deleuze and Guattari famously differentiate between "smooth" space as the space of "nonmetric, acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities" (1987, 371) and "striated" space as a Euclidean one, bounded and metrical; they are, of course, not thought as a stable, binary opposition, but defined by a constant cross-transformation. Less quoted is their relation to different forms of vision and perception: "It seems to us that the Smooth is both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile). The Striated, on the contrary, relates to a more distant vision, and a more optical space" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 493). When "sight" and "site" are linked through the techno-military apparatus of the screen and the data feed, the optical connection to a faraway geographical point produces a "distant vision"; in the same movement, a "close vision" and a complex, "smooth"

1 A fictionalized and inverted version of the city of Tal Afar, in which the author was deployed as a machine-gunner.

space are de-linked from each other. In a topological operation, this configuration is inverted: the topological closeness of Iraq and the US is produced by the texts and connects two "close visions" in a complex narrative, folding one distant "site" into the other. In the military view from above, as in an orientalist othering, both sites stay radically separate, striated to deadly effect, and linked in a distant vision.

Modes of proximity are not only used on a metaphorical level, but also in the literal sense of focusing on gruesome and abject details. The narrative close-ups on injuries and body parts in *The Yellow Birds* are striking, especially against the backdrop of an – apparently – almost virtualized war. It is only in the age of suicide bombing and the drone strike that such an extreme "close vision" of small fragments of bodies and human tissue, "appearing infinite, [...] a piece of skin and muscle, entrails" (Powers 2012, 126) becomes thinkable. This focus on messiness certainly works against the narrative of "surgical precision," the notion of a "clean war" bound up with late modern warfare.

But the idea that the novel sets close-up human vision against long-distance warfare is perhaps too simple, because there *are* also forms of scopic regime that act in the text. Again and again, the first-person narrator looks through his weapon's scope; what he sees is, naturally, magnified, but also weirdly flattened, greenish (like in Lehr's screen vision), and refracted; and, most importantly, the close-up does not make the objects of his gaze get closer to him in an empathetic way. When he witnesses the killing of an old Iraqi couple in a car by his fellow soldiers hidden on a rooftop (again, the view from above), he can even see details, but he stays completely detached and seems unable to act:

> A car drove toward us along the road between the orchard and the field of dead. Two large white sheets billowed from its rear windows. [...] I looked through my scope and saw an old man behind the wheel and an elderly woman in the passenger seat. Sterling laughed. "Come on, motherfuckers." He couldn't see them. I'll yell, I thought. I'll tell them they are old, let them pass. But bullets bit at the crumbling road around the car. [...] I said nothing. I followed the car with my scope. The woman ran her fingers along a string of pale beads. Her eyes were closed. I couldn't breathe. The car stopped in the middle of the road, but Sterling did not stop the shooting. The bullets ripped through the car and out the other side. (Powers 2012, 22)

The scope may be a simple optical apparatus, but it is nevertheless part of the scopic regime of war, producing a mediated gaze from a distance as well as an optical proximity; in this way, it reifies the soldiers' situation between approaching, sometimes even getting to know, the civilians (they are frequently invited for tea and chat about everyday life) and staying at an unbridgeable distance from them. In this passage and others, the scope captures the Iraqis in the double sense that Butler assigns to all "frames of war" – in its function as a medium that

actually frames and zooms in, and as an epistemic and discursive framing of their lives as "ungrievable." Butler understands this ungrievability, in turn, as a product of spatial distance, legitimizing narratives of "security" and constructions of cultural difference (like the neo-orientalisms identified by Said), and as a prerequisite to underwriting the whole "War on Terror": "[Targeted] populations are 'lose-able', or can be forfeited, precisely because they are framed as already being lost [...]. When such lives are lost, they are not grievable, since, in the twisted logics that rationalizes their death, the loss is deemed necessary to protect the lives of 'the living'" (Butler 2007, 31). Again, also in Butler's work, distance is thought both as metrical, spatial distance and in terms of reductive narratives.

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To sum up, I would argue that the fictional texts copy, affirm, and expose the apparatuses and tactics of late modern warfare, both technological and discursive. I do not claim that they resist the (now, metaphorically conceived) "view from above" in simplifying media narratives per se; Lehr's *September*, for example, does fall back into orientalist stereotypes at times. While I do think that the texts systematically collapse distance in a double sense, they are not only "counter-narratives" in that way; rather, they also perform a moment of shifting between a complex narrative that moves on the ground and a reductive, optical view from above.

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Translocal Constellations: Towards a New World Literature

Abstract: Since the 1960s, the accelerating pace of global flows and migration have been rendering national borders and cultural boundaries more permeable, leading to the emergence of a rich body of literature of mobility and migration, also conceptualized as "new world literature." Adopting Walter Benjamin's thought on language, translation, and constellations, in addition to transnational, transcultural, and cosmopolitan perspectives in contemporary theory, I introduce a new parameter, the translocal constellation, as a lens for the analysis of dynamic configurations of mobility as well as emplacement in this emerging literature. As models for the analysis of translocal constellations, I focus on two contemporary narratives: Emine Sevgi Özdamar's story "The Courtyard in the Mirror" (2006) and Teju Cole's novel *Open City* (2012).

Keywords: constellation (Walter Benjamin), cosmopolitanism, hybridity, migration, new world literature, *Open City* (Teju Cole), placial particularity, planetary turn, post-colonial criticism, sensuous geographies, strangers, "The Courtyard in the Mirror" (Emine Sevgi Özdamar), transculturality, translocal constellations, translocality, transnationalism, *Weltliteratur*

Since the second half of the twentieth century, processes of decolonization and globalization, of migration and diaspora, have produced a rich body of literature which explores and reflects on the multifaceted movements and multicultural conditions shaping new identities and modes of living in the contemporary world. In the course of this development, the concept of "world literature" has been rejuvenated and reoriented from Goethe's original notion of *Weltliteratur*, understood as a canon of texts that are read globally beyond national boundaries, to an international field where literatures and peoples meet. Accordingly, in addition to earlier post-colonial studies, new transdisciplinary scholarship has been developed, with transnational, transcultural, and cosmopolitan perspectives for analysing a "new world literature" and its complex processes of interaction between and across cultures.

In what follows, I shall introduce a new parameter of translocality to reflect on the narratives and poetics of this emerging literature and to contemplate manifold practices of mobility as well as emplacement, in other words, embracing them both

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as being always "in process." Developing my argument for translocality and translocal constellations on the basis of burgeoning forms of contemporary new world literature, I adopt Walter Benjamin's thought on language, translation, and constellations. I will first give a brief summary of recent scholarship, which has opened up new transnational, transcultural, and cosmopolitan perspectives.

Transnationalism as a critical discourse includes the examination of the nation through its various "nation-building" institutions, such as language, culture, politics, society, and history. In his work on transnational connections, which contemplates various aspects of contemporary globalism from the perspective of anthropology and the social sciences, Ulrich Hannerz coined the term "global ecumene," which highlights the interconnectedness of today's world through interactions, exchanges, and related developments – affecting not least the organization of culture (1996, 7). New lines of thought emerged with Benedict Anderson's path-breaking study on nations as imagined communities (1983); Homi K. Bhabha's inspiring edited collection on narrative strategies of nation-building (1990); and Jean-Francois Lyotard's sophisticated challenge to the "national culture" metanarrative, which he argued was in decline (1984). Increased migration in recent decades has also generated a new understanding of globalization and cosmopolitanism. According to the sociologist Ulrich Beck, the cosmopolitanization process means globalization from within national societies, with important transformations in daily identities, since global problems have turned to be part of our day-to-day life and of global governance structures (Beck 2000). This is the fundamental difference from the older concept of globalization, which delimits something that is outside the nation. The concept of transculturality gained momentum in the 1990s. The philosopher Wolfgang Welsch (1999) has developed an understanding of the transcultural that is based on the fact that the general feature of all cultures today is hybridization, and as such overcomes the limitations of multiculturalism or interculturalism, which are still grounded in the traditional concept of single cultures and, therefore, promote exclusivity instead of inclusivity.

The transnational, cosmopolitan, and transcultural dimensions of literary and cultural practice have been addressed in many different interpretive models and approaches challenging insinuated forms of national or cultural homogeneity and concepts of identity in terms of nation, national language, and culture. Against the background of Europe's migration crisis in the 1990s, Sidonie A. Smith and I edited an essay collection on transnational literature, *Writing New Identities: Gender, Nation, and Immigration in Contemporary Europe* (Brinker-Gabler and Smith 1997). Other works, to name only a few, have addressed the growing body of writing "outside the nation" (Seyhan 2000) or "WritingbetweenWorlds," undermining the borders between *National-* and *Weltliteratur* (Ette 2006). New perspectives have developed on writers of a "new world literature" (Sturm-Trigonakis 2007), trans-

cultural writers in the age of mobility (Dagnino 2015), or writers of "ex(tra)territoriality," opening the utopian horizon of a new freedom, another space, new margins (Lassalle and Weissmann 2014). All these studies have drawn attention to the multiple trajectories created by various kinds of mobility that move people between different countries, cultures, languages, and communication practices.

In terms of global flows, mobility, and interconnectedness, another agenda emerged in the 1990s, which seemed to move in the opposite direction, a so-called spatial turn or a politics of location. With decolonization and post-colonial studies entering critical discourse from the 1970s onward, attention had shifted to people on the so-called periphery whose self-determination required not just the rediscovery of a "pure" place and culture but an understanding of the dynamic nature of all cultures (Fanon 1963). Adding a deconstructionist lens, post-colonial analysis fostered a rethinking of many assumptions about space, emphasizing, for example, how it had been entangled in the fantastical construction of colonized world(s) (Said 1978). In the 1990s, the field of geography moved to the centre of critical discourses on spatial processes in the social sciences and humanities. The geographer Doreen Massey, in her essay "A Global Sense of Place" (1994), countered the argument that place and the local dissolve as the result of globalization. She argued that the local does not dissolve and its "social meaning" does not vanish. However, we must challenge a conservative sense of place tied to origin and authenticity that is devoid of temporality: if we dynamize space and place with time, placial narratives will change. Massey suggested thinking of place as a "meeting place," that is, a place open to change, to flows and connections.

The French geographer Daniel Courgeau (n.d.) had already introduced the term "translocality" in the 1970s, applying it to his special field of demography. Around the turn of the present century, the term was newly theorized and created an opportunity to challenge spatial restrictions with multidirectional global interconnections, as well as to emphasize the continuing importance of the production of locality (Appadurai 1996). As the social scientist Michael Peter Smith summarized, translocality defines "situated yet mobile subjectivities," that is, a mode of multiple emplacement or situatedness both *here* and *there*" (Smith 2011, 181; emphasis in original). In 2013, the anthropologist Clemens Greiner and the geographer Patrick Sakdapolrak published a highly informative overview of the employment of translocality as a research perspective in the social sciences that involves mobility, migration, circulation, and spatial interconnectedness. They point out that scholars who have developed conceptual approaches to the term usually build on insights from transnationalism while at the same time attempting to overcome some of the limitations of this long-established research perspective. What defines the new approach of translocality is the use of the two central dimensions of mobility and place along with their socio-spatial dynamics. Unlike

transnational studies, the perspective of translocality focuses not only on national border-crossings but expands to include manifold crossings of continents, megacities, and regional and rural borders. As such, it can be applied – in contrast to transnationalism – to research on internal migration (that is, migration within national borders), which makes up the greater part of global migration dynamics today (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013).

By now, translocality has been applied widely in various studies in the social sciences; more recently, however, this perspective has been adopted in literary and cultural studies as well. One example is the essay collection by scholars in post-colonial English studies at the University of Münster entitled *Postcolonial Translocations: Cultural Representation and Critical Spatial Thinking* (Munkelt et al. 2012). Testing the uses and limitations of translocation as an open exploratory model for a critically spatialized post-colonial studies, the book covers a wide range of cultural expressions (e.g. literature, film and television, photography and the arts) from the anglophone world and beyond. In their insightful introduction, the editors see the advantage of the translocal perspective as an addition to earlier studies on the hybridization and creolization of diasporic cultures, bringing to today's critical spatial thinking a more refined concentration on mobility and the dynamic process of location and emplacement as intervention.

In *Literature's Sensuous Geographies: Postcolonial Matters of Place* (2015), the Danish comparatist Sten Pultz Moslund turns to phenomenological approaches to place and language, drawing inspiration from Heidegger, Dufresne, and Deleuze, among others. According to Moslund, post-colonial studies have focused on the discursive challenges of imperial master narratives. He mentions, for example, studies on the Caribbean by Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, which specifically concentrated on the journey, translation, movement, interhuman relations, and the various diasporas in the Caribbean – but make no mention of the Caribbean as a phenomenal place and environment (Moslund 2015, 180–181). To open up relations to the world other than discursive ones, Moslund suggests the paradigm of sensuous geographies, that is, the exploration of sense-aesthetic dimensions of embodied experiences of placial worlds.

Thus, we may conclude, global flows, increased movement, and migration create a heightened awareness for mobility and interconnectedness as well as new negotiations of place, in which people are situated and live in particular ways tied to specific contexts – yielding a multipositionality which I try to balance with caution in my approach to translocal constellations. Walter Benjamin's thought on language, translation, and constellations, I suggest, offers a complex

and flexible intellectual site for thinking translocality through by applying his thought on language to place and cross-cultural practice.[1]

Traditionally, translation theory is based on a bifurcation of target and source language; this bifurcation is undermined in Benjamin's understanding of languages as always different and supplemental at the same time. According to Benjamin, languages differ in their mode of intention (*Art des Meinens*), but he also notes that the relatedness and kinship of all languages, that is, their translatability, resides within this mode of intention because no single language can attain by itself a mode of intention (Benjamin 1968a, 73–74). By extension, where place is concerned, we only can begin to grasp the specificity of a place, or placial particularity, by learning about other places, supplementing our understanding of the place that we believe we know or belong to. Using Benjamin's framework of language, we can say that all places are distinct as well as non-hierarchically interrelated. From this perspective, what we define as a familiar place is actually "foreign," and will only become familiar with our expansion into different places. It is important to understand that this move is not from one place to another, but an expansion that involves a double "creation" of location – of the particularity of the seemingly familiar place and the specificity of the new place – to which I bring my placial particularity, or what I call placeability. Whenever this happens, there emerges a constellation that is open to a manifold triggered heterogeneity that allows, most importantly for Benjamin, "reverberation" and "supplementation" (1968a, 74, 76).

In addition, I am drawing here on Benjamin's methodological image of the constellation, which he reveals in his *German Tragic Drama* and later develops further in his *Arcades Project* and "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (Benjamin 1998, 1999, 1968b). Based on the *Sternbild* as *Konstellation*, a constellation is defined as the potential of displaying the relation of juxtaposed changing elements within an overarching unity of disunity, in which they gain "actuality" and are grasped instantaneously from a viewpoint, but never become fixed. Accordingly, in my model, "constellation" serves as a conceptual tool for overcoming the duality of global/local and elucidating the experience of placial particularity that undergoes multifaceted transformations, creating a translocality that is always open to change, and as such, is a configuration always in motion.

Let me briefly outline what I see as the beneficial ways in which this model complements previous approaches I discussed earlier. The attentiveness to the creative process of places, reverberation, and supplementation in the concept of the constellation resists, in my opinion, any simple understanding of origin, or

1 On Benjamin's translation theory, see Brinker-Gabler (2016).

mobility, hybridity, or performativity. The model of the translocal constellation emphasizes provisional placial particularity always in a process of expansion, which lets connections and contrasts emerge instantaneously in various translocal constellations depending on diverse contexts. Some scholarship of globalization has emphasized the imminent weakening of the local parallel to growing transnational interconnectedness and transcultural communication. Clearly, the contextual understanding of placial particularities in a constellation promotes not only an understanding of recognized "locals," but also sincerely considers heterogeneous "locals" in their particularity around the world at risk of being marginalized or even of disappearing.

Furthermore, following more recent criticism of an exclusive focus on fluid boundaries and identities, we may ask: if the transnational or transcultural is looked at positively as a fluid space, always in the making, does it become a shallow or superficial space, even promoting violent fluidity? An equally urgent question right now is how virtual reality will overshadow what we are accustomed to call reality. The concept of the translocal constellation tries to avoid eclipsing or absorbing placial particularity, and, at the same time, attempts to stay attentive to mobility and cultural flows with a focus on expansion. This allows for consideration of various forms of dynamic interaction between a territorial localization (centring) within specific contexts and processes of delocalization (and decentring) under specific conditions, such as practices of mobility, multilingualism, and global communication.

Identity is learned in relation with people and places forming one's placeability. In today's complex cultural configurations, placeability will be challenged in a process of negotiation at an early stage. As a concept, hybridity offers the possibility of leaving dichotomous thinking behind and seriously confronting crucial contradictions in today's world. There are nuanced explorations of multiperspectivity via hybridity, but there is also the danger of unassuming moves to mixture, collapsing hybridity into a fixed category without engaging profoundly with its structure and relevant contexts. Translocality offers instead a process of expansion and actualization within emerging constellations, which can then be unpacked in their complexity of locations and contexts.

At this juncture, I wish to reflect on the presentation and readability of such an actualizing constellation of the translocal by briefly looking at two narratives: Emine Sevgi Özdamar's short story "Der Hof im Spiegel" (Özdamar 2001), brilliantly translated by Leslie Adelson as "The Courtyard in the Mirror" (Özdamar 2006), and Teju Cole's novel *Open City* (2012).[2] Özdamar is a Turkish-German writer who has

2 Cole's novel has been translated into several languages, including German (Cole 2013).

been successfully publishing stories and novels in German since the 1990s and is now a celebrated, well-known writer. Many publications have analysed her work and given particular attention to the representation of the migratory experience. In her article "Comparative Cultural Studies and Ethnic Minority Writing today," Sabine Milz (2002) highlights the "fluidity of belonging" and cultural "hybridity" in Özdamar's writing and compares this with another example of "minority writing" by the Caribbean Canadian writer Marlene Nourbese Philipp. In what follows, I explore the possibility of reading Özdamar's story as an articulation of a carefully constructed composite of an expanding particularity that assembles relationships and the specificities of a site into a translocal constellation.

In the story "Der Hof im Spiegel," the narrator, coming from afar, settles in a large German city. She inhabits and navigates her place, which offers a view of a courtyard, by strategically placing mirrors around her apartment, allowing her an expanded view into the public/private spaces of her neighbours. Creating her multiperspectival setting, she has in mind a French urban specialist who once wrote "about the residential aesthetic of the Orient" (Özdamar 2006), that is, how people there extend their houses into alleyways resembling labyrinths where neighbours wake up nose-to-nose. With these three mirrors, she has extended her apartment and built her very own neighbourhood as a meaningful meeting place. For her, it brings back feelings from her upbringing in Turkey, which comfort her now. In other words, she has come to her new place and brought with her a particular "placeability," a geographical imaginary of home. With the extended space of her mirrors, she connects with her present by watching her neighbours and engaging emotionally with their everyday life, such as the nun who enjoys reading *Alice in Wonderland* in her bed, and with the woman from Africa who bakes bread on the windowsill every day while her four children are playing. In addition, the mirrors provide an imagined space for relating to those who live in an "other" place. Whenever she picks up the phone and talks to family and friends back in Turkey, she looks into the mirrors, where they become present. What emerges here is not just a connection of two sites, here and there, but a contingent and shifting formation across borders, blurring the distinction between here and there – in other words, a translocal constellation.

Özdamar's story beautifully mirrors the reverberation and supplementation of placial particularity and relationality of past and present that are actualized in a process of expansion and constellation. She looks into the mirrors and watches her "world," which includes people who are living and who have died. The merging of multiple layers of time and placial worlds in the mirrors creates a mediated world experience with self-reflexivity, and allows the narrator to access the beloved people of her past and present, to come to terms with her memories and past movements, and to build an understanding of her present and the people she meets on

an everyday basis in her new life. Rather than a gradual process of synthesis or hybridity, we find in Özdamar's story a juxtaposition of heterogeneous places and experiences, out of which emerges a discontinuous, fragmentary expansion and translocal constellation that is guided, in her case, by compassion. It is with compassion that she watches and engages with her neighbours, that she reaches back to childhood memories, people lost, her friend Jon's poetry, which she complements with German poetry, weaving pain, solitude, and sometimes desperation into her story.

I would now like to compare Özdamar's translocal constellation with the Nigerian-American writer Teju Cole's presentation of a translocality in his first novel, *Open City*. The novel focuses on issues of identity, race, dislocation, and history. It is a post-colonial, a migrant, and also a post-9/11 novel. The first-person narrator in *Open City* is Julian, who is of both of German and Nigerian descent, and, as a psychiatrist, spends his final year of a psychiatry fellowship in New York city after 9/11. Julius is a wanderer in the streets of his adopted city, reminding us on the exemplary figure of modern life presented in Georg Simmel's essay "The Stranger," first published in 1908. According to Simmel, a stranger is a "person who comes today and goes tomorrow," with a "proportion of nearness and remoteness" that is the aura of "objectivity" (Simmel 1950, 402–404). In this guise, we follow Julius across the city, wandering, observing, and recording stories, calmly, seemingly undisturbed, in an ambience of disconnectedness.

In his reading of Cole's novel, Pieter Vermeulen argues that it affirms aesthetic cosmopolitanism. In other words, it "refuses to celebrate intercultural feeling and understanding as valuable cosmopolitan achievements in and of themselves" (2014, 55). In this way, cosmopolitanism is preserved and remains to be achieved in an uncertain future.[3] In addition to the frame of cosmopolitanism, I suggest critically examining the novel further by drawing on placial particularity and the translocal constellation. Longer passages of Julius's early life in Nigeria, as well as fragmentary memories of his past there, evoke an upbringing that is shaped by his experience of otherness among Nigerians as a biracial child, for example not feeling "black" enough at a military school, an "otherness" further intensified by the alienation from his German mother and loss of his Nigerian father when he was fourteen (Cole 2012, 227). Clearly, there is a dissociation in Julius's early life in his Nigerian place world that significantly shapes his placeability. Coming to New York, Julius is faced with a more-than-fast "naturalization process," as in this city he is treated like other native blacks, for instance by African Americans who address him as "brother" (40).

3 For a recent discussion of a number of traits of cosmopolitanism in narrative, see McClusky (2013).

He remains reserved, however, and is more inclined to just fit in than he is willing to express sympathy or to be acknowledged by others for his own history or heritage. In the absence of a clear cultural identity and a belief that cultures are not fixed or static, Julius finds enchantment in the "world without words" and sensuous silence; he loves to listen to classical music, especially to the work of Gustav Mahler. Certainly, we find in his passion an echo of a cosmopolitan longing: "[…] Mahler's music, is not white, or black, not old or young and whether it is even specifically human, rather than in accord with more universal vibrations is open to question" (252).

Unlike Özdamar, Julius does not create his own close-knit neighbourhood or stay closely connected with the placial world of his upbringing. He focuses instead on the placial particularities in the city and the diversity of its people. He has chance encounters with many people from near and far, often immigrants, who offer personal accounts filled with pain and violence, past and present, and he visits various places in the city, among them places of atrocities, such as the burial ground of slaves next to Wall Street, and the 9/11 Memorial. In addition, Julius's imagination crosses and recrosses times and places, which allows him – like the iconic modern figure of the *flâneur* – to tell alternative stories. For example, passing the city's most infamous site, where a crowd is hemmed in on both sides by a chain-like fence, he remembers: "No bodies were visible, except the falling ones, on the day America's ticker stopped" (Cole 2012, 58). His personal memory of "erasure" on this special day calls forth the manifold "erasures" that happened at this place, such as the tearing down of the old Washington Market for the World Trade Center buildings, and the disappearance of the Christian-Syrian enclave established in the late 1800s or of other communities' settlements before even Columbus set sail (59). Local as well as global stories of atrocities are interwoven with the story, such as those relating to Native American history, the Holocaust, or the Rwanda genocide. As such, the "local" – the place of New York city – emerges as a multidirectional assemblage with numerous crossovers of the local and the global, which light up momentarily in a translocal constellation which is always in transformation.

Julius's experience of New York City is different from the experience that Michel de Certeau presents in his seminal essay "Walking in the City" (1984), where an urban space is constantly produced through embodied experiences of moving freely through the streets. In the novel *Open City*, freedom of movement has a darker side: the continuous confrontation with and reflection on violence and atrocities, past and present, in the old and new world. There is clearly a bold statement not only of the failure of modernity but of the failure of humanity in general. Julius's translocal constellation is not stirred by compassion, as in Özdamar's story, but seemingly motivated by countering forgetfulness.

Julius is a self-reflexive narrator who embraces his disengaged modes of relation to the world as an intentional defence against the shrieking noise of political and racial ideology in everyday life. This is brilliantly illuminated in Julius's pairing with a doppelgänger. On a trip to Brussels, he meets the intellectual Farouq from Marocco, who passionately embraces cultural difference, even with violent consequences (Cole 2012, 107). Julius raises for himself the ultimate question of cosmopolitanism discussed today: that is, whether it is a possible practice based on a disconnected mode of one's own culture and other cultures, and has an apolitical stance, or whether it should be a practice with universal concern and recognition of legitimate difference, even violence.

Julius cultivates detachment, but also presents a multidirectional memory project that lends significance to places and human stories focused on overcoming amnesia and forgetfulness of discursive and real violence in history and everyday life. Toward the end of the story, however, readers begin to doubt Julius's reliability as narrator: he apparently covers up a violent act of his own during his past upbringing in Nigeria (Cole 2012, 244). The final pages offer yet another perspective, a "planetary turn," to use Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's phrase.[4] Julius experiences a severe disruption of his seemingly "comfortable" and privileged disconnected mode of seeing and recording the world. One evening, he visits a performance of Mahler's ninth symphony in Carnegie Hall; he leaves early and steps out of an exit door, which places him all of a sudden in the open air on a fire escape high above the city streets. Staring up at the night sky with thousands of stars, and reflecting on starlight travelling millions of miles per hour to reach the earth (and the dark spots with stars whose light has not reached him yet), he has a revelation about the relativity of time and space, and with it the limits of historical narratives (256). This is a moment of sensuous presence as a "planetary creature" facing the universe at the edge of the earth and time, the instantaneous appearance of translocality in deep space. To adapt Benjamin's wording (1999, 462): "It's not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on what is past; rather, [...] [translocality] is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the *now* to form a constellation" (my emphasis).

For Julius, the borders of memory and amnesia become blurred. Instead of the coherence of memory and narrative, there are uncertainties and discontinuities beyond any human control. With this comes recognition of the hazard of anthropocentric thinking and the apocalyptic vision of a planet altered beyond recognition. The novel closes with a model of humble recording and agency against the background

4 In *Death of a Discipline*, Spivak (2003) introduces the concept of planetary standing for thinking in wholly new ways about the ethical labour of contemporary culture.

of a human-inflicted environmental disaster in the past, and foreboding of many more to come. Teju Cole brings back a grand figure of the nineteenth century, Colonel Tassin, stationed on Liberty Island. On a trip to this island, Julius thinks of Tassin, who observed the killing of thousands of migrating birds that were fatally distracted by the flame from the torch of the Statue of Liberty (Cole 2012, 258–259). He diligently kept count of the number and species of birds that were killed by flying into the statue, and also took care of having them preserved in scientific institutions instead of selling them at the market. The image of the killed birds on Liberty Island is a reminder of another killing by collision more than a century later – and brings to the "time of the now" an ethical decision in favour of nature that has the potential to create new meanings and narratives.

Translocality, with the guiding image of the constellation, captures the open, non-linear processes of interconnectedness and relationality of people and places in modern cultures today. The concept provides a new set of tools for analysing literary and cultural practice, one that considers both the trajectories of movement as well as the dynamics of emplacement. It is attentive to global and local wanderings as well as to diverse placial practices, sensuous placial experiences, and imagined placial worlds. Placial particularity is not static or fixed in a "here and there," but understood as undergoing transformations in a process of expansion which is fragmentary and discontinuous, and captured in instantaneous actualizations of translocal constellations. Translocality, if further developed, may serve to establish a new broad category in literature, that of translocal literature, offering a horizon of multiple forms of situated yet mobile subjectivities and their cultural expressions. This needs further exploration with regard to the now of the author and the reader, as well as production and distribution parameters.

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Giovanni Dettori

Italian Literature outside the National Literary Canon: The Case of *Bellas Mariposas* by Sergio Atzeni

Abstract: Italian literature has been constructed monolithically around an artificial Italian standard. The extraordinary example represented by the works of Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch paved the way for writers who came after them and who could not avoid resorting to the language elaborated by these exemplary authors. Italian, as a modern language, finds its roots in the Tuscan dialect forged into a literary language by the Three Crowns of Italian literature. Italian unification in 1861 highlighted the lack of national unity of the Italian people: the state was created, but the people did not identify with the newly unified state. The construction of the fragile Italian identity relied also on the idea of a national literature. Scholars highlighted the unifying elements of such a literature, minimizing its geographical, cultural, and linguistic diversity. In the twentieth century, the Italian literary canon opened itself to works that reflect the cultural and linguistic fragmentation of Italy. Carlo Emilio Gadda and Pier Paolo Pasolini, among others, dignified a literature based on code-mixing and linguistic pastiche. This article describes the multilingualism of Sardinian literature with reference to a tale by Sergio Atzeni, one of the precursors of the so-called Sardinian *nouvelle vague*.

Keywords: *Bellas Mariposas*, contemporary Italian writers, Italian polycentrism, multicultural diversity, multilingual literature, problems of identity, regional Italian, regional literatures, Sardinian language, Sardinian literature, Sergio Atzeni

Italian literature has always been characterized by multilingualism. The fragile Italian national identity is reflected in the multiplicity of languages and dialects spoken on the peninsula. However, the history of Italian literature has been interpreted monolithically as the history of texts written in Italian. From De Sanctis on, we find a progressive centralization of Italian literature, favoured also by nationalistic Fascist rhetoric. This monolithic conception of a literature constituted solely by texts written in standard Italian continues to dominate literature programmes in the Italian educational system (Sulis 2004, 81).

The idea of a national literature written in Italian is rather misleading. In fact, for centuries, literary production in Italian was at least bilingual – Italian and Latin – and also included works in other languages and dialects. It is sufficient to cite *Il Milione* by Marco Polo (1254–1324), a thirteenth-century travelogue

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originally transcribed in Franco-Venetian, or *Lo cunto de li cunti* (1634–1636) by Gianbattista Basile (1566–1632), written in the Neapolitan dialect. Production in languages other than Italian continued during the twentieth century as well, and found one of its most illustrious proponents in the figure of Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922–1975), who wrote one of his first works, the poetry collection *Poesie a Casarsa* (1942), in his native Friulian language.

During the twentieth century, the monolithic conception of the national canon has been deposed by authors who experiment with the Italian language; they have progressively contaminated Italian with dialects in order to reflect the reality of the spoken language heard on the Italian peninsula and to affirm a specific local identity that goes beyond the national identity.

1 The Sardinian *nouvelle vague*

Contemporary Sardinian literature represents an example of a literary corpus that moves away from the rigidity of the Italian national canon; it rejects monolingualism in favour of a hybrid style that mixes languages and registers. In recent decades, the Italian island of Sardinia, the second-largest island in the Mediterranean after Sicily, has experimented and produced a cultural renaissance that has brought many Sardinian authors onto the national and international literary stage. The artistic vitality on the island has been defined by the critic Goffredo Fofi as a "nouvelle vague" (2003), and by the journalist, writer, and critic Giacomo Mameli as a "Sardinian literary spring" (2008). Alfredo Franchini, writing about the "nouvelle vague mediterranea" [Mediterranean *nouvelle vague*], remarks on the surprising number of publications coming from Sardinia: "Gli artisti sardi stanno vivendo un momento particolarmente felice, che per quanto riguarda l'editoria, s'è tradotto nella pubblicazione da parte delle 45 case editrici regionali di circa 250 titoli in un anno" [Sardinian artists are experiencing a particularly favourable moment that, where the publishing industry is concerned, resulted in the publication of 250 titles per year by 45 regional publishers] (quoted in Amendola 2006, 112).[1]

Despite the popularity of the term "Sardinian *nouvelle vague*," this labelling is rather misleading because it seems to suggest a renaissance of Sardinian literature emerging after a dark period in which literary production was absent. This idea is wrong, for Sardinia has a long literary tradition that spans centuries. Franchini explains the success of Sardinian authors like Salvatore Niffoi (1950–), Salva-

1 All translations in this article are my own.

tore Mannuzzu (1930–2019), Marcello Fois (1960–), Giorgio Todde (1951–2020), and Flavio Soriga (1975–), who publish for national publishers, with a change in readers' attitudes toward regional languages and dialects. He remarks that Sardinian people, due to their distinctive history, are accustomed to using several languages and dialects. Furthermore, a more accepting attitude on the part of the general Italian audience toward languages other than Italian has favoured the affirmation of a Sardinian literature outside the island. In fact, what characterizes works written by Sardinian authors in Italian is a mix of Italian and Sardinian. This linguistic mix can be minimal, as in the works of Salvatore Mannuzzu, or more predominant, as in those of Niffoi or Fois. This unconventional use of Italian manipulates the standard to create a hybrid language.

2 Sardinian literature

Sardinian literature has always been characterized as profoundly linked to a Sardinian identity, often stereotypically connoted. Sardinia used to be perceived as an island outside history and time. Immovable, unchangeable, and archaic. This is what made and still makes Sardinia fascinating in the eyes of non-Sardinians. The island is seen as an exotic place, inhabited by fierce and brave populations animated by extreme passions that can lead to vindictive and destructive actions. Grazia Deledda, the only Italian female writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, in 1926, contributed to this rather stereotypical idea of Sardinia. Maurizio Virdis observes that the island had to be distinguished from the Italian mainland. Its peculiar identity had to be clearly marked in contraposition to Italy and the rest of the world. Life on the island had to be sketched in strong colours so that its distinctiveness could emerge as much as possible (Virdis, quoted in Contarini, Marras, and Pias 2012, 31).

The interior of the island, the setting of Deledda's novels, became the paradigm of a true Sardinia. According to this narrative, people inhabiting this region were less contaminated by outside invaders and spoke the most genuine form of Sardinian. The myth of an authentic Sardinia is reinforced with the urbanization processes that put the rural and urban areas of the island into contact with each other. From every part of the island, people flowed to the main Sardinian cities like Cagliari and Sassari. The main language of communication in urban agglomerations became Italian, and the Sardinian language started to lose ground. The so called "Piani di Rinascita" [Rebirth Plans] implemented during the sixties, imposed by the Italian government on Sardinia, forced the creation of industrial areas on the island and brought an imposed, violent modernization to the region.

This process was aimed at improving the Sardinian economy but was not successful; it polluted large areas of Sardinia and contributed to the weakening of the Sardinian identity and language without producing long-lasting significant economic growth. During the seventies, the defence of Sardinian identity and language became a central theme for those political groups that defended the right to self-determination of the Sardinian people. The debate about identity has linguistic and literary aspects, as well as assuming political significance.

3 A new course for Sardinian literature

Contemporary literary production on the island is focused on discourses of identity. Sardinian authors reflect on the idea of *sardità*, of what it means to be Sardinian, and on the role of the Sardinian language. They project a less monolithic image of the island, one that is multiform and composite. Sardinia is not just the archaic, rural, mythical place symbolized by the mountainous central villages of the island, keepers of the true Sardinian essence. The contrast between a real rural Sardinia and an altered urbanized Sardinia ceases to exist. Sardinian identity is expressed in rural villages as well as in urban contexts.

The author that contributed most to a revival of Sardinian literature was Sergio Atzeni (1952–1995). He is considered one of the most important Sardinian authors of the second half of the twentieth century, and his works continue to influence literary production on the island. Like many other Sardinian writers, Atzeni is profoundly influenced by the history, culture, and language of Sardinia. His works revolve around a reformulation of Sardinian identity through a re-examination of Sardinian history that assumes a mythopoeic connotation. This tendency is particularly evident in his posthumous novel *Passavamo sulla Terra Leggeri* [Lightly We Passed on Earth] (1996), where the author fictionalizes Sardinian history and fictitiously recreates the language of ancient Sardinian populations. His aim is that of providing a Sardinian mythology in which Sardinians can anchor their peculiar, distinct identity.

One of the most characteristic features of Atzeni's style is the unique use he makes of linguistic contamination. This tendency can already be observed in his debut novel, *Apologo del giudice bandito* [Apologue of the Bandit Judge] (1986), in which he inserts names and place names derived from the Sardinian language. These insertions give his narrative a sense of linguistic otherness that will continue throughout his production. Atzeni's language becomes progressively more contaminated by different languages, registers, and codes. He grafts Sardinian

syntax and vocabulary onto the Italian language, creating a hybrid, a composite puzzle of linguistic systems.

Atzeni is not the first Sardinian author to mix Italian and Sardinian in his writing. Code-mixing between the two languages can also be observed in Deledda's novels. However, Atzeni perfected this art, especially after the encounter he had with Patrick Chamoiseau (1953–) in 1993 and the translation he made of Chamoiseau's novel *Texaco*. Meeting with the Martiniquais writer and translating his work exerted a strong influence on the Sardinian author. The creolized French used by Chamoiseau inspired Atzeni to experiment with a similar form of creolization that mixed Italian with the Sardinian language (Sulis 2002, 557).

4 *Bellas Mariposas*: A text between languages

The most accomplished result of Atzeni's linguistic experimentation is the story *Bellas Mariposas* [Beautiful Butterflies], published in 1996. This tale is a monologue presented by the protagonist Caterina (Cate), a young girl who lives in a dysfunctional family with an unemployed slacker father, a mother who is relegated to the role of housewife, and several other siblings: one older sister, Mandarina, who has two young children and who works as a prostitute to support herself and her daughters; Tonio, a violent guy; and Massimo, a drug addict; Alex, who plays in a band; Ricciotti, a promising soccer player; and Luisella, who is only one-and-a-half years old. In this tale, we follow the young protagonist and her best friend Luna through an entire day: 3 August of an undefined year. Cate will tell us, with a humoristic and at times poetic style, the stories of the neighbours in her degraded suburb of Cagliari, the capital city of Sardinia, and her adolescent dream of redemption from the misery and degradation of her family and surroundings.

In this work, the author perfects the mixing of Italian, Sardinian, and other languages, like English and Spanish, in a seemingly perfect fusion of linguistic codes. The title itself is an example of code-switching. It can be read in Spanish or Sardinian; in fact, the words *bellas* "beautiful" and *mariposas* "butterflies" are the same in the two languages. The title is a testimony to the linguistic influence of the Spanish language on the island due to Aragonese-Spanish rule, which lasted from the thirteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the island passed into the hands of the House of Savoy (Broccia 2014, 8). In *Bellas Mariposas*, Atzeni intertwines Sardinian and Italian in such a way that it is almost impossible to separate the two languages. In the same sentence, we find words, expressions, and syntactic forms in both languages in a continuous game of code-

switching. This linguistic phenomenon is defined as the "alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent" (Poplack 1978, 583). At times, entire sequences in Sardinian accompany Italian sentences. The author does not provide any translation or any explanatory footnotes for the Sardinian parts. For a reader who is not familiar with the Sardinian language, many passages can be incomprehensible. Atzeni embraces the idea of an opaque language, a concept formulated by Chamoiseau. In fact, the texts of the Martiniquais author present the same comprehension difficulties for readers who are not familiar with the creole spoken in Martinique. Both authors leave the interpretation of obscure passages to the audience. Their language is opaque; it is the product of the encounter between different cultures and linguistic systems (Sulis 2002, 563). Furthermore, Atzeni almost expects that the word will reveal its content on its own. He is not particularly concerned if the reader does not understand its meaning; he is more interested in the musical effect the "foreign" word produces in the text, as if that word is a musical note contributing to the rhythm of the text (Marci 1999, 57).

Sergio Atzeni, like many Sardinian authors, finds his inspiration in the island, to which he feels a deep attachment. In an interview, Atzeni stated: "Non riesco ad immaginare storie che non siano ambientate qui. Mi sento sardo e come tale mi presento dovunque vado" [I cannot imagine stories that are not set in Sardinia. I feel Sardinian and as such I introduce myself, wherever I go] (quoted in Marci 1999, 235). He also admires the Sardinian language, which he defines as "bellissima" [very beautiful] (35); he is saddened by the progressive loss of this language: "mi dispiace che si perda perché è idioma straordinariamente ricco" [I'm sorry about the loss of this language, since it is an extraordinarily rich one] (35). Atzeni appreciates the mixing of and contamination between languages, which he sees as an enrichment for the Italian language as well: "L'unico modo in cui posso arricchire la lingua italiana dal punto di vista dei vocaboli è recuperandoli dalla esperienza sarda" [The only way in which I can enrich the vocabulary of Italian is drawing words from Sardinian] (35–36).

5 The Sardinian language

The Sardinian language itself is the fruit of language mixing and contamination. Sardinian presents a particularly dense pre-Roman substratum in which Paleo-Sardinian elements are accompanied by Punic and Iberian elements that indicate some similarities with the Basque language. All these different linguistic stratifications reflect the complexity of Sardinian history, which is marked by a series of

conquests by different civilizations: Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, Pisans, Genoese, Catalans, Aragonese, and Piedmontese. With each conquest, the island found a different language that was absorbed into the ancient pre-Indo-European language that formed the substratum of Sardinian (Marci 2010, 17–64).

With the Roman conquest of Sardinia in 238 BC, all the island's indigenous languages were absorbed into Latin and developed into the Sardinian vernacular. The formation of the Sardinian vernacular reflects a similar pattern shared by other Romance languages like Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, and French. Sardinian was one of the first Romance languages in Europe to be used in public administration; the first documents in Sardinian date to the eleventh century and appear in all four autonomous state entities, called *giudicati*, into which the island was divided. The surviving documents are mainly juridical transactions; this seemed to be the prevalent area of utilization for the language, and throughout the fourteenth century we do not find examples of literary texts written in Sardinian. In 1323, Sardinia fell under Aragonese control; Catalan started to exert its profound influence throughout the island and it became the official language for public administration until 1643. Catalan continued to be used on the island even after the reunification of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon in 1469. After Latin, Catalan and Spanish are the languages that most influenced and shaped Sardinian vocabulary and syntax (Casula 2013, 13–14).

Atzeni transposes the various stratifications of the Sardinian language into the language of the tale. The text is the product of multilingualism and multiculturalism that permeate the narrative from beginning to end. In fact, the protagonists of the tale, predominantly Cate, express their thoughts by alternating between at least three different linguistic codes: Italian, Sardinian, and a non-standard dialectal form of Italian spoken in Cagliari that is highly influenced by the language of the island and defined by scholars as the "Italian of Sardinia." This language consists primarily of a mix of Italian and Sardinian words and syntactic structures that are superimposed on Italian syntax. A similar phenomenon is observable all over Italy, where the influence of dialects is still felt and penetrates standard Italian (de Renzo 2008, 59).

6 Code-switching

In *Bellas Mariposas*, Sardinian sneaks into Italian in different ways throughout the narrative of the young Cate. In this short work of only about thirty pages, 178 sentences contain Sardinian words or expressions enclosed in Italian phrases. The fre-

quency with which the linguistic mixture occurs results in an almost perfect blending of the two languages, producing a unique language used by the protagonist Cate. She expresses her thoughts in a style that is dominated by a continuous alternation between Italian and Sardinian words or sentences. The author uses several varieties of code-switching. The simplest way in which Sardinian contaminates the narrative is achieved through the insertion of Sardinian words into Italian sentences. This type of code-switching is called tag switch by Poplack; tag switches do not considerably affect the structure and the comprehension of a sentence. Poplack states that tags are heavily loaded with ethnic content and are low on the translation scale (1979, 589). Tag switches are less linked to the grammatical structure of a sentence; they can be moved around inside a sentence and they can occupy different positions in it.

Tag switches as described by Poplack occur mainly with nouns; other grammatical categories, like adjectives or articles followed by nouns, need to be carefully inserted into the Italian phrase, and they participate in its grammatical structure. According to Poplack's statement, most of the tag switches involving a single noun presented in the text are linked to slang words in the regional variety of Italian spoken in Cagliari, where the story is set, rather than to the Sardinian language. Here some examples, highlighted in italics:

– "lo presenta quella *caghina* famosa Battistina Puresciori" [it (the show) is hosted by that famous affected woman Battistina Puresciori] (Atzeni 1996, 74);
– "in pullman c'era un *grezzo*" [on the bus there was a vulgar man] (87); and
– "guardando la *stria* non si è accorto [...]" [looking at the bitch, he didn't realize (...)] (87).

These words, although influenced by the Sardinian language, reflect the regional variety of Italian spoken on the island.

Another way in which Atzeni manipulates Italian is through the use of extrasentential code-switching – a form of code-switching that occurs outside the rigid structure of a sentence and does not fall into a specific grammatical category. Examples of this kind of code-switching are fillers, interjections, and idiomatic expressions. In the text, we find several interjections that are taken from the Sardinian language or the regional variety of Italian spoken in Cagliari. Examples of interjections are *pezzemerda*, an insult which Cate repeatedly directs at her father or men in general, who are seen as vile human beings – "non come quel pezzemmerda di babbo" [not like that piece of shit of my dad] (Atzeni 1996, 77) – and the interjection "mindaffuttu" [I don't give a damn] (99).

At times, code-switching expands into entire segments in Sardinian, often introduced by Italian sentences. Rarer is the case of a Sardinian sentence preceding an Italian one. Here are some examples, again highlighted in italics:

– "gli ha detto *Immoi arruis e ti segasa sa skina*" [he told him, Now you fall and you will break your back] (Atzeni 1996, 87); and
– "pareva mio fratello Tonio *mera prus becciu e leggiu*" [he looked like my brother Tonio way older and uglier] (93).

An example of a Sardinian sentence preceding an Italian one:

– "*no sciri kistionai mancu su casteddaiu* altro che spagnolo" [he doesn't know how to speak the dialect from Cagliari, let alone Spanish] (Atzeni 1996, 70).

This type of code-switching, in which a sentence in a specific language, in this case Italian, is completed by a sentence in a different language, here Sardinian, was defined by Poplack (1978) as intra-sentential code-switching. This is a more complex or "intimate" type of code-switching, in which two segments written in two different languages are blended together while respecting the syntactic rules of the two languages so that the grammatical bridging of the two codes is made possible. The effect is that of completing the concept expressed in Italian, of amplifying it, of giving more character to the sentence, of resolving it in a pun, and expressing belonging to a group through the use of a regional linguistic code.

Very rarely, we find more than one phrase written in Sardinian; when longer sentences in Sardinian are present, they are usually uttered by Cate's parents, his father and mother, or by older protagonists. The longest sentence completely in Sardinian in the short story is attributed to Cate's father. Its content is rather obscene and vulgar; it is an exhortation to a female stripper who is performing on television to get naked and show her intimate parts: "E bogarindi cussas murandas aiò caladdas brava brava de aicci aiò brava oberi oberi su pillittu faimmmiddu biri aiò oberi bagassa de aicci brava brava faimmì biri su stampu e su culu" [Come on, take off those panties, come on, lower them, good girl, like that, come on, open it, let me see your pussy, come on open, you slut, like that, good girl, let me see your butthole] (Atzeni 1996, 75).

It is not surprising that Cate's father uses Sardinian as his main language. It reflects a common pattern in regions where minority languages or dialects are spoken in a situation of diglossia. After the unification of Italy in 1861, the Sardinian language slowly underwent a diglossic process that reached its peak in recent decades. Sardinian became the language of lower prestige, was relegated to a domestic environment, and stopped being transmitted to younger generations. Atzeni's short tale mirrors the linguistic situation on the island, where younger generations speak an Italian interspersed with Sardinian words and expressions,

attesting a growing practice of code-switching (Rindler Schjerve 1993, 2003). The local language of the island saw a reduction in its users, who perceived it as a symbol of the past and an obstacle to economic development and social mobility. In particular, women, who are the main transmitter of languages due to the important function they exert in the upbringing of children, are especially reluctant to use Sardinian when communicating with their children, and they opt for an education based on Italian (Tufi 2013, 154). In fact, many sociolinguistic studies have shown that women favour the most prestigious variety of language, fearing that the use of a minority language could produce social exclusion and economic disadvantages (Gal 1978; Labov 1990; Cavanaugh 2006).

Diglossia can explain why the use of Sardinian by the younger protagonists of Atzeni's tale is so fragmentary and heavily characterized by code-switching. Furthermore, it is debatable if the characters in the short story are really speaking Sardinian; it can be argued instead that they are using Sardinian to give Italian more directness and a local colouring. It is also remarkable that Sardinian is relegated to the semantic area of swear words and profanities that produce a comic effect on the reader. Some examples include "minca" [cock] (Atzeni 1996, 63), "bagassa" [whore] (66), "calloni" [asshole] (67), "cagalloni" [asshole] (67), "folaga" [masturbation] (75), "coddare" [to fuck] (79), and "babassoni" [dumbass] (83).

Atzeni constructs a very peculiar language which draws from Sardinian but also from the Italian spoken in Cagliari, which he defines as the "Calaritana" language (quoted in Marci 1999, 57). Atzeni, even when he is using Italian, enriches it with structures and idiomatic expressions that are typical of the Italian spoken in Cagliari and that reflect the syntactic structure of Sardinian. The author is fascinated by the mixing that characterizes the language spoken in the capital city of Sardinia: "Vivere a Cagliari è un'esperienza esaltante, per chi ama la confusione linguistica, la mescolanza spuria degli idiomi, i giochi di parole deliranti: spesso – in modo più o meno cosciente – si parla un italiano contraffatto, incomprensibile a chi non sia del luogo, tratto di peso dal sardo" [Living in Cagliari is an exalting experience for those who like linguistic confusion, the illegitimate mixing of languages, the delirious play on words: often – with more or less awareness – people speak a fake Italian, unintelligible to people that are not from there, heavily influenced by the Sardinian language] (Atzeni, quoted in Marci 1999, 220). The Sardinian language used in *Bellas Mariposas* reflects the diglossic situation that characterizes the island. Italian and Sardinian coexist in an unequal relationship. Sardinian is relegated to the expression of popular sentiments, it is confined to the run-down neighbourhood where Cate lives, and it is the language of poverty and degradation, used for comic effects, to express vulgar images, and to swear. To standard Italian, not contaminated by any code-switching, is assigned the role of describing elevated

and poetic feelings, like the sensation of freedom Cate feels when she swims in the beautiful Sardinian sea.

The mixing of languages and codes is so dominant throughout the text that it is difficult to assert that this is a tale written in Italian; but, at the same time, it is not a work written entirely in Sardinian either. It is a perfect blending of codes that effectively depicts a linguistic reality on the island where Sardinian is used on private occasions and survives in smaller communities. Atzeni foresaw what could be the future of the Sardinian language, endangered and at risk of dying, overwhelmed by the power of Italian and its prestige. Furthermore, the author accurately portrayed the use of Italian among more disadvantaged social groups on Sardinia – an Italian that is no longer standard but a hybrid product with strong traces of Sardinian syntax, words, and expressions.

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Cristina Şandru

Post-Cold War Literature of Migration: East-Central European Consciousness between Exile and Diaspora

Abstract: This article seeks to provide a provisional taxonomy of the various kinds of literatures of migration produced by writers with an East-Central European background both before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain. More specifically, it discusses the movement away from "exile" literature within the context of the Cold War to different forms of post-1989 diasporic (self-)representation. I will focus on three texts in which the narrative modes adopted dramatize an array of identity struggles and existential crises faced by characters grappling with a rapidly changing world order, marked by the disappearance of the initial reason for relocation, but also by an acknowledgement of the impossibility of return. Emerging in conditions of literal and metaphorical displacement, these texts – the fictional memoir *Why is the Child Cooking in the Polenta?* (2012) by Aglaja Veteranyi (Romanian-German), and the novels *The Black Madonna of Derby* (2008) and *Sweetest Enemy* (2012) by Joanna Czechowska (British-Polish) – are different from earlier exilic writing in both the historical context of their production and their hybridic, liminal status between cultures. Poised precariously on the cusp where exile and diaspora meet, their characters embody all the nuances of the migrant sensibility – from loss, alienation, and despair to the realization of new potential and creativity.

Keywords: diaspora, displacement, East-Central Europe, exile, identity, migrant literature, post-Cold War Europe

> It may be argued that the past is a country from which we have all emigrated, that its loss is part of our common humanity. Which seems to be self-evidently true; but I suggest that the writer who is out-of-country and even out-of-language may experience this loss in an intensified form. It is made more concrete for him by the physical fact of discontinuity, of his present being in a different place from his past, of his being "elsewhere." (Rushdie 1992, 156)

The end of World War II saw a hypertrophy of expatriation, either in the form of political exile (with legions of artists, writers, and intellectuals from behind the Berlin Wall fleeing the censorship of the Communist regimes), or as the mass migration of large swathes of former colonial populations seeking to escape the economic deprivation of their newly liberated countries, and chasing the mirage of an affluent and welcoming West. Consequently, the exilic and diasporic space

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has, for nearly half a century, been the privileged locus of "articulating the predicaments that disfigure modernity" (Said 1994, 403) – the abuses of power, the political control of the past, mass deportation, imprisonment, collective dispossession, and the lure of utopias. The migrant, in her various guises, can thus be seen as the quintessential political figure of our time,[1] a site of contestation, unease, and unrest, both part of and at one remove from the societies in which she seeks to find protection, acceptance, and a new life. Post-Cold War global events have pushed the hitherto shadowy figure of the migrant onto centre stage: she has become the embodiment of a contrasting ideological landscape in which unprecedented levels of mobility and cultural fluidity wage daily battle with renewed anxieties about the "stranger within" and the invading "Other" from outside.

My aim here is to briefly describe the transition from "exile" literature within the context of the Cold War to different forms of post-1989 diasporic (self-)representation in the literature written by writers of Eastern European descent. There is, of course, a significant fluidity to this transition, and the categories I use to classify literary writings produced outside national borders during this period (both before and after 1989) should be taken mainly as an effort to systematize a vast and diverse body of work rather than as an exercise in epistemic straitjacketing. The three categories I operate with are as follows:

(1) pre-1989 exilic literature, produced by émigré writers who fled Communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, either to North America or Western Europe (e.g. Norman Manea, Herta Müller, Milan Kundera);[2]
(2) post-1989 transitional literature, struggling to seek a new position of articulation within a rapidly changing world order, marked by the disappearance of the initial reason for relocation, but also by an acknowledgement of the impossibility of return (e.g. Domnica Radulescu, Aglaja Veteranyi, Vesna Goldsworthy, the post-1989 fiction of some of the older exiles such as Milan Kundera);
(3) the literature of migrant and diasporic consciousness, which finds parallels in second-generation post-colonial texts (e.g. Joanna Czechowska's *The Black Madonna of Derby* [2008] and *Sweetest Enemy* [2012], or Marina Lewycka's novel *Two Caravans* [2007]).

1 See Thomas Nail's crucial study on migration, *The Figure of the Migrant* (2015).

2 I call these pre-1989 exilic writings even though many were published well after 1989, particularly by those writers who only escaped Communism late in the 1980s, such as Norman Manea or Herta Müller. But their most salient characteristics place these narratives in the anti-Communist exilic category rather than in what I call the transitional period.

In the pre-1989 literature of exile, the main purpose of the narrative is by and large to throw light on the oppressive circumstances which made emigration necessary, rather than to engage in any meaningful way with the host cultures. Many such works embrace a liminal space which constantly juxtaposes capitalized, brutal, traumatic History with the various "little" narratives of individual resistance or defiance. An acute consciousness of exile is visible throughout: the texts are backward-looking, ironic, and somewhat nostalgic; there is very little engagement with the cultural reality of their authors' host nations; instead, the focus is on rearticulating a past distorted by official propaganda and on the retrieval of individual or collective resistant memory. Exile, in this understanding, has a more "definitive connotation" of "terminal loss" (Said 2002, 173), signifying a space of permanent "non-belonging" (177).

The literature of transition, emerging in conditions of literal and metaphorical displacement, is different from older exilic writing in both the historical context of its production, and its hybrid, liminal status between cultures. It is, perhaps, the first truly diasporic mode of writing, exploring "what it is to have complex, multiple identities, a simultaneity of attachments and memories that 'do not necessarily *succeed* one another in historical memory but echo back and forth'" (Clark 2002, 278; emphasis in original). The narrative modes adopted (involving generic hybridization and the frequent occurrence of surreal, carnivalesque, magical-realist, or otherwise non-realist episodes) are often a mirror of the split consciousness of exile in which the different geographical and temporal coordinates of the past constantly intrude upon the present, rendering it doubly foreign – not only fragmentary, but also alienating. While the past – in its spatial and temporal contours, as well as in the dramatization of a split, schizoid subjectivity – infuses most of the fictions of transition (the protagonists tend to be radically displaced exiles, uneasy in their new locations, or struggling to find a new identity in an environment that is often perceived as radically removed from their previous life experiences), these writings do engage with the coordinates of their authors' host cultures. Here, diasporic consciousness can be said to have reached its peak, with positive "newness" (see Rushdie 1992) struggling to emerge from a clash of cultures and subjectivities. This is why "translation, multi-centeredness and 'multiple adjacencies' are all endemic to the diasporic condition" (Clark 2002, 278) and prevalent in the work of both first-generation post-colonial authors and the post-1989 East-Central European "diasporized" émigré. In some cases, we can see the contours of this positive self-realization emerging from the discordance between the need for personal continuity of the self, and the constant and abrupt changes it has been forced to accommodate (as in Domnica Radulescu's novels or Vesna Goldsworthy's 2005 memoir

Chernobyl Strawberries); in other cases, the self cannot hold the incompatible movements together, and it fractures, or, to use Aglaja Veteranyi's metaphor, shatters into myriad pieces like a mirror that can no longer hold a unified image of the person together. In yet other cases, as in Kundera's "French novels," the landscape of the contemporary host culture is contrasted, in an ironic and not altogether favourable manner, with ideological brainwashing under Communism. The disenchantment with the "transition" to the Western package of capitalism, freedom, and democracy is clearly evident in his post-1989 novels.

If the transitional literature uneasily sandwiched between exile and diaspora bears many similarities with the works of hyphenated, first-generation post-colonial writers, post-millennial diasporic writing seeks to express the complex processes of cross-cultural exchange brought about by successive waves of migrant mobility. In this sense, it is more akin to second- or third-generation metropolitan post-colonial writings (such as those by Zadie Smith, Hanif Kureishi, Andrea Levy, Kiran Desai, and others): the focus is firmly on the present – the past does resurface, yet it functions mainly as a memory backdrop which the migrants look back on nostalgically, but with little to "exorcize." Migration itself has a different ontological status: it is perceived as a provisional movement, not a final destination – there always exists not only the possibility, but often also the actuality and frequency of return, and the links with the mother country and the past are not severed, as was often the case with exilic literature. In the older literature of exile, the status of and relationships to the mother country were constantly problematized – most often, the latter is an oppressive space, yet one from whose gravitational pull the émigré cannot escape. The political valence of much contemporary migrant fiction is more diffuse, and more cosmopolitan and transnational in scope. In the terminology proposed by Graeme Dunphy (2001), the "emigrant perspective" (with its focus on the past and the place left behind) is steadily replaced by the "immigrant perspective" (with a focus on the present and the new place), while magical realism or surrealism are replaced by a politics of estrangement, or what we might call reverse exoticism: in much of this fiction, the representation of the new local cultures is voyeuristic and comedic – the gaze of the migrant is turned back on the hosts, with the writing portraying the latter's habits, mores, and customs as odd, funny, or downright uncivilized (e.g. British drinking culture). In what follows, I will exemplify these latter strands of writing by briefly looking at three texts from the transitional and diasporic categories.

1 The bitter-sweet taste of emigration: Aglaja Veteranyi's *Why Is the Child Cooking in the Polenta?*

Aglaja Veteranyi was a Romanian-born Swiss writer of mixed parentage (Hungarian and Romanian). Her quasi-autobiographical narrative written in German, *Warum das Kind in der Polenta Kocht?* [Why Is the Child Cooking in the Polenta?] (2012), is probably one of the most problematic and traumatic representatives of what I have termed transitional fiction. The text is as hybrid and liminal as its troubled bicultural émigré author: part surrealist poem, part monologue, part diary, the whole does not cohere in any conventional or traditional novelistic sense, and is indicative of the many ruptures its protagonist – who is a remembered child-version of the author herself – has suffered in the course of multiple dislocations and relocations as the child of a family of itinerant circus artists who have been thrown out of (or escaped) Communist Romania (it is never quite clear what their status is and how exactly they left Romania). The structure of the text is a Bakhtinian combination of the carnivalesque and picaresque; yet, unlike eighteenth-century novels of travel and adventure, filled with optimism about the potential for growth and development, Veteranyi's text presents childhood experiences that are often traumatic in nature. The narrating child's voice is fractured, sometimes surreal, mixing genres and registers in a manner that suggests a reworking of the child-like imagination from the perspective of the grown-up adult she has become. There is little sense of a nostalgic yearning for a lost homeland (indeed, the lost homeland is a place of fear and terror, just as much as the new places are), while the sense of adventure characteristic of the early picaresque narratives is replaced by fear and foreboding at a potentially destructive future (the narrator is haunted by constant anxiety about her mother's unwitting self-immolation as a result of her death-defying circus act). Yet, while the form is touchingly innocent in the apparent naivety of the questions the narrator asks, their subliminal or otherwise symbolic nature points to a retrospective reconstruction of that childhood voice, now forever lost. When she asks "Does God speak foreign languages? Can he understand foreigners too?" (Veteranyi 2012, 7), or "How many places are foreign countries?" (87), her questions resonate with a weight that speaks for all displaced or in-between creatures forced out of their native tongue into a linguistic and cultural Babel that is as confusing as it is traumatizing, and compelled to forever "translate themselves."

The title of Veteranyi's book, which has a surrealist cruelty reminiscent of Buñuel, might have been intended by its publishers as a commercial ploy that capitalizes on the public's thirst for sensationalism, yet it is fully congruent with the

author's suicide a decade earlier. Its narrative does not resolve the incongruity between the foreigner's permanent outsider status and the possibility that exile can open up a space for newness to emerge. "Dispersal" and "fragmentation," those signifiers most beloved by certain versions of post-colonial criticism, are not necessarily successful in resisting an abiding sense of unbelonging and marginalization. On the contrary, the "unhomely" and "unhoused" are the central organizing metaphors here: unlike the more directly retrospective fictions of politically motivated emigration, these texts of transition emerge at the intersection between a past that has vanished and a spatial instability given not only by the real change in geographical location, but also by the changing fluidity of their authors' former homelands. Like the more recent post-millennial migrants, these first-generation exiles can go back whenever they wish – but the landscape they find bears increasingly tenuous connections with the remembered and re-imagined landscape of home. Hence the pervasive sense of loss such texts exhibit is stronger than that which permeates both older exilic and more recent migrant fictions.

2 (Dis)continuities and (dis)integration: Mapping the migrant soul in Joanna Czechowska's *The Black Madonna of Derby* and *The Sweetest Enemy*

> Zosia: "'History was all that really mattered', thought Zosia. 'If we don't know who we are and where we came from, we are nothing.'"
> (Czechowska 2008, 532)

> Wanda: "'Why do they always live in the past?' […] The future was the only thing that mattered to her. She didn't care about these old people, old wars, old quarrels. It was history that caused wars – if people didn't know about the past, they wouldn't fight over it."
> (Czechowska 2008, 278)

Novels such as Joanna Czechowska's *The Black Madonna of Derby* and *The Sweetest Enemy* neatly bridge the gap between the transitional and the post-millennial literature of emigration. This is chiefly because the narrative is conceived – much like Zadie Smith's cosmopolitan novels of second-generation post-colonial migrants – as the story of several generations of immigrants, each illustrating the specific way in which they relate to the traumas of the past (both personal and familial, and historical in a larger sense), and how they negotiate an ever-more tenuous sense of national belonging. In *The Black Madonna of Derby*, too, the past and history weigh heavily on the characters – like much of twentieth-century European history, it is a past of crimes, separation, and heartache, and it refuses to

let itself be forgotten. If we are to use Kundera's metaphors of lightness and weight (cf. *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, 1985), the Polish world of exile as it manifests itself in Czechowska's novel is one of burdensome weight which keeps the characters imprisoned within the traumatic world of the past, whereas the settled, plain, often unimaginative life of the locals is one of lightness – of emergent consumerism (in pre-packaged foods and new TV sets), pop culture (witness Beatlemania), stars, and fashion. However, its 2012 sequel, *The Sweetest Enemy*, which continues the story of the Baran family through the 1980s and 1990s, is already much more centred in the present, with a large proportion of the narrative dedicated to the lives and tribulations (amorous and otherwise) of its second-generation British-Polish protagonists.

The three generations of the Baran family reflect, each in its own way, the struggles inherent in exile. The elderly generation is scarred by war memories and often unable, or unwilling, to stop living in the past; their children, the first generation of migrants, struggle to fit in and build a life in a country which has received them as war refugees, and to which they owe their current well-being, but to which they feel they do not really belong; and the second migrant generation of "hyphenated" British Poles are caught between their cultural heritage and their desire to belong in their country of adoption, to no longer feel and be perceived as different or foreign.

Even though she has been living with the family of her miraculously found daughter, with whom she is reunited in Britain after they were separated in 1942 during a Nazi raid in Warsaw, Babcia, the matriarch-grandmother of the house, refuses to learn even basic English and continues to live in a wholly made-up world of private and public life in Poland before her husband, the "Prince," died. The circumstances of his death, which are gradually revealed to us in the course of the narrative, have very little to do with the heroic story she spins and which she earnestly imparts to those of her grandchildren who are willing to humour her, particularly the bright, scholarly Zosia, who absorbs her grandmother's stories like a sponge. As a consequence, Zosia grows up with this mythical construction of the past, both of her family and of "old Poland," which values honour and heroism above all. This sets her on a collision course with the new post-war British reality in which she lives: she is constantly bullied at school and considered odd on account of her bookishness and excessive scholarly proclivities; like many old-fashioned Eastern Europeans, she scorns what she sees as the petty preoccupations of her sister and her peers, which are merely normal girlish teenagers obsessed with music, make-up, fashion, and stars. Zosia is the serious one – the only thing that interests her is the past, and it is this obsession that eventually leads to her untimely death in the Poland that she so longed for, but whose dilapi-

dated, crumbling Communist present is as remote from Babcia's stories as her character is from the country into which she was born.

At the opposite pole is Zosia's elder sister, Wanda, who chooses to live wholly in the present and whose ardent wish to fit in is constantly thwarted by the ubiquitous presence of her Polish roots, at home in the person of her grandmother (who pays little attention to her, since she is neither as good-looking, nor as bookish or clever as Zofia), and in the public sphere of the Catholic church they all attend and the Polish club attached to it. This desire for integration, however, is simply a pained response to her grandmother's dismissive attitude towards her. In effect, Wanda is a much more complex and multidimensional character than both her "pure," rigid, and unapproachable sister and her fully anglified brother whose only interests in life are football and making money. Janek/Johnny is so eager to leave his roots behind that he accepts what at the time was a very rare occurrence indeed, namely taking his English wife's surname after marriage, in the hope that he will inherit the printing shop of his conservative father-in-law, who wishes to keep "business within the family."[3]

Yet Zosia, despite her looks, kind soul, and eagerness to learn, is herself, in many ways, as blinkered as her brother – she lives in the artificial world fostered by her grandmother's stories and further aggrandized by her hyperactive imagination: she chooses to live in old Poland, or, rather, a particular version or narrative of that country, one that does not include the "plebs," those "plain, ordinary" souls like Wanda or Pawel that she so despises. Her Poland is a half-fictitious construct preserved in the desires and imaginations of those who were forced to leave it behind and could never call the "elsewhere" their home. In this respect, even though she is born and bred in England, she feels more alien to it than both her immigrant parents: her highly intelligent mother, Helena, who has (temporarily) abandoned her intellectual ambitions in order to take up work in a factory, and her plain, ordinary father, Tadek (whom Babcia treats with the same veiled contempt she shows for Wanda). When visiting her aunt's friends in Cracow, "she [...] realised that this was the life she craved – good food, intelligent conversation, historical knowledge, no one ignoring her or putting her down. No one call-

3 Zosia is taunted and bullied, interestingly, on account not primarily of her Polishness but of that particular version of Eastern European intellectual pathos that is so alien to the English temperament. It is not her putative nationality that sets her apart, but her desire to appropriate a particular version of her Polish identity, one that is at the furthest remove from the anti-intellectualist traditions of the English "commoner." Her brother, though obviously clever, never flaunts his brains and is happy to play football and abandon school at sixteen for the much worthier middle-class ambition of making money. Between Zosia and her brother there is an abyss, and Wanda is the bridge between them.

ing her a snob, a show-off, a spotty git, miss lah-didah, too big for her boots. Zosia fitted in, she was at home" (Czechowska 2008, loc. 2613). This is why, when Pawel describes her to his friend Bogdan, with whom he is involved in printing and distributing samizdat publications, as being "more interested in the past than the present," Bogdan retorts ironically, "Well, that's a well-known Polish disease" (Czechowska 2008, loc. 2053). It is, one might add, the typical disease inflicting immigrants of all kinds, in which a romanticized version of the homeland, heightened by nostalgia and the propensity of memory to distort the past, vies with an often difficult and unfulfilling present. It is the same disease that has symbolically destroyed Zosia, and which is exhibited in full at the Polish club, which, as Pawel remarks with astonishment, "lives in a time-warp" (Czechowska 2008, loc. 3244). Not only do they wish to preserve a corner of Poland in this faraway foreign land, a desire which is, after all, understandable, and common to all immigrant communities, but the Poland they wish to preserve is one that no longer exists. Like so many post-colonial migrants, their inability to fully accept their new location also translates into an inability to face the contemporary conditions and transformations of the countries they left behind – in this case, contemporary Communist Poland, whose problems and struggles they are alien to: "They have completely ignored the reality of communism in Poland and live in a little Poland that doesn't exist anymore, if it ever did" (Czechowska 2008, loc. 3244).

While both sisters feel alien in the country of their upbringing, Wanda's insecurity stems from the obvious marks of her foreignness (her name, her religion, her Saturday schedule dedicated to a Polish version of the scout club, which she thoroughly hates), rather than some actual inability to integrate. More importantly perhaps, she feels "different" because of the other markers of what she perceives to be her "inferiority," those of her family environment, in which certain standards of good looks, smartness, and good behaviour – those dictated by the towering figure of the *babcia* – are seen as superior and desirable. Her qualities, which only her father perceives and appreciates – practicality, a certain sensual warmth, generosity of heart, and a capacity to forgive and move on – are not those of the heroic "Poland of the mind" that her grandmother and then her sister tragically wished to preserve at all costs, even if that meant destroying a child's self-confidence. This is why, as Wanda puts it after her strained meeting with her sister in London, they "don't speak the same language" – both literally (Zosia constantly insists on Polish, while Wanda is always replying in English) and metaphorically. To schematize somewhat, the London-based Wanda longs to be part of the England of commerce, shops, fashion, and the aspiring lower middle classes, whereas Zofia is constantly looking back to an old world of learning, manners, history, and heroes, the world fashioned by her grandmother and to which the Poland of the present stands in such contrast. As for Janek, a summary post-

colonial reading of the novel reveals that Maxine's English family seem to have little trouble accepting "Johnny" into their fold as long as he is willing to abandon all traces of his foreignness, including the ultimate stamp of his alien status – his very name. If the foreigner is willing to become a "mimic man," then he is tolerated – perhaps even accepted, particularly since the visible signifiers of difference are not or no longer present (after all, "Johnny" is tall and fair-skinned). Otherwise, he or she remains an object of derision (Zosia) or an exotic token of one's cosmopolitan inclinations (Wanda to her London pseudo-friends).

Wanda can thus be seen as the only truly "hybrid" character in the book, the one who has managed to harmonize the past (her language, traditions, cooking, history with a small "h") with her present life in Britain: she works in a pastry shop and is fully integrated within her provincial Derby community, and she teaches English and Polish at the Polish church club, in short, she has become the best version of what she could be. This is probably why she was chosen by the author to be the protagonist of the novel's sequel, *Sweetest Enemy*, which returns us to the Baran family during the Solidarity decade in Poland and the early 1990s, after the collapse of the Communist regimes in East-Central Europe. Wanda and Pawel are married, and their highly intelligent daughter is "the spitting image of her auntie Zosia" (Czechowska 2012, chapter 27, loc. 1964) – but, unlike the long-lost sister Zosia, Anna is a perfectly adjusted British-Polish child, a living testimony that intellect and good looks can coexist perfectly well with being likeable and popular at school. Along similar lines, after nearly forty years spent in Britain, Wanda's mother and Babcia's brilliant daughter, Helena, is finally exorcizing the demons of her past, that traumatic moment in Poland when she "was [...] thrown into a German truck with scores of other strangers and forcibly removed from the country" (chapter 36, loc. 2723) and the loss of her daughter Zosia, taken away by the same country that had ejected her at the tender age of sixteen. Finally, she takes on the challenge of sifting through the debris of this past, going back to the place of her trauma, and assembling it all into some sort of coherent whole – even while simultaneously fulfilling her long-frustrated intellectual potential by completing the book about her family's and country's past that is symbolically entitled *The Fragmented Mind*. The sequel to the original novel provides much-needed closure, and Zosia's ghost is finally put to rest in her mother's intellectual accomplishment, which pulls together the personal and historical threads that had been her daughter's undoing.

As this very brief discussion has hopefully shown, even though there are differences of degree, quality, and circumstance that distinguish various kinds of migratory movements (such as political exile or economic migration), they are all

linked by a similar ontological status of rupture/mutation/displacement. The views of home and diaspora, here and there, now and then, as they emerge in the fictions of migration, correspond rather well to what Edward Said describes in *Reflections on Exile* as the distinguishing features of a displaced person. In contrast to the "legitimate" inhabitant and rooted citizen, the immigrant is "neither here nor there, but rather in-between things" (Said 2002, 99). In the case of exile, the two complementary but contradictory movements – "that of keeping the memory of the lost native spaces alive and that of reinventing oneself in new and foreign spaces" (Radulescu 2015, 11) – produce a permanent split between that which was lost and may be irretrievable, and that which is unfamiliar, alien, perhaps hostile. This dynamic is played out differently in the case of voluntary migration, in which the space left behind is usually not irretrievable; but a certain degree of loss is a prerequisite to any moving away. *The Fragmented Mind*, the title of Helena Poniatowska's book in Joanna Chechowska's *Sweetest Enemy*, written by a representative first-generation immigrant poised precariously on the cusp where exile and diaspora meet, can be seen as the key to understanding the migrant sensibility – that harbinger of new potential and creativity. In the words of one such unhoused sensibility, "one confronts and accepts dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order that reveals more fully where we are, who we can become, an order that does not demand forgetting. Our struggle is also a struggle of memory against forgetting" (hooks 2002, 148).

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Elke Segelcke

Okzident und Orient: ‚Poetik der Bewegung' im Werk Zafer Şenocaks

Abstract: Im Zusammenhang mit Zafer Şenocaks transkulturellem Poetikkonzept und der Problematisierung von Übersetzung aus der islamischen Überlieferung in die Moderne wird in diesem Beitrag unter Heranziehung seiner kultur- und übersetzungskritischen Essays sowie seines literarischen Textes *In deinen Worten. Mutmaßungen über den Glauben meines Vaters* (2016) das Verständnis des türkisch-deutschen Autors von literarischer Übersetzung sowohl als Kulturübersetzung als auch einer Kultur als Übersetzung im Sinne eines kulturspezifischen Bewegungsprozesses thematisiert. Als ein „ZwischenWeltenSchreiben" (Ottmar Ette) in Abgrenzung von allgemeinen Begriffen wie National- oder Weltliteratur und in dekonstruktiver Umdeutung des traditionellen hermeneutischen Verstehens und Übersetzens mit seiner auf einen Universalitätsanspruch zielenden Sinn-Konstruktion impliziert Şenocaks De- und Rekontextualisierung des Übersetzungsvorgangs mit Bezug auf Walter Benjamin und Jacques Derrida eine philologische Auslegung in Form einer nationalliterarisch nicht zu vereinnahmenden, sich ständig verändernden Lesart wie auch das Verstehensmodell einer „negativen Hermeneutik", die gerade das Nicht- und Missverstehen im Kulturenkontakt hervorhebt, um so die Relevanz von kultureller Vermittlung und Festhalten am Grundprinzip der Übersetzbarkeit zu verdeutlichen.

Keywords: Translation, transkulturell, Kulturübersetzung, Hermeneutik, Negative Hermeneutik, Islam, Sufismus, Zafer Şenocak, Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Doris Bachmann-Medick, Ottmar Ette, Homi, Bhabha, *In deinen Worten*, *Mutmaßungen über den Glauben meines Vaters*

Angesichts der Herausforderungen von Globalisierung und Migrationsbewegungen, transnationaler Vernetzungen und wechselseitiger Abhängigkeiten gewinnen sowohl Kulturtransfer und kulturelle Überlappungen als auch Erfahrungen von kultureller Differenz und Alterität an Relevanz, womit Kultur selbst zu einem Übersetzungsprozess wird. Wie die Literatur-und Kulturwissenschaftlerin Doris Bachmann-Medick (2014, 240–252) zum „*translational turn* in den Kulturwissenschaften" ausführt, beinhaltet die Wandlung von der rein philologischen Übersetzung zur „Kulturübersetzung und Kultur als Übersetzung" – im Zusammenhang mit Homi Bhabhas postkolonialem Begriff „translationaler Kultur" – ein jenseits fester Identitäten von Übersetzungsprozessen durchzogenes, dynamisiertes Kultur-

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verständnis. Die literarische Übersetzung aus anderen kulturellen Kontexten sieht der Romanist und Komparatist Ottmar Ette (2005, 109–112) im Sinne eben dieses kulturwissenschaftlichen Übersetzungsverständnisses als einen hermeneutischen Vorgang, indem diese durch „die De- und Rekontextualisierung" des Übersetzungsvorgangs eine philologische Auslegung in Form einer sich ständig verändernden Lesart entfaltet und somit als eine „oszillierende Denkfigur" nicht territorialisierbar oder nationalliterarisch zu vereinnahmen ist, sondern für ein „ZwischenWelten-Schreiben" steht, das die eigenen Denkmöglichkeiten und Ausdrucksformen bewusst erweitert. In Abgrenzung von Begriffen wie „*einer* Nationalliteratur oder *der* Weltliteratur" geht es Ette (2005, 30) jenseits der Bipolarität von ‚Nation' und ‚Welt', ‚fremd' und ‚eigen' sowie der eindeutigen Zuordnung zu nur einer Kultur um die Entwicklung einer grenzüberschreitenden „Poetik der Bewegung" (Ette 2005, 19) im Kontext heutiger „Bewegungs-und Vernetzungsprozesse" (Ette 2005, 30), in der Raum und Zeit im ständigen Springen zwischen den Kulturen aufeinander bezogen sind, ohne fixierbare Beziehung zu einer einzigen Kultur.

Eine Entsprechung zu Bachmann-Medicks – wie auch zu Ettes revidiertem – Verständnis von Übersetzung als einem kulturspezifischen Bewegungsprozess findet sich in dem für diesen Beitrag zu untersuchenden transkulturellen Poetikkonzept des transnationalen türkisch-deutschen Autors, Publizisten und Übersetzers Zafer Şenocak in Form von Übersetzung als kulturelle Vermittlung, dessen Einstieg in die lyrische und literarische Produktion „im Umfeld einer Übersetzungskultur" (Şenocak 2011, 84) entstand. Vertraut sowohl mit der europäischen Literatur und Philosophie als auch mit der osmanisch-türkischen Literatur im Rückgriff auf das eigene Erbe, übersetzte er unter anderem als erster die *Diwan*-Lyrik des Sufi-Mystikers Yunus Emre ins Deutsche. Angesichts der dichotomischen Grenzziehungen zwischen den Kulturen und Religionen sowie der Widerstände „gegen vieldeutige und hybride Identitäten" (Şenocak 2011, 109) in den Migrations- und Integrationsdebatten, sucht Şenocak als Kulturvermittler in Erweiterung auch des deutschen Literaturkanons und kulturellen Gedächtnisses nach „einer neuen Sprache [...], die das Fremde nicht diffamiert, sondern übersetzt", als Grundlage jeder Verständigung in Form eines kritischen Dialogs sowohl mit anderen als auch mit sich selbst (Şenocak 2011, 187). In diesem Zusammenhang repräsentiert das Osmanische Reich für ihn die „unterschiedlichsten kulturellen Einflüsse, [...] Stil- und Sprachvermischung" (Şenocak 2011, 84) und somit eine „Unreinheit" im „kreativen Sinne" im Gegensatz zur „puristischen Ideologie der [türkischen] Republik" (Şenocak 2011, 85). Bezogen auf Şenocaks transkulturelles Übersetzungskonzept widersteht daher ein differenzbestimmtes, jedoch „nicht-dichotomisches Übersetzungsmodell" in der Formulierung Bachmann-Medicks der „vermeintlichen Reinheit von Konzepten wie Kultur, Identität, Tradition, Religion usw." und „entlarvt jegliche Identitätsbehauptungen als trügerisch, da immer schon von Fremdem durchzogen" (Bachmann-Medick 2014, 247). Damit beinhaltet das Inter-

pretieren bei der literarischen Übersetzungsarbeit für den Autor das Einnehmen wechselnder Perspektiven statt vorgefasster Standpunkte, „die das Fremde immer nur vom Eigenen her" definieren, was entsprechend eine differenzierende Dekonstruktion von Gegensätzen impliziert, „um eine verändernde Wirkung des Fremden im Eigenen zu spüren" (Şenocak 1994, 54). Entgegen dichotomischer Wahrnehmungsmuster steht für Şenocak der Autor nicht zwischen dem ‚Einen' oder dem ‚Anderen', „sondern trägt alle Zeichen, mit denen er in Berührung gekommen ist, in sich", wozu in seinem Fall neben der „anatolisch-islamischen Kultur mit ihren spezifischen Kreuzungen" insbesondere deutsch-jüdische, religiös-mystisch inspirierte Schriftsteller der Moderne gehören wie „Kafka, Benjamin, Scholem, Celan", die nicht identisch mit der deutschen Sprache oder Nation waren, sondern, wie Şenocak selbst, geprägt durch Kontakt zu anderen Kulturen (Şenocak 2001, 100).

Unter Heranziehung seiner kultur- und übersetzungskritischen Essays sowie seines zuletzt erschienenen Buches *In deinen Worten. Mutmaßungen über den Glauben meines Vaters* (2016), in dem sich die aus dem Türkischen übersetzten lyrischen Einlagen mit allgemeinen Reflexionen zur Übersetzung vermischen, soll es in diesem Beitrag im Kontext von Şenocaks Sicht auf den Islam um seine Umdeutung des traditionellen hermeneutischen Verstehens und Übersetzens gehen, deren inter- und transkulturelle Dimension bereits in Walter Benjamins Essay *Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers* (1923) angelegt ist. Im Zusammenhang mit der Verstehensproblematik von Identitätskonstruktionen und Alterität wird davon ausgegangen, dass Şenocaks Vertrautheit mit Benjamins Werk auch dessen Übersetzungsaufsatz mit einschließt, auf den sich wiederum Jacques Derridas Essay „Babylonische Türme. Wege, Umwege, Abwege" (1997) auf direkte Weise bezieht. Wie Bachmann-Medick (2014, 246–247) zur kulturwissenschaftlichen Wende in der Übersetzungswissenschaft ausführt, wirkt sich der *translational turn* mit seiner Neukonzeption des Kulturverständnisses als ein Übersetzungsprozess auf den „Übersetzungscharakter der kulturwissenschaftlichen Gegenstände selbst" aus, „auf ihre Hybridität und Vielschichtigkeit", womit ein solches Übersetzungsverständnis einerseits „zu einer wichtigen Methode der Deplatzierung und Verfremdung, der Differenzbildung und Vermittlung entfaltet worden" ist. Andererseits wirft es ein kritisches Licht nicht nur auf die klassische Hermeneutik, deren Aufgabe in Verbindung mit dem Übersetzen unter anderem bei Hans-Georg Gadamer (vgl. Cercel 2009) auf Weltauslegung im Sinne der Herstellung einer holistischen Deutung und eines universalen Sinnverstehens als diskursives Gelingen von Verständigung zielt, sondern auch auf die vergangene europäische Übersetzungspraxis als „eine Strategie der Verfestigung fremder Kulturbilder im kolonialistischen Prozess" in Form von binärem Identitätsdenken von ‚Eigenem und Fremdem' im „Dienst einer europäischen Repräsentationspraxis" (Bachmann-Medick 2014, 245).

In diesem Kontext lässt sich Şenocaks Aufsatz „Literarische Übersetzung: Brücke oder Schwert?" (Şenocak 1994, 48–54) unter expliziter Erwähnung von Edward Saids

„‚Orientalismus‘ als eine geistige Vorstufe und Begleiterscheinung des Kolonialismus“ als Auseinandersetzung mit der kulturpolitischen Übersetzungsgeschichte als Teil der Kolonialgeschichte und deren diskursivem Umfeld verstehen, in dem er die polarisierende Denkweise von ‚Orient‘ und ‚Okzident‘ mit der zunehmenden Expansionspolitik der europäischen Mächte und der Etablierung der Orientalistik Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts in Verbindung bringt als „vor allem eine deutsche Kreation“, die einerseits „zur Exotisierung einer als fremd wahrgenommenen Welt geführt“, andererseits „auch viel Nachbarschaft geschaffen“ hat hinsichtlich der literarischen Rezeption der Divan-Tradition von Autoren wie Lessing, Goethe, Rückert und Rilke sowie der griechischen Antike als „gemeinsame[r] Ursprung sowohl der islamischen Zivilisation im Mittelalter als auch der abendländischen in der Neuzeit“ (Şenocak 2011, 106). Allerdings waren nicht die Dichter, sondern vorwiegend die Orientalisten „die ersten Übersetzer orientalischer Literatur“ (Şenocak 1994, 48), die häufig als Diplomaten die politischen und ökonomischen Interessen ihres Landes vertraten wie im Fall von Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, der Şenocak als „der Prototyp des orientalisch vorbelasteten Übersetzers“ gilt, der mit seiner „eurozentristisch angelegte[n] Orientalistik“ bestehende „Vorurteile und Mißverständnisse zwischen den Kulturen“ festigte und damit das Bild vom „osmanische[n] Reich und [der] daraus entstandene[n] Türkei“ als eine „von Europa erschaffene Gegenwelt“ (Şenocak 1994, 50). Für Şenocak hat diese polarisierende Übersetzungspraxis nicht nur direkte Folgen für die Rezeption „der osmanisch-türkischen Literatur durch die Orientalisten“ (Şenocak 1994, 50), die „von dem übergeordneten Begriff ‚orientalische‘ Literatur“ und „orientalistischen Stereotypen“ ausgeht anstatt von den Besonderheiten eines „einzelnen Dichter[s] oder von einer bestimmten Epoche, Gattung oder Strömung“ (Şenocak 1994, 51), sondern trägt auch zur Fehlrezeption von türkisch-deutschen Autoren bei. Statt sich an der „Fiktion“ des Autors als „ein einmaliger, persönlicher Ausdruck des Sprachbewußtseins“ (Şenocak 2001, 99) zu orientieren, lese man „seine ihm auf den Leib geschriebene Biographie“ (Şenocak 2001, 98), sodass Şenocak in seinem Essay „Zwischen Koran und Sexpistols“ argumentiert, dass das anhaltende „Aufeinanderprallen gegensätzlicher Welten“ eine „übersetzende Kraft“ braucht, „deren Zweck nicht in der Nivellierung von Unterschieden, wohl aber im Transfer von unterschiedlichen Deutungen liegt“ (Şenocak 2006, 32).

Wie im Folgenden anhand seines literarischen Textes *In deinen Worten. Mutmaßungen über den Glauben meines Vaters* und dessen Thematisierung des Problems der Übersetzung aus der Tradition in die Moderne und damit aus der ursprünglichen Überlieferung in die Gegenwart auf der Suche nach einer neuen Dynamik im islamischen Denken verdeutlicht werden soll, sind insbesondere Texte religiöser Art in ihrer Ambiguität immer auch hermeneutische Fälle, deren Verstehen und Nichtverstehen von den „sich wandelnden soziokulturellen Einbettungen“ und sich „historisch [...] verändernden Lesarten“ (Ette 2005, 109) abhängen, im Widerspruch zur fehlenden Offenheit für Interpretation und Hinterfragung von Quel-

len im dogmatischen Islam. Şenocaks Rekurs auf die „reichen Traditionen eines erzählenden, eines dichtenden, eines ästhetischen Islam", der im frühen Mittelalter „auch eine große Zivilisation geschaffen hat" (Main 2016), ist unter anderem als kritische Entgegnung auf die „Ausschaltung oppositionellen Denkens" in den heutigen muslimischen Gesellschaften (Şenocak 2016, 16) und die „regressive Entwicklung" des Islam in Form einer Rückkehr als politische Ideologie besonders in der Türkei zu verstehen, wo der öffentliche Diskurs trotz des Potenzials an „sehr viele[n] kritische[n] Theologen und Denker[n]" fehlt (Main 2016). Das Buch gleicht einem religiös-philosophischen Essay, in dem der Autor aus muslimischer Sicht sich der Glaubenswelt seines kürzlich verstorbenen Vaters zuwendet, in dem sich die Denkweisen von traditionell muslimisch-orientalischer Herkunft und westlich orientierter Aufklärung miteinander verbanden. Şenocak will seine Erinnerungen jedoch nicht als „Dokumentation über das Leben [s]eines Vaters" (Main 2016) verstanden wissen, sondern vielmehr als „Fiktion" im Sinne einer sich weiterentwickelnden dritten Figur, die im fiktiven Fortschreiben der ehemaligen Vater-Sohn Gespräche beim Hineintasten der Figur des Sohnes in die Kultur der Vaterfigur entsteht. In seiner erzählerischen Form ähnelt der Text einem Puzzle mit seinem fließenden Übergang zwischen den Textsorten: Der literarische Text wechselt von kultur- bzw. religionsgeschichtlichen und ästhetischen Reflexionen zu Kindheitserinnerungen und zur direkten Anrede an den Vater mit zusätzlichen Zitaten aus seinen Notizheften und Briefen und ist durchsetzt von kursiv abgesetzten lyrischen Passagen, die das zuvor Gesagte und Reflektierte noch einmal in Form von Poesie spiegeln, wobei die nicht immer klar identifizierbaren, zumeist islamischen Quellen von Şenocak ins Deutsche übersetzte fremde Lyrik, väterliche Verse wie auch eigene Gedichte enthalten, neben Koran-Suren, woraus sich im Kontext mit den Vater-Sohn-Gesprächen entgegen des orthodoxen Interpretationsverbots des unmittelbar von Gott empfangenen Wortes eine Art imaginärer Dialog mit dem Koran ergibt. So folgen auf die Erläuterung der für den Vater relevanten Quellen islamischer Kultur, die neben dem auf das Alte Testament gestützten Koran das griechische, persische und indische kulturgeschichtliche Erbe umfassen – als einer „natürliche[n] Brücke zwischen Ost und West" und „Gegenentwurf zu den eurozentristischen Projektionen der abendländischen Kulturgeschichtsschreibung" (Şenocak 2016, 20) – die vom Autor aus dem Türkischen übersetzten Verse des bengalesisch-indischen Dichter Tagore, die entsprechend auf dieses „Vermächtnis" anspielen, „das uns zur Mehrsprachigkeit verpflichtet" (Şenocak 2016, 21). Şenocaks die „Ambivalenz zwischen rationaler und mystischer [...] Welterfahrung" (Şenocak 2001, 99) reflektierende Schlusspassage des Textes über die „letzten Dinge", die „wie vieles in diesem Buch [...] von ihm [dem Vater] geschrieben worden sein" könnte oder von einem Boten, „der immer noch zwischen uns verkehrt" (Şenocak 2016, 164), mutet in Anspielung auf die „Tiefenstruktur des menschlichen Bewusstseins" (Şenocak

2001, 99) mysteriös an und rührt an über den Islam hinausgehende Glaubensfragen wie das Glauben an sich sowie dessen Ungewissheiten. Wie bereits der Untertitel des Bandes „Mutmaßungen über den Glauben meines Vaters" signalisiert, lässt sich der gesamte Text als Gegenbuch zu Gewissheiten zugunsten eines produktiven Zweifels lesen, indem der Autor „die Verkümmerung der Humanität im Islam" auf das Fehlen einer selbstkritischen Auseinandersetzung und den Verlust einer „Kultur des Widerspruchs", der „Skepsis" und der „Ironie" zurückführt (Şenocak 2016, 79), denn die Deutungsvielfalt löst zugleich auch die „Legitimierung absolutistischer Herrschaft durch vermeintliche muslimische Autoritäten" (Şenocak 2016, 16) in der islamischen Welt auf.

Der Neigung zu Vereinfachung und Verkürzung im modernen Islam wie auch im westlichen Islamverständnis steuert Şenocak mit seinem fragmentierten, die Form der großen Erzählung auflösenden Schreibstil entgegen, der dem Autorenanliegen der Auflösung auch von ideologischen und religiösen Gewissheiten entspricht. Dazu gehören seine im Text formulierten kritischen Fragestellungen und Forderungen sowohl nach einer Wiederbelebung der „Humanität im Islam" durch „eine historisch-kritische Aufarbeitung der muslimischen Quellentexte" (Şenocak 2016, 37), als auch nach einer Aufarbeitung des literarischen Erbes in Rückbesinnung auf die Dichtung und Ästhetik der kanonisierten Sufi-Mystiker des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts, die neben der für den Autor zentralen Bedeutung von Poesie als Gesang, Musik und Körpersprache auch das Prinzip von Zweifel und selbstkritischem Denken übermittelten. Wie Şenocak im Zusammenhang mit seiner Sicht auf den Islam und die väterliche Glaubenswelt in einem Interview erläutert, lehnt „die vorherrschende Glaubensrichtung des Islam, die Sunna" (Main 2016), in ihrer Wort-Fixierung und buchstabentreuen Deutung des Koran aus langer Tradition die humanistische und heterodoxe Haltung des Sufismus ab. Der Vernachlässigung einer „ästhetischen Empfindsamkeit" (Şenocak 2016, 84) wird der Sufismus als „eine Art Mischdeutung der islamischen Wurzelreligion" entgegengesetzt, der aus Sicht Şenocaks aufgrund seines Synkretismus in der Aufnahme christlicher, schamanistischer, persischer und anderer Lehren besonders offen für Interpretation und Deutung ist (Main 2016).

Der fiktionale Text betreibt ein Spiel mit der Autofiktionalisierung, indem die Perspektive von Vater- und Sohnfigur auf vielfache Weise auch die des Autors und seines Vaters ist, in dessen Leben der Koran eine zentrale Rolle spielte, jedoch nicht ohne Verbindung zur Poesie. Wie Şenocak in seinem Essayband *Deutschsein. Eine Aufklärungsschrift* (Şenocak 2011, 79–80) zu seinem „Schreibmythos" erläutert, verdankt der Sohn dem Vater die Annäherung an den Koran und die „mystischen Gesänge des mittelalterlichen anatolischen Sufi Yunus Emre" als „Hörerlebnis" und somit das Einhören in fremde Sprachen als „sinnliche[s] Erlebnis von Sprache" und Inspirationsquelle für die eigene Dichtung, was ihm in den 1980er Jahren die Übersetzung von Versen Emres und weiterer osmanischer Dichter und türkischer Au-

toren ins Deutsche ermöglichte: „Ohne die Poesie wäre mir dein Glaube fremd geblieben" (Şenocak 2016, 25), doch „wir wohnten in der Übersetzung. Unser Haus stand überall dort, wo Sprachen aufeinander trafen" (Şenocak 2016, 23). Das Haus als Sprachmetapher für die Übersetzung und als bildlicher Bezugspunkt für den synkretistischen Charakter von Şenocaks literarisch-kulturellem Erbe weist auf die zentrale Rolle der Metapher als ein Über-Setzen für seine eigene Poetik hin, deren Bildlichkeit als bewusster Gegensatz zur reinen Begrifflichkeit er weniger als ein Stilmittel denn als „Kern jeglicher metaphysischer Erfahrung" versteht, die als „das uns übriggebliebene Geheimnis in einer Welt der Entdeckungen" die „rationale Erkenntnis überragt" (Şenocak 2001, 102). Diese Neubestimmung der Metapher kann zugleich verstanden werden als Kritik des Autors an der Fehlrezeption der Divan-Poesie durch westliche Orientalisten und deren Mangel an „poetische[m] Spürsinn" gegenüber der osmanisch-türkischen Dichtung, deren Stil stereotyp als „gekünstelte Redeweise" oder „überzogene Metaphorik" im Sinne des Orientalismus als einer eurozentristischen Geisteshaltung beurteilt wurde (Şenocak 1994, 51–52). Bei der Übersetzung von Poesie kommt es dem Lyriker Şenocak dagegen statt auf „spröde Nachahmung von Form und Reimmustern" auf das Erfassen des „spezifischen Geist[es]" einer „fremden Dichtung" an, auf das „komplexe Zusammenspiel von [...] Sprache, Form und Klang, sowie einer offenen und einer verborgenen Bedeutung, die [...] aus der Anordnung der Bilder und Chiffren zu erschließen ist", um so den historisch-kulturellen „Gesamtkontext" eines Werkes zu erhellen und der Tendenz zu einer „polarisierende[n] Denkweise" auch in der literarischen Ost-West-Begegnung entgegenzuwirken (Şenocak 1994, 53). Im literarischen Text selbst wird das Problem des hermeneutischen Umgangs mit dem Koran auf der Suche nach neuen Impulsen für einen modernen aufgeklärten Islam auf mehrfache Weise thematisiert: Während der Sohn „ein Momentum der Offenbarung" über die „Tiefe" von „Wort, Körper und Traum" (Şenocak 2016, 36) ästhetisch erfährt und der Vater sich im Glauben an die Schrift „als *die* Offenbarung Gottes" (Şenocak 2016, 37) nach der Seele und Inspiration des Islam in der mystischen Sufi-Tradition sehnt in Form einer Flucht aus der Gegenwart in die Poesie, macht sich „der Korangläubige" von heute aus Şenocaks Sicht „zur Gegenfigur des Übersetzers": Aufgrund eines fehlenden Verständnisses für die hermeneutische Deutung einer Sprache in einer anderen gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit kann er statt einer humanen, zeitbezogenen Lesart „weder linguistisch noch historisch" die Widersprüche im religiösen Text deuten, woraus zahlreiche „weder geistig noch sozial" zu lösende Konflikte resultieren (Şenocak 2016, 37). Mit der Feststellung, dass der Koran „in allen Sprachen gedeutet, aber in keine Sprache übersetzt werden" konnte, verbindet sich bei der Figur des Sohnes die Frage, ob „nicht jede Übersetzung immer auch eine Deutung" sei und der Mensch, wenn er deutet, dann nicht „jedes Buch immer wieder von neuem" (Şenocak 2016, 37) schreibe, also konfrontiert sei mit der Vieldeutigkeit und

Deutungsvielfalt des Wortes wie auch der Spannung zwischen Übersetzbarkeit und Unübersetzbarkeit.

In seinem Essay „Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers“ macht Walter Benjamin diese Spannung im Kontext des Problems des hermeneutischen Verstehens für die Übersetzung fruchtbar. Obwohl seiner philosophisch-metaphysischen Übersetzungstheorie nach eine von ihm erahnte überhistorische Verwandtschaft der Sprachen in Form einer „reinen Sprache“ sich nicht in den jeweiligen Einzelsprachen offenbart, sondern in Anspielung auf eine verlorene Totalität einer Ursprache wie auch auf einen unübersetzbaren wesenhaften Kern nur in „der Allheit ihrer [der Sprachen] einander ergänzenden Intentionen erreichbar ist“ (Benjamin 1977, 54), hält Benjamin trotz seiner Einsicht in die Inkommensurabilität der Sprachen am Prinzip der Übersetzbarkeit fest, da erst in der über die reine Mitteilung und Vermittlung hinausgehenden Übersetzung die dem Original innewohnende Bedeutung ihre „stets erneute späteste und umfassendste Entfaltung“ (Benjamin 1977, 52) erreicht. Im Gegensatz zur herkömmlichen Theorie der Übersetzung, bei der „Form und Sinn des Originals möglichst genau [zu] übermitteln sind“, besteht für Benjamin „das echte Verhältnis zwischen Original und Übersetzung“ in der „Wandlung und Erneuerung“ des ursprünglichen Textes, denn ohne festgelegte „Sinnwiedergabe“ gibt es „eine Nachreife auch der festgelegten Worte“ (Benjamin 1977, 53), ein Grundgedanke, der sich ebenfalls in Şenocaks literarischem Übersetzungskonzept als Erkenntnisgewinn im transkulturellen Dialog mit dem auf kreative Weise fortzuschreibenden Bezugstext findet. Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers besteht für Benjamin demnach darin, die „reine“, im fremden „Werk [und seinem Sinn] gefangene“ Sprache in der „Umdichtung zu befreien“, um so die „Sprachbewegung zurückzugewinnen“ (Benjamin 1977, 60) und mit erneuertem Sinn die eigene Sprache durch „die fremde“ zu erweitern und zu vertiefen (Benjamin 1977, 61). Seine Differenzierung zwischen „Intention [des] Gemeinten“ und „Art des Meinens“ (Benjamin 1977, 55) am Beispiel des deutschen Wortes „Brot“ und des französischen „pain“, wonach dasselbe gemeinte Objekt in verschiedenen Sprachen aufgrund des unterschiedlichen kulturellen Kontexts eine andere Semantik gewinnt, bedeutet für Ottmar Ette epistemologisch „den Sprung von der Linguistik [...] hin zu einer kulturwissenschaftlich aufgeschlossenen Philologie“ (Ette 2005, 118), ohne dass die Nicht-Äquivalenz der Begriffe notwendigerweise zu einer grundsätzlichen Unübersetzbarkeit führen muss. Die Übersetzung sollte nach Benjamin vielmehr in Hinsicht auf das Original, „dessen Art des Meinens in der eigenen Sprache sich anbildet“ (Benjamin 1977, 59), und in Entsprechung von Şenocaks Verständnis von Übersetzung als eine ständige Denkbewegung verstanden werden, die ihre eigenen inter- und transkulturellen Bezüge zum Ausdruck bringt, indem sie mit einem „befremdete[n] Blick auf das Eigene“ (Şenocak 2006, 30) das Fremde in ein Fremdes im Eigenen verwandelt.

Zum erkenntnisfördernden Zweifel und zur Bedeutungsvielfalt des Wortes gehört für Şenocak zudem die notwendige muslimische Wiederentdeckung „der Vergänglichkeit von Deutung und Interpretation", die nur in historischen Zusammenhängen zu verstehen sind, was im fiktiven Vater-Sohn-Gespräch in Form der Differenz zwischen Original und Übersetzung im Benjaminschen Sinne der Sprachbewegung sowie der Übersetzung als ein kulturspezifischer Bewegungsprozess zum Ausdruck kommt: „Ich verstehe, warum du immer das Original des Koran jeder Übersetzung vorgezogen hast, denn der Sinn der Wörter ist reiselustig, vergänglich und missverständlich, ihr Klang aber ist ewig" (Şenocak 2016, 63). Dementsprechend kritisiert wird in diesem Zusammenhang auch die Fixierung auf das (göttliche) Wort in der islamischen Kultur, das „im Kreislauf der Hermeneutik gefangen" bleibe (Şenocak 2016, 80), da „das Wort [...] alle anderen Zeichen" durch „das strenge Bilderverbot im sunnitischen Islam" (Şenocak 2016, 81) verdrängt habe und damit die bildnerische, darstellende Kunst mit ihrer menschlichen Dimension, Versinnbildlichung und Symbolik als „eine Übersetzung des Göttlichen in das Menschliche hinein" (Main 2016) im Unterschied zur christlichen Kultur fehlt. Bis zu einem gewissen Grade ausgeglichen sieht der Autor „das Fehlen einer Humanisierung der göttlichen Botschaft durch Bild und Metapher" (Şenocak 2016, 81) – neben der Bedeutung des Traums als ein Weg der Erkenntnis und Offenbarung – vor allem durch die verfeinerte Rezitationskunst beim Vortragen des Korans, durch deren Musikalität, Klang und ästhetische Wirkung, wie auch durch die „Stimme der Mystik" (Şenocak 2016, 82), womit sich für ihn wiederum Religion und Poesie miteinander verbinden.

Die Reiselustigkeit, Vergänglichkeit und Missverständlichkeit des Sinnes der Wörter resultieren für Şenocak wiederum im positiv besetzten, erkenntnisfördernden Zweifel, und zwar sowohl an überhistorischen Deutungen als auch an der eigenen Deutung, da jegliche kommunikative Handlung durch Meinungsvielfalt entsteht, die erst „den Dialog mit einem Anderen ermöglicht" (Şenocak 2016, 57). So versucht die fiktive Figur des Sohnes im Text die islamische Glaubenswelt des Vaters immer wieder von unterschiedlichen Perspektiven her zu verstehen und dabei auch sein Nichtverstehen in Worte zu fassen: „Vaterfragen waren für mich alle Fragen, für die es keine Antworten gab, weil es keinen Gott gab" (Şenocak 2016, 86). Indem der Sohn im Sinne der Autofiktionalisierung nach wiederholten Annäherungen immer neu vom Glauben abfällt und am Glauben (ver)zweifelt, wird „aus dieser Verzweiflung sein Glauben für ihn selber glaubwürdig", womit Şenocak nach eigener Aussage aus muslimischer Sicht an den nach der Aufklärung entstandenen Weg vieler Christen, Juden und auch Mystiker erinnern will, den heutige Muslime in Glaubensfragen wieder nachgehen sollten (Main 2016). Das Anliegen des Autors sowohl einer Kulturübersetzung als auch einer Kultur als Übersetzung impliziert neben inter- und transkulturel-

len Verflechtungen und Dekonstruktion von Gegensätzen somit auch ein Nicht- bzw. Missverstehen mit Auswirkungen auf die „Kommunikationsmodelle für Verständigung zwischen den Kulturen“ (Şenocak 2001, 103). Bereits in seinen früheren Essays findet sich dafür der Begriff der „negativen Hermeneutik“, mit dem entgegen der traditionellen hermeneutischen Verstehenslehre mit ihrer auf einen Universalitätsanspruch zielenden Sinn-Konstruktion und ganzheitlichen Deutung sowie ihrem „maskierten [Selbst-]Verstehen“ (Şenocak 1994, 28) des Fremden „hermeneutische Modelle [...] mehr vom Mißlingen des Verstehens als von seinem Gelingen her betrachtet“ werden, wobei „das vermeintlich Verstandene kritisch hinterfragt [wird] und das Unverstandene, Verdrängte in den Mittelpunkt rückt“ (Şenocak 2001, 103). Unter dem Begriff der „Posthermeneutik“ (Mersch 2010) beschäftigen sich neuere Theorien mit den Leistungen einer „negativen Hermeneutik“ ebenfalls, indem sie wie in der Theoriebildung der Dekonstruktion gegen einen Primat des kohärenten Verstehens dem Nicht- und Missverstehen eine spezifische Produktivität zuweisen.

Über Şenocaks Verstehensmodell einer „negativen Hermeneutik“ lässt sich so auch eine Beziehung herstellen zu Jacques Derridas eng an Benjamins Übersetzeraufsatz angelehnten Essay „Babylonische Türme. Wege, Umwege, Abwege“ und dessen „System in Dekonstruktion“. Derridas Texttheorie setzt die von Benjamin für die Übersetzung fruchtbar gemachte Inkommensurabilität oder nur scheinbare Äquivalenz der Sprachen im Denken über Sprache fort, die als „differentielles und bedeutungskonstitutives Ordnungsgeschehen“ eingeführt wird, denn „indem die Differenz zwischen Eigenem und Fremdem in der Übersetzung zur Darstellung gebracht wird, vollzieht sich in der Übersetzung“ exemplarisch die Dekonstruktion (Hirsch 1997, 11). Die Konzeption differentieller Bewegung in der Sprache mit ihrem sich permanent verändernden linguistischen und semantischen System führt dazu, dass die Übersetzung zwischen den Sprachen statt einzelner Elemente Verwebungen, Verhältnisse und Relationen zu übertragen hat. Aufgrund der „immer schon von fremden Texturen“ durchzogenen unreinen Sprachen und ihren Überschneidungen sind Sprachen als „Intertexte“ zu verstehen, sodass „die ehemals als Übersetzung *zwischen* den Sprachen entworfene Übersetzung [...] zu einer Übersetzung *in* sprachlichen Geweben und Verweisungsordnungen“ (Hirsch 1997, 12) werden muss. Indem die Übersetzung als ein das sprachliche Gewebe ständig modifizierender Prozess gedacht wird, wird in der Übersetzungsbewegung ihr dekonstruktiver Charakter deutlich, indem sie Texturen auflöst und destruiert und zugleich neue konstituiert, womit der Übersetzungsprozess sowohl die inkohärente als auch die bedeutungskonstitutive Sprachstruktur offenlegt. Şenocaks dekonstruktive Umdeutung des traditionellen hermeneutischen Verstehens im Interesse einer „negativen“, ihre Grenzen und Schwächen offenlegenden „Hermeneutik“ löst das Fremdheitsverhältnis zwischen ‚Eigenem‘ und ‚Frem-

dem' ebenfalls nicht auf, doch das Nicht- und Missverstehen im Kulturenkontakt verdeutlicht umso mehr das Angewiesensein auf Vermittlung sowie auf ein Festhalten am Prinzip der Übersetzbarkeit und am Verständnis von Übersetzung als eines kulturspezifischen Bewegungsprozesses, der darauf zielt, sowohl die „gekappten Kommunikationsstränge zwischen den Kulturen" (Şenocak 1994, 27) neu zu verknüpfen, als auch an das hybride kulturgeschichtliche Erbe in West wie Ost zu erinnern und zu einer neuen ästhetischen Wahrnehmung zu führen, die die „Bastardisierung" (Şenocak 1994, 27) im Sinne einer kreativen Unreinheit sowohl von Sprache als auch von europäischer Literatur vermittelt.

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Eine etwas modifizierte Fassung dieses ursprünglichen Konferenz-Beitrags ist unter dem Titel „Zafer Şenocaks Übersetzungskonzept als Kulturkritik zwischen Hermeneutik und Dekonstruktion" im *Jahrbuch Türkisch-deutsche Studien 2018* erschienen sowie eine englische Übersetzung dieser deutschen Fassung im Sammelband *The Many Voices of Europe. Mobility and Migration in Contemporary Europe*. Hg. Gisela Brinker-Gabler und Nicole Shea. Berlin: De Gruyter 2019.

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4 Communication and the Triangle ‘Author-Text-Reader’

Mária Bátorová

Die Möglichkeiten der Komparatistik aus Sicht der Komplexität der Forschung

Abstract: Diese Studie basiert auf dem bekannten Kommunikationsmodell Autor – Text – Leser (F. Miko, A. Popovič). Doch in der neuen Forschung, die sich aus den langjährigen Studien der Autorin ergibt, wird jedes Glied des Modells um seinen Kontext erweitert, der die ganze Theorie im Bereich der Sozialwissenschaften verortet. Die entstehende Theorie verzichtet nicht auf die literaturwissenschaftliche Analyse des Textes, der die Resultate der Forschung bestätigt. Die Ambition dieser Studie ist es, die Autorschaft, ihre Einmaligkeit und typische Züge der Poetik eines Autors zu begründen, und zwar im Zusammenhang der Kontexte, was im Gegenteil zu postmodernen Theorien steht, die auf die Kategorie des Autors völlig verzichten und nur die Kategorie des anonymen Lesers wahrnehmen.

Keywords: Komparatistik, Sozialwissenschaften, Kommunikation, Theorie, Kontexte, Kategorie des Autors

Kommunikation der Kunst: Das Forschungsmodell der drei Komponenten und ihre Kontexte

Die vorliegende Studie legt den Schwerpunkt auf die Kategorie des Autors mit all ihren untersuchbaren Aspekten: 1. dem historischen Kontext (die Zeit, in der der Autor lebte und schuf); 2. dem soziologischen Kontext (Familie, Ausbildung, Politik, Lebenserfahrungen etc.); 3. dem philosophischen Kontext (Eltern, Lehrer, Freunde, Bildung, Bücher etc.); 4. dem eigentlichen Text als eigenständigem Kontext. (Vgl. Eshel 2003) Dazu ist die Forschung in Archiven, die Untersuchung autobiografischer Einträge, der Korrespondenz, des Nachlasses usw. von Bedeutung.

Der konkrete Text eines Autors dient als Grundlage der literaturwissenschaftlichen Analyse, zunächst mit Schlüsselbedeutung und kontextuellem Bezug: 1. zum Autor; 2. zum Zeitpunkt der Veröffentlichung;[1] 3. zum Leser (und damit auch zum Interpretierenden).

1 Die Literaturwissenschaft der postkommunistischen Länder nach 1989 entdeckt eine ganze Menge von Büchern der inneren Emigration, mit der sich die Literaturgeschichte auseinandersetzen muss.

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Der Leser wird hier verstanden als fachkundiger Leser und Interpretierender (I.): Der Kontext des I.: 1. der historische Kontext (Zeit, in der der I. lebte und schuf); 2. der soziologische Kontext (Familie, Ausbildung, Politik); 3. der philosophische Kontext (Eltern, Lehrer, Freunde, Bildung, Bücher usw.)

Die Untersuchung des Kontextes des Interpretierenden, die Auswahl des Autors, die Methode der Untersuchung etc. klären, warum ein Interpretierender bzw. ein Komparatist einen bestimmten Schriftsteller ausgewählt hat, welche seine Beweggründe sind und, falls diese subjektiv sind, was oft der Fall ist, ob die Untersuchung objektiv ist. Hier werden wissenschaftliche Untersuchungsmethoden, Interviews zum Thema etc. erörtert.

Wir gehen davon aus, dass der Autor für die Kunst wesentlich ist, dass er einzigartig ist. Auch in Zeiten, als die Autoren ihre Werke nicht signierten und sie nicht vollständig aus ihrer eigenen Invention schöpften, sondern Auftragsarbeiten ausführten, gab es dennoch eine „Handschrift", das für sie charakteristische und bezeichnende „Etwas", das sie stilistisch von anderen Autoren unterscheidbar machte. So können ganze Malerschulen voneinander unterschieden werden. Wir betrachten den Autor nicht als eine Art Genie, sondern wir bemühen uns, so umfassend wie möglich den Kontext zu bestimmen, dessen Ergebnis sein einzigartiges Werk ist – Text, Bild, Skulptur, Komposition etc.

Wir knüpfen an die slowakische Tradition an, vertreten durch die Namen D. Ďurišin, P. Koprda, L. Franek, R. Gáfrik oder die tschechische, vertreten durch R. Wellek, Ivo Pospíšil, Miloš Zelenka u. a.

Amir Eshels Studien erhellen unsere Bemühung, die Ereignisse der Geschichte, die ‚Fakten' der Geschichte und das Erlebnis eines Einzelnen in einer künstlerischen Aussage in einem Gedicht, Roman usw. zu fassen, indem er ästhetische und real-historische Zeit unterscheidet. Er bearbeitet diese These an Hand des postmodernen Diskurses von François Lyotard.

Die gewählten Artefakte nehmen wir unter die Lupe, wir analysieren die Texte mit einem besonderen literaturtheoretischen Instrumentarium und einer Methode, die wir wählen oder aus einer Kombination mehrerer Ansätze selbst entwickeln. So wenden wir beispielsweise die althergebrachte Methode des hermeneutischen Zirkels partiell an (Dilthey, Heidegger, Gadamer).

Es kommt immer wieder vor, dass es, wenn man sich mit einem künstlerischen Artefakt aus einem bestimmten historischen Zeitabschnitt zu beschäftigen beginnt, erforderlich wird, sich in diese Zeit zu „vertiefen", etwa durch Arbeiten von Historikern, durch Archivmaterial wie die Korrespondenz des Autors etc., und das Gelände unter diesem historischen Blickwinkel zu sondieren. Wollten wir nämlich ein künstlerisches Artefakt aus unserer aktuellen Sicht beurteilen, so käme es in der Regel zu einer ideologischen Bedeutungsverschiebung. (Vgl. dazu

Skinner 2009)[2] Skinner lehrt, dass der Charakter einer Epoche dadurch erfasst wird, dass man in die lokalen und zeitlichen Kontexte eintritt, in denen der Charakter der Epoche dann als „Sprachgeschehen" (Sprachereignis) aufscheint.

Die Akzeptanz und Rekonstruktion eines menschlichen Phänomens führt uns zu anthropologischen Aspekten. Die Anthropologie, die Erforschung des Menschen, ist eine relativ junge Wissenschaft. Diese „Wissenschaft vom Menschen" hat neue Kategorien des Denkens entwickelt und bemüht sich diese durchzusetzen, etwa Begriffe wie Raum und Zeit, Widerspruch und Gegenrede etc. Sie erhebt den Anspruch auf den Status einer semiologischen Wissenschaft und legt den Schwerpunkt ganz bewusst auf die Bedeutungsebene. (Vgl. Lévi-Strauss 1981, 369–408)

Auch über die Frage des Verständnisses ist die Anthropologie an die Soziologie gebunden sowie an deren spezifischen Zweig der „Verstehenden Soziologie" (begründet und definiert von Max Weber und Werner Sombart). Ausgehend von dem Entwicklungsparadigma der „Verstehenden Soziologie", wie sie von W. L. Bühl skizziert wurde, stütze ich mich auf die vierte Entwicklungslinie. Diese verläuft von der Phänomenologie zu einem *sprachlich-philosophischen* Ansatz, oder, wie bei Peter Winch, ausgehend vom späten Wittgenstein, zu einem *linguistischen* Ansatz; darüber hinaus auch zu einem *hermeneutischen* Ansatz (den Gadamer über Heidegger wiederbelebt hat), dessen Programm in der Soziologie von Jürgen Habermas und Paul Ricœur ausgearbeitet wurde. (Vgl. Bühl 1972, 7–9; Mauss 2010, 199–218; Zima 2005, 47–62). Ich verweise hier auch auf die Meinung Henry H. H. Remaks:

> Comparative literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on the one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts ... philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion, etc., on the other. In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression.
>
> [„Komparatistik ist die Untersuchung der Literatur außerhalb der Grenzen eines bestimmten Landes und die Untersuchung der Beziehungen zwischen der Literatur auf der einen Seite und anderen Wissens- und Glaubensbereichen wie Kunst, Philosophie, Geschichte, Sozialwissenschaften, Wissenschaften generell, Religion, etc. auf der anderen Seite. Kurzum, es ist der Vergleich einer Literatur mit einer oder mehreren anderen sowie der Vergleich von Literatur mit anderen Bereichen menschlichen Ausdrucks.] (Vgl. Bátorová 2015, 71)

2 Quentin Skinner ist ein Methodologe der historischen Schule des politischen Denkens von Cambridge. Er hatte dort bis 2008 die Stellung eines Regius Professor of Modern History inne und lehrt nun am Queen Mary College in London.

Zwischen Soziologie und Philosophie bewegt sich der Diskurs von Bourdieu, der sich mit den Theorien von Foucault, seinem „symbolischen Strukturalismus“ und dem Begriff des „Feldes strategischer Möglichkeiten“ auseinandersetzt. Er führt die „Feldtheorie“ ein, und zwar mit der These, dass die „Universen von Intellektuellen soziale Mikrokosmen sind, die ihre eigene Struktur und ihre eigenen Gesetze haben“. Er führt auch den Begriff des „Raumes der Möglichkeiten“ ein, den er folgendermaßen beschreibt:

> [...] er funktioniert in einem gemeinsamen Koordinatensystem und bewirkt, dass gleichzeitige Regisseure, auch wenn sie in keiner Beziehung zueinander stehen, durch ihre gegenseitige Relation objektiv bestimmt werden. Dieser Logik kann sich auch die Reflexion über Literatur und künstlerische Werke nicht entziehen. (Bourdieu 1998, 57)

Veränderungen in diesem Feld kann man nur dann verstehen, wenn man die spezifischen Gesetze dieses Feldes versteht, das heißt den Grad seiner Autonomie. Bourdieu merkt hierzu Folgendes an (wobei er sich der starken Vereinfachung der Erklärung dieses Problems bewusst ist): „Autoren (einschließlich Wissenschaftler), Schulen, Zeitschriften usw. existieren nur durch die Unterschiede, die sie voneinander abheben.“ (Bourdieu 1998, 63) Er verwendet eine Formulierung von Benveniste: „Sich zu unterscheiden und etwas zu bedeuten ist ein und dasselbe.“ (Zit. n. Bourdieu 1998, 57)

Das Ergebnis einer so ausgerichteten Untersuchung einer („kleinen“) Literatur im Vergleich mit einer anderen, benachbarten oder weiter entfernten, kann eine Bereicherung der Weltliteratur um neue Werke bedeuten, um Werke bislang unbekannter Autoren, und eine Ent-Ideologisierung des Bildes von einer Literatur im Spektrum anderer Literaturen. (Vgl. Dyserinck 1981, 187–188; vgl. auch Beller und Leerssen 2007)

Zusammenfassung

Das Konzept der Komplexität der literaturwissenschaftlichen und zugleich soziologischen Forschung durch das Modell des konkreten Textes und seiner Kontexte stellt in dieser Form nur ein ideales Modell dar. Doch als Modell und Vorlage kann es weiteren kollektiven und interdisziplinären Projekten dienen.

Die Weltliteratur, dekonstruktiv verstanden (und damit der Hermeneutik näher stehend), betont den Aspekt des Entgegenkommens, der Offenheit, der kommunikativen Grenzüberschreitung der im Umlauf befindlichen Texte und Ideen. Die Weltliteratur hat bewegliche und nicht kontrollierbare Dimensionen. Die Weltliteratur hat hier auch mehrere Zwecke, sie ist ein allmählicher und komplizierter Prozess, der axiologische, gleichwertige inter-literarische Netze knüpft.

Durch diese Netze wird ein gewaltfreier Dialog zwischen Welten und Kulturen geführt, der ein Gegengewicht zum Massenphänomen der Globalisierung darstellt. Die Entwicklung dieser Methodologie und dieses theoretischen Konzeptes der Komplexität einer Forschung und der Kontexte beruht auf der Verbindung der Perspektiven aus verschiedenen Disziplinen der gesellschaftlichen und humanistischen Wissenschaften inklusive Soziologie, Geschichte, Politologie, Kulturologie mit Schwerpunkt auf der Literaturwissenschaft.

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Mária Bátorová

„Intertextualität“ in der Moderne, Malerei und Literatur

Tagebücher und Bilder von Edvard Munch im Vergleich mit den Romanen von Jozef Cíger Hronský

Abstract: Die vorliegende Studie behandelt typologische Beziehungen zwischen bildender Kunst der norwegischen Moderne in den Gemälden von Edvard Munch und slowakischer Literatur in den Romanen von Jozef Cíger Hronský. Anhand der Analysen von einzelnen Themen, Motiven und Poetiken wird mit Hilfe von historischem, soziologischem und philosophischem Kontext der Zeit der Moderne auf Parallelen und Unterschiede zwischen den zwei Künstlern hingewiesen. Zugleich wird die fast unbekannte slowakische Moderne im Rahmen der mitteleuropäischen Moderne erforscht und als neue Komponente in den Diskurs über die Moderne eingebracht.

Keywords: Komparatistik, Moderne, bildende Kunst und Literatur

Einleitung

Die vorliegende Studie versucht anhand der Vergleiche der Themen, Motive und einzelnen Poetiken von zwei hervorragenden Vertretern der europäischen Moderne einmal die Moderne selbst durch die bildende Kunst und durch die Literatur zu präsentieren. Außerdem geht es in dieser komparatistischen Forschung darum zu zeigen, was eigentlich die Inspiration des Lebens selbst für die Künstler in der Zeit der Moderne war, welche Motive, Themen sowie Poetiken sich anhand der Analysen, aber auch durch die Benutzung der Archive und Interviews sowie autobiographischen Äußerungen der Künstler und der Bilder und Texte selbst beweisen lassen. Zum Vergleich des Werkes der zwei Künstler der Moderne, des bekannten norwegischen Malers Edvard Munch[1] und eines international weitgehend unbe-

1 Edvard Munch (1863–1944), der wichtigste Maler der norwegischen Moderne. Der Katalog zur Retrospektive weist auf wichtigste Quellen seiner Schöpfungen hin: Verlust der Mutter und Geschwister sehr früh, der Maler erkrankte selbst an der an sich tödlichen Tuberkulose, kam aber gesund davon. (Vgl. Buchhart 2015/2016, 33).

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kannten slowakischen Romanciers Jozef Cíger Hronský[2], ermutigen uns zwei Thesen, die wir zunächst näher begründen, sowie die Tatsache, daß wir durch diesen Vergleich eine wenig bekannte Kunst der mitteleuropäischen Moderne, nämlich die slowakische literarische Moderne, in den aktuellen Diskurs einbringen können.

Die erste These: Die verschiedenen Künste besitzen (erhalten) ähnliche Bedeutungsebenen (semantische Ebenen), die man identifizieren kann. Nur die „Sprache" der Künste ist anders. Als Beispiel kann man eine Reihe von wissenschaftlichen Werken nennen: die Monographie von Thomas Zaunschirm *Robert Musil und Marcel Duchamp* (1982) sowie Dionýz Ďurišin und Ludwik Korkoš *Svetová literatúra perom a dlátom* (1993), oder aber aus dem letzten Diskurs an der Komenský Universität Bratislava über Genres des Romans die Studie, die von der gezeichneten/erzählten Form des Romans handelt, nämlich Monika Schmitz-Emans' Text „Der graphische Roman. Poetik und Spielformen einer hybriden Gattung" (2015). Die vorliegende Studie knüpft an den Vergleich von Tagebüchern und anschließend Bildern von Edward Munch und Romanen von Jozef Cíger Hronský an, der im Kapitel „Frau als Drohung, Schicksal, Vampir (A. Strindberg, E. Munch und J. C. Hronský)" zum ersten Mal vorgenommen wurde. (Bátorová 2004, 65–71; slowakische Ausgabe: Bátorová 2000, 77–85).

Die zweite These: Der „Dachbegriff" Moderne ermöglicht dem Interpreten, sich bei der Erforschung der Zusammenhänge auf die historischen, soziologischen, philosophischen, psychologischen usw. Kontexte zu stützen. Dies unterstützt Pierre Bourdieu mit seiner Auseinandersetzung mit Michel Foucaults Begriff „Feld strategischer Möglichkeiten", der dem semiologischen Begriff schon nahesteht, Pierre Bourdieus Begriff „semantisches Feld", den er folgendermaßen charakterisiert:

> [...] dieser funktioniert an Hand des gemeinsamen Systems von Koordinaten und veranlasst, dass die heutigen Regisseure, auch wenn sie nicht in gegenseitiger Beziehung stehen, objektiv durch ihr gegenseitiges Verhältnis bestimmt werden. Dieser Logik entzieht sich auch die literarische Reflexion nicht, genauso wie die künstlerische Werkanalyse. [...] Die Autoren, Schulen, Zeitschriften usw. existieren überhaupt nur in den Unterschieden und durch die Unterschiede, die sie trennen. (Bourdieu 1998, 56–83)

Dafür benutzt er Jacques Benvenistes Formulierung: „Sich unterscheiden und etwas bedeuten ist ein und das selbe." (Bourdieu 1998, 63)

2 Jozef Cíger Hronský (1896–1960), der bedeutendste Romancier der slowakischen Moderne. (Vgl. Bátorová 2004).

Die typischen Züge und Kennzeichen der Moderne

Es handelt sich um folgende Charakteristika: Torso als literarische Form (auch im „großen“ epischen Genre – Roman); Wiederholung der Motive; das Bearbeiten des eigenen Inneren und der Erlebnisse; die Konzentration auf den Menschen und seine Individualität, die in der modernen Industrialisierung verlorengehen kann; die Enttabuisierung der Welt der Kinder und Frauen (darunter Sexus, Psychoanalyse).

Sexus bezeichnen die Analytiker der Moderne als unterschwellige Kraft, wichtig für Bewegungen in der menschlichen Tätigkeit (Ricoeur 1971, 135); weiter sollte man erwähnen: zwei Apokalypsen – Weltkriege – bringen unaufhörliche zivilisatorische Ängste, psychische Störungen, Heuchelei, deren Zeichen Maske ist; Liebe bringt keine Zufriedenheit oder Glück, sondern umgekehrt, sie ist, wie es in Tagebüchern Edvard Munchs steht, wie ein „Stern, der aufgeht, eine Weile in der Nacht leuchtet und ins Dunkel wieder verschwindet.“ (Buchhart 2016, 133) Die Kunst bringt keine Illusion, sondern Wahrheit über die Wirklichkeit.

Künstlerischer Ausdruck müsse auf der eigenen Lebenserfahrung beruhen (die Autoreflexion). Mit dieser Idee hat der anarchistische Schriftsteller Hans Jäger (1880) auf den jungen Edvard Munch Einfluss ausgeübt (neben Christian Krohg – die zweite größte Persönlichkeit der damaligen Boheme von Kristiania, heute Oslo). Zu erwähnen sind auch Edvard Munchs Aufenthalte in Paris und Berlin (Abende in der Gaststätte „Zum schwarzen Ferkel“) und die Freundschaft mit August Strindberg, Stanislaw Przybyszewski und Dygna Juell. (Vgl. Buchhart 2016, 133)

Typologische Parallelen und Unterschiede zwischen Bildern von Edvard Munch (unterstrichen von den Kommentaren in seinen Tagebüchern) und zwischen dem Sujet und einzelnen Figuren in den Romanen von Jozef Cíger Hronský:

Es stehen bei Jozef Cíger Hronský keine Tagebücher zur Verfügung, doch nach den Kontexten des Autors (Archive, Interviews, Kommentare) lassen sich seine Werke in ‚objektive‘ und ‚subjektive‘, d. h. autoreflexive Romane einteilen. (Bátorová 1997, 45–49) Autoreflexion ist auch eines der Zeichen der Moderne. Bei Edvard Munch sogar *expressis verbis*: Er malte nur das, was er erlebte (Hans Jäger).

Folgende Parallelen können in den Themen und Motiven der Werke und ihren Variationen der zwei untersuchten Autoren festgestellt werden: die Motive der Angst, der Frau, der Liebe, der Eifersucht, der Einsamkeit und das Motiv des Todes. Das Motiv der Angst ist nicht nur eins der unterschwelligen menschlichen Gefühle allgemein, es ist auch einer der expressionistischen Begriffe, evident in der expressionistischen Kunst. (Vgl. Rothe 1977)

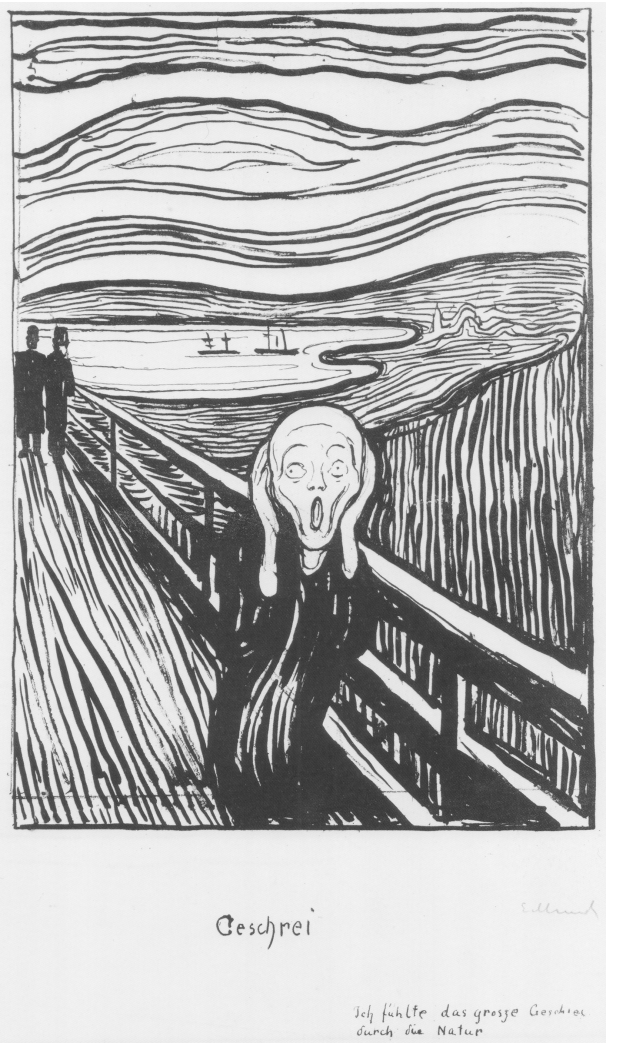


Abb 1: Edvard Munch „Der Schrei“ (Gravur, 1895).

Das berühmteste Bild von Edvard Munch „Geschrei“ oder „Der Schrei“ wurde wie kein anderes Bild zum Sinnbild des 20. Jahrhunderts (Abb. 1). Edvard Munch schreibt in seinen Tagebüchern dazu:

> Ich ging mit zwei Freunden die Straße entlang – die Sonne ging runter – etwas wie leise Schwermut rührte mich an. Plötzlich färbte sich der Himmel blutig rot – ich blieb stehen – unter der Stadt lagen Blut und Feuerzungen [...] ich stand immer noch zitternd vor Angst

> und ich fühlte [nicht „hörte“! Meine Bem., M.B.], dass ein großer nie endender Schrei durch die Natur ging. (Buchart 2015/2016, 175)

Dieter Buchhart kommentiert das Bild, das bei einer Auktion 2012 in New York den Höchstpreis von 120 Millionen Dollar erwarb: „Munch schildert die erlebbare Existenzangst des zivilisierten Menschen, seine Panik und seinen Schrecken in höchster Steigerung. Dabei wird durch die Isolation des Protagonisten die Landschaft zum Spiegel seiner psychischen Befindlichkeit, der Unausweichlichkeit einer Zwangsvorstellung.“ (Buchart 2015/2016, 175)

Das Bild Edvard Munchs „Der Schrei“ trägt fast alle bisher erwähnten Symptome der Moderne: Einsamkeit, Torso, reduziertes Sein in der schmalen, mageren Gestalt und im Gesicht usw. Und vor allem das panisch Schreckliche, das die Gestalt sieht, das Innere spiegelt sich auf ihrem Gesicht.

Die Atmosphäre des Greuels und die Personifikation der Lebensangst ist auch in den Romanen von Jozef Cíger Hronský evident, und zwar im Widerspruch zur traditionellen Wahrnehmung der Geburts eines Kindes, das man im Leben willkommen heißt. Der Roman *Jozef Mak* beginnt mit der Szene der Geburt der Hauptgestalt, doch auf den ersten Seiten ist die Atmosphäre der Angst (auch *expressis verbis*) stark anwesend. So ist es auch in anderen Werken des Autors. Es sind nicht nur zivilisatorische Ängste, es sind auch ganz individuelle innere Zustände, die sich aus der Reduktion der Liebe, Depression durch das Ausgeschlossensein von den anderen Menschen (Motiv des Außenseiters) usw. ergeben.

Der Mann und die Frau als Hauptfiguren leiden an Einsamkeit, wobei die Frau die stärkere ist und in dem Motiv des sexuellen Verlockens ihre Anziehungskraft ausnutzt. Bei Edvard Munch geschieht dies fast immer durch das Motiv des Haares, das frei um den Mann weht und ihn fesselt. Es sei zu betonen, dass es zur Zeit Edvard Munchs bei Frauengestalten in der Malerei nur konventionell gebundenes Haar gab. Freies Haar symbolisiert Nacktheit. Bei Edvard Munch ist das Haar einer Frau immer nur frei.

Beide Künstler schildern nicht die treue Liebe. Es lassen sich in den Werken Dreiecksbeziehungen feststellen. Bei Edvard Munch nicht nur in seinem Schaffen, sondern in seinem Leben selbst (Edvard Munch – Dygna Juell – Stanislaw Przybyszewski).

Das Bild „Eifersucht“ (Abb. 2) zeigt dieses Dreieck. Das Sujet auf dem Bild erzählt von einem Mann voll Eifersucht, verlassen von seiner Frau, die sich mit ihrer Nacktheit, mit ihrem ganzen Sexus einem anderen Mann zuwendet. Die Szene dieser Lebenssituation ist bei Jozef Cíger Hronský im experimentellen Roman *Pisar Grac* die Schlüsselszene der Beziehung vom alten Seidenhändler, Greschkovitsch, zu seiner jungen Frau Jana.

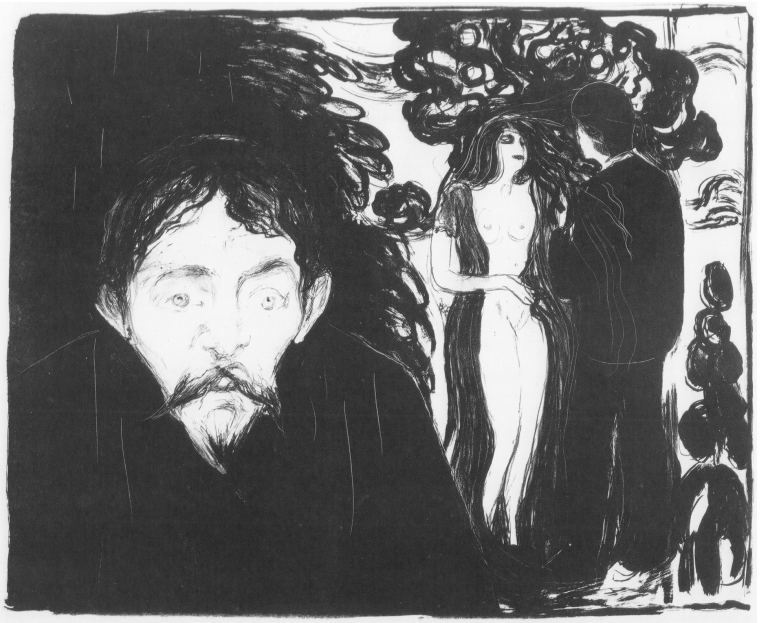


Abb 2: Edvard Munch „Eifersucht“ (Lithografie, 1896).

Die Frau

In den Werken von beiden Künstlern (aber auch in der Moderne allgemein) geht es um die Aufdeckung der „Wahrheit“ über die Frau,[3] und bei beiden Künstlern ist die Frau immer mit dem Tod verbunden. Alle Haupt-Frauenfiguren in Jozef Cíger Hronský's Romanen enden tragisch, d. h. bei ihm gibt es keine drei Stadien wie bei Edvard Munch (Abb. 3), weil die Protagonistinnen das dritte Stadium, das Alter, nicht erreichen. Sie enden willkürlich durch Selbstmord oder sterben jung an einer Krankheit; die Frau bedeutet Lebensgefahr; die Frau ist wetterwendisch (flatterhaft), unbegreiflich, unberechenbar; der Mann ist gegenüber einer Frau und ihrer sexuellen Lockung schwach und zugleich unfähig wegen der Angst, eine feste Beziehung zu schaffen.

3 Vgl. Diderots Enzyklopädie: die Identität einer Frau als „vieldeutig“ (der Roman *L'Eve futur* von Villiers de L'Isle-Adam bzw. daraus das Kapitel „Tanz der Toten“ inspirierte Charles Baudelaire zum Gedicht *Dance macabre*, das wiederum den Bildhauer E. Christophoi zur Installation eines Skeletts einer Frau inspirierte). (Vgl. Hofmann 1986, 13–20).

Die Figuren haben fast keine Antlitze, sie werden durch Bewegung, Mimik, durch Geste, bei Jozef Cíger Hronský ausschließlich durch Gesten und Taten, charakterisiert. Doch in anderen Fällen malt Edvard Munch die Porträts der konkreten Persönlichkeiten, seiner Freunde wie Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Stanislaw Przybyszewski, genau wie auch Selbstporträts „von innen“. Es sind psychologische Porträts.[4]



Abb 3: Edvard Munch „Das Weib II (Sphinx; die Frau in drei Stadien)“ (Kaltnadelradierung, 1895).

Männliche Protagonisten sind die schwächeren, den Frauen unterliegen sie vollkommen (Frau als Vampir). Sie entziehen sich dieser Kraft des Sexus teilweise – oder sie bemühen sich, kämpfen wenigstens innerlich gegen diese sexuelle Kraft (z. B. Andreas Búr oder Jozef Mak).

Edvard Munch schreibt zum Bild „Vampir“ (Abb. 4), es sei nur eine Frau, die den Mann küsst.

4 Zwischen August Strindberg und Edvard Munch bestand eine komplizierte Beziehung wegen August Strindbergs „von innen“ gemaltem psychologischem Porträt, was zum Streit führte. (Vgl. Maurer 1987/1988).



Abb 4: Edvard Munch „Vampir“ (Lithografie, 1902).

Dieter Buchhart betont bei Edvard Munch einen „sparsamen Styl“. Genau das kann man auch über die Texte Jozef Cíger Hronskýs feststellen. Durch Analysen der Texte ist die Verwendung rhetorischer Figuren (Symbole, Metaphern, innere Gesten usw.) nachgewiesen. (Vgl. Bátorová 2004, 7–19) Die Romane sind eher kurz und nicht deskriptiv angelegt.

Zusammenfassung

Edvard Munch schrieb Tagebücher und wurde von Freunden auch zum Schreiben seiner Autobiographie animiert. Dort schreibt Edward Munch, er male mit dem „inneren Auge“ (Maurer 1987/1988, 49), aus seinem Gedächtnis. Was Edvard Munch in Tagebüchern mit Worten schildert und nachher malt oder radiert, sind Motive, die wir auch in Jozef Cíger Hronskýs Romanen finden können. Dieter Buchhart spricht bei Edward Munch über „Sujet“ in der Reihe der Kuss-Bilder. (Buchhart 2015/2016, 133)

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Monika Schmitz-Emans

Der Sammler als „Autor“ – zu kulturellen Praktiken und literarischen Reflexionen des Sammelns

Abstract: Das Sammeln von Dingen oder von Wörtern ist ein kreativer Prozess, der dem Gestaltungswillen des Sammlers entspricht, auch wenn er ihn nicht immer perfekt umsetzt. Auch das Erzählen ist als ein Sammeln interpretiert worden. Und so erscheint Sammeln als eine Form der ‚Poiesis‘, die dem literarischen Arbeitsprozess nicht allein zugrunde liegt, sondern ihm auch als Modell dient. Ein solch poetologisch akzentuiertes Konzept des Sammelns prägt Orhan Pamuks Roman *Das Museum der Unschuld* (*Masumiyet Müzesi*), als dessen Parallelprojekt ein gleichnamiges Museum in Istanbul entstand. Inhaltliche und sammlungsästhetische Korrespondenzen bestehen zwischen Pamuks Roman und Goethes Werk *Der Sammler und die Seinigen,* vor allem mit Blick auf die Signifikanz des Sammelns für Erinnerungsversuche und Erinnerungsprozesse.

Keywords: Sammeln/Sammlung, Erzählen, Poiesis, Erinnerung, Museum, Alltagsdinge

Wer sammelt, produziert nicht selbst – so scheint es. Besteht seine Tätigkeit nicht darin, bereits existierende Dinge oder Wörter (*res* oder *verba*) zu suchen, zu finden und seiner Sammlung als etwas Gefundenes einzuverleiben? Kein Büchersammler druckt seine Sammelstücke selbst, kein Briefmarkensammler produziert seine eigenen Briefmarken – und Reisesouvenirs sammelt man vor allem deshalb, weil sie Stücke aus der Fremde sind. Oft geschieht es, dass Dinge gesammelt werden, die den Sammler vor Rätsel stellen und die erst durch Interpretation erschlossen werden müssen: Gegenstände aus fremden Kulturen etwa oder Textrelikte früherer Zeiten. Sammler ‚holen‘ sich die Dinge, sie ‚machen‘ sie nicht.[1]

Und doch ist die Zusammenstellung einer Kollektion von Objekten oder Wörtern (ich beziehe mich weiterhin auf Kollektionen von *verba* und *res*) keineswegs nur rezeptiv, sondern ein konstruktiver Prozess, dessen Resultate den Gestaltungswillen des Sammlers zum Ausdruck bringen. Wer sammelt, bringt etwas hervor. Dies gilt sowohl bezogen auf die Art der jeweils gesammelten Objekte als

1 Manfred Sommer, der vor einer Reihe von Jahren eine *Philosophie des Sammelns* vorgelegt hat, spricht von einer „Herhol-Schleife“ (Sommer 1999, 10), durch die der Sammler seine Objekte führt (und ein anderes Buch Sommers gilt, kaum zufällig, dem *Suchen und Finden*).

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auch bezogen auf deren Anordnung. Und es gilt auch dann, wenn sich der Wille des gestaltenden Sammlers nicht perfekt realisieren lässt.[2]

Sammeln als Selbstdarstellung: psychologische Perspektiven

Der Psychoanalytiker Werner Muensterberger hat das Sammeln aus psychologischer Sicht erörtert und ein Psychogramm des passionierten Sammlers entworfen. (Vgl. Muensterberger 1995)[3] Unabhängig davon, wie fruchtbar und tragfähig man seinen letztlich patho-logischen Ansatz findet, impliziert er doch in jedem Fall eine Betonung des Potentials an bewusster oder unbewusster, gewollter oder ungewollter Selbstdarstellung, die im Sammeln liegt.

> [I]ch [betone] den subjektiven Aspekt des Sammelns [...], denn die Emotion und häufig die Begeisterung, die den Sammelobjekten entgegengebracht werden, stehen nicht notwendigerweise im Einklang mit deren Besonderheit oder kommerziellem Wert und haben auch nichts mit irgendeiner Art der Brauchbarkeit zu tun. Für den wirklich begeisterten Sammler haben die ‚Dinge', die er sammelt, eine andere Bedeutung und sogar das Potential einer fesselnden Kraft. (Muensterberger 1995, 20)[4]

Bei Muensterberger liegt der Akzent auf der psychischen Disposition der Sammlerpersönlichkeit und auf ihren Emotionen und Passionen; Sammlungen als solche interessieren ihn nur indirekt. Gleichwohl bietet er einen theoretischen Ansatz, um aus der Beschaffenheit von Sammlungen auch Rückschlüsse auf die Persönlichkeit des Sammlers zu ziehen. Allerdings steht dabei nicht die gewollte

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2 Im Folgenden sei, um eine wichtige Unterscheidung Sommers zu verwenden, von ästhetischem und nicht von ökonomischem Sammeln die Rede; Letzteres zielt darauf, Dinge für den Verzehr oder Verbrauch zusammenzutragen, Ersteres zielt auf die Konservierung der Objekte und ist nicht allein durch praktische Zwecke bestimmt. Die Grenze zwischen beiden Formen des Sammelns mag vielfach fließend sein.

3 Muensterberger begründet das Sammeln in psychischen Strukturen und betont das pathologische Moment des obsessiven Sammlers.

4 Vgl. auch: „[D]ie Objekte tragen zum Identitätsgefühl bei und fungieren als eine Quelle der Selbstdefinition." (Muensterberger 1995, 22) „Beobachtet man Sammler auf der Jagd nach einem Gegenstand, erkennt man bald ausgesprochen aufschlußreiche individuelle Eigenheiten – die unterschiedlichen Weisen, wie sie es anstellen, ein neues Objekt zu erreichen, wie sie ihr Verlangen ausdrücken oder ihre überwältigende Genugtuung vermitteln; andererseits kann es geschehen, daß sie [...] sich mit Zweifeln und Selbstvorwürfen peinigen [...]. Es gibt keinen ‚Durchschnittssammler'." (Muensterberger 1995, 21).

und ‚auktoriale‘ Selbstdarstellung im Zentrum, sondern es geht um halbbewusste und verborgene Motive. Immerhin: Sammlungen tragen zu ‚Porträts‘ bei.

Sammeln als Gestalten

Andere Perspektiven ergeben sich, wenn man den Sammler als bewussten Gestalter einer Sammlung in den Blick nimmt. Zu unterscheiden sind (mindestens) zwei Ebenen, auf denen der gestaltende Wille des Sammlers sich manifestiert. Dies betrifft erstens die Entscheidung darüber, was überhaupt gesammelt wird – Pilze oder Briefmarken, Kunstwerke oder Reiseandenken. Man sammelt, wie Manfred Sommer betont, immer am Leitfaden eines Begriffs von dem, was man zusammentragen möchte.[5] Sei es nun, dass dieser Begriff unscharf ist, sei es auch, dass er als Leit-Begriff von anderen übernommen wird (ich sammle Briefmarken, weil meine Schulfreunde das auch tun) – es ist doch ‚mein‘ Leitfaden, dem ich da folge; ich habe ihn gewählt. Eine zweite Ebene (für Sommer nicht so wichtig) ist die der Anordnung des Gesammelten, gegebenenfalls die der Präsentation für andere. Wer sammelt, gestaltet zwar noch keine Ausstellung, und die Tätigkeit des Sammlers sollte nicht mit der des Museumskurators gleichgesetzt werden, aber zumindest für sich selbst muss jeder ja entscheiden, wie er das Gesammelte positioniert. Objekte müssen untergebracht werden, und wenn sie anderen gezeigt werden sollen, die etwas daraus lernen oder sich daran erfreuen sollen, müssen sie möglichst in eine dafür zweckmäßige Anordnung gebracht werden.

Auch wenn sich die gewünschte Anordnung nicht immer realisieren lässt, etwa weil der Sammler nicht genug Platz hat – er wird doch versuchen, das Beste aus seinen Möglichkeiten zu machen. Ein Büchersammler lagert seine Bücher nicht im feuchten Keller, und wer Pflanzen sammelt, versucht sie zu konservieren. Besonders wichtig ist aber der Aspekt der Anordnung der Einzelstücke – der Anordnung nach einem wie auch immer genauer bestimmten Prinzip oder System. Gestaltend wirkt der Wille des Sammlers, zwischenbilanzierend gesagt, also erstens bezogen auf das einzelne Stück: Der selbstgewählte Leit-Begriff bietet einen Anhaltspunkt dafür, ob ein konkretes Objekt zur Sammlung passt oder nicht. Und zweitens gestaltet der Sammler beim Sortieren seiner Sammlung (und ohne wenigstens ein Minimum an Sortierarbeit kommt er nicht aus, schon weil er seine Sammlung ja unterbringen muss). Meist gehört es zur Sammlertätigkeit dazu, dieser eine Ordnung zu geben,

5 Vgl. Sommer 1999, 113–114: „Sammeln kann nur, wer von dem, was er sammelt, einen Begriff hat oder haben könnte.“

welche sich dann auf unterschiedliche Weisen in räumlichen Anordnungen zum Ausdruck bringen kann. Dabei ist eine sachlich-begriffliche Ordnung, etwa nach Herkunftsort und Alter oder nach klassifikatorischen Gesichtspunkten nicht dasselbe wie eine räumlich-physische Anordnung, aber oft soll sich Erstere in Letzterer abbilden.[6] Und wenn das nicht möglich ist, nutzen Sammler vermittelnde Codes.[7]

Wörter-Sammlungen

All dies gilt nicht nur für Ding-Sammlungen, sondern auch für Wörter-Sammlungen, also etwa für das Sammeln von alten Texten oder aber für das Sammeln von Materialien für ein wissenschaftliches oder für ein literarisches Projekt. Ohne einen ‚Vorbegriff' davon, wonach man sucht, kommt man auch hier nicht aus, auch wenn einen einzelne Funde dann überraschen und den Suchbegriff selbst sogar modifizieren mögen – aber sie überraschen einen eben doch mit Bezug auf eine orientierende Vorstellung, die an Begriffe geknüpft ist. Und der Aspekt räumlicher Anordnung spielt ebenfalls eine Rolle – wie exemplarisch die Notizbücher, Zettelkästen, Materialordner und Bibliotheken wissenschaftlicher und literarischer Autoren deutlich machen.[8]

Wenn es einem Sammler nicht gelingt, seinen Gestaltungswillen perfekt umzusetzen, so kann dies unterschiedliche Gründe haben – etwa, dass seine Sammlung nicht ‚vollständig' wird oder dies vielleicht nicht einmal werden kann. (Es kommt darauf an, was gesammelt wird, ob eine Komplettierung überhaupt möglich erscheint.) Ein anderer Grund ist die Widerständigkeit der Objekte – ihre Entfernung, ihre Fremdheit, ihr Verborgensein, ihre mangelnde Handhabbarkeit (Sperrigkeit, Fragilität, Ferne etc.) – und natürlich, je nach Sammlungsobjekten, ihr zu hoher

6 Typisch ist etwa die Einrichtung eines Gemälde-Museums, in dem die Werke chronologisch nach Jahrhunderten oder nach Zeitstilen die einzelnen Räume füllen.

7 Dazu gehören etwa Verweissysteme, die einander ähnliche oder anderweitig zusammengehörige Objekte miteinander vernetzen.

8 Ein wesentlicher Unterschied zwischen *Res*- und *Verba*-Sammlern sei nicht übergangen: Die Dinge sind (auch wenn sie Typen oder Klassen repräsentieren bzw. unter diesem Aspekt betrachtet und gesammelt werden) konkrete Einzelgegenstände. Wörter und Texte hingegen lassen sich fast beliebig multiplizieren; wer ein Zitat sammelt, schreibt es einfach noch einmal und muss es nicht aus seiner Vorlage herausschneiden. Aber eine solche Zitatsammlung bedarf dann doch eines materiellen Substrats und eines Ortes, und entsprechend verlangt auch sie nach Anordnung. Die Anordnung von ‚*Verba*-Materialien' ist auch nach der Ablösung der Wörter von konkret-physischen Trägersubstanzen im digitalisierten Zeitalter sammlungsrelevant, wenngleich sich das Gesammelte hier auf ganz andere Weisen an- und umordnen lässt. Aber auch und gerade der PC-Benutzer braucht ‚Ordner'.

Preis. Viele äußere Faktoren nehmen also – positiv oder negativ – Einfluss auf die Genese von Sammlungen – nicht zuletzt das manchmal schwer zu findende oder zu handhabende Material selbst. Und doch ist der Wille des Sammlers für den Konstitutionsprozess der Sammlung maßgeblich.[9] Werden nicht physische Dinge (*res*), sondern sprachliche Gegenstände (v*erba*, also Texte, Vokabeln, Textbausteine, Zitate oder ähnliche sprachlich verfasste Gegenstände) gesammelt – wie etwa beim Exzerpieren, beim Vorbereiten einer Anthologie etc. –, dann ist die kreative Dimension des Sammelns ebenso evident – und sie wird sogar sichtbar, sobald das Gesammelte einer bestimmten Anordnung unterworfen wird. Ein Zettelkasten mag mit Fremdzitaten vollstecken, aber es ist doch mein Zettelkasten; ich bestimme, was verzettelt wird, und ich sortiere das Verzettelte – oder auch nicht.[10]

Sammeln als Erzählen

Schon in den 1950er Jahren hat Roland Barthes in seinen *Mythologies* den Weg dafür bereitet, Dinge als Zeichen bzw. Ensembles aus Dingen als Syntagmen wahrzunehmen. (Vgl. Barthes 1964 [Orig.: 1957]) Als „Materialien der mythischen Aussage“ bestimmt er neben der „Sprache“ auch Bildtypen („Photographie“, „Gemälde“, „Plakat“), Riten und Objekte. (Barthes 1964, 92)[11]

Die Kulturwissenschaftlerin Mieke Bal interpretiert – ausgehend vom Konzept der ‚sprechenden‘ Dinge – Sammlungen als strukturalistisch-narratologisch beschreibbare Erzählungen. (Vgl. Bal 2002, 117–145) Voraussetzung dafür ist die Erweiterung des narratologischen Interesses über sprachliche Gebilde hinaus auf

9 Manfred Sommer spricht zwar auch vom sich in Pfützen sammelnden Wasser und von sich versammelnden Menschen, aber nur um dies gegenüber intentionalem Sammeln abzugrenzen (vgl. Sommer 1999, 19–20); im Englischen weist die Unterscheidung zwischen *collecting* und *gathering* auf eine Spezifität des *Collecting* hin.

10 Das in der neueren Literaturtheorie so erfolgreiche Konzept der Intertextualität verhält sich zu einer Konzeption ‚sammelnden‘ bzw. auf *Verba*-Sammlungen beruhenden Schreibens evidenterweise besonders affin. Werden Texte als Kombinationen von Zitaten verfasst (und verstanden), dann ist es klar, dass die Bausteine dieses ‚Mosaiks‘ zunächst einmal zusammengetragen werden müssen. Die Sammlung mag ihren Ort gelegentlich allein im Kopf (im Gedächtnis) des Schriftstellers haben, der sich an das erinnert, was er einmal gelesen hat – aber meist wird sie sich in Aufzeichnungen, Zitatkollektionen etc. materialisieren, und in jedem Fall hat sie in den gelesenen Texten selbst, gleichsam in der konsultierten Bibliothek, ihren ‚Ort‘.

11 Unter „Mythos“ versteht Barthes dabei ein sekundäres semiologisches System, das sich einem primären Zeichensystem überlagert (vgl. Barthes 1964, 92).

andere potenzielle Träger von „Erzählung“.[12] Als solch nonverbale Träger von Erzählungen in den Blick genommen werden nun auch die Dinge;[13] „Geschichten“ werden durch Zeichenketten dargestellt, zu denen auch Dinge gehören können, so Bal. Ihr geht es dabei explizit nicht um die Möglichkeit, eine bereits bestehende Erzählung im Medium illustrierender Objekte nachzuerzählen, sondern vielmehr um ein genuin an die Dinge gebundenes Erzählen – und sie versteht das Sammeln von Dingen selbst bereits als einen narrativen Prozess. Einleitend in die Erörterung des ‚Sammelns als Erzählung‘ definiert Bal „Erzählung“ als Syntagmenbildung im Rahmen eines semiotischen Systems.[14] Das Bedürfnis zu erzählen – vor allem die eigene Geschichte – ist der hier einfließenden anthropologischen These im Wesen des Menschen angelegt, und es konkretisiert sich unter anderem als ein demnach ebenfalls anthropologisch fundiertes Grundbedürfnis zu sammeln. (Vgl. Bal 2002, 126) Durchs Sammeln lassen sich verschiedene Arten von Fabeln erzählen; ein Typus ist die „Todeserzählung“. (Bal 2002, 142) Bal betont dabei die Historizität von Codes und Codierungen sowie der ihnen entsprechenden syntagmatischen Strukturen. Dinge, die in einen neuen Sammlungskontext versetzt werden, gewinnen neue Bedeutungsdimensionen oder -potenziale. Modifiziert wird durch die Erweiterung um weitere Elemente zugleich aber auch die Gesamtaussage der Sammlung selbst. (Vgl. Bal 2002, 139–140)

Anlässlich solcher und ähnlicher Diskurse über das ‚Erzählen‘ mit Dingen eine notwendige Bemerkung: Die Frage – ob man ‚mit Dingen‘ erzählt oder ‚am Leitfaden der Dinge‘ oder auch nur stimuliert ‚durch Dinge‘ – oder ob die Dinge selbst (angeblich) etwas ‚erzählen‘, wird von einschlägigen Theorien nicht immer konsistent beantwortet. Klärend wirkt hier eine Differenzierung, wie sie Marie-Laure Ryan bezogen auf die Frage nach Bildern und Erzählung getroffen hat,

12 „[E]s liegt [...] auf der Hand, daß sprachliche Texte nicht die einzigen Objekte sind, die zur Übermittlung einer Erzählung fähig sind. Die Sprache ist nur ein – vielleicht das hervorstechendste – Medium, in dem sich Erzählungen konstruieren lassen. Wie die Tradition der Historienmalerei beweist, bieten Bilder ebenfalls die Möglichkeit dazu, ganz zu schweigen von gemischten Medien wie Film, Oper und Comic strip. Allmählich frage ich mich, ob die ausschließliche Konzentration aufs Sprachliche beim Studium des Narrativen nicht den Bereich der Beobachtungen in recht willkürlicher Weise begrenzt hat.“ (Bal 2002, 120).

13 „Können Dinge Geschichten sein oder erzählen? Objekte als subjektivierte Elemente einer Erzählung [...].“ (Bal 2002, 120).

14 „Ich werde das Sammeln als Erzählung erörtern. Nicht als einen Prozeß, über den eine Geschichte erzählt werden kann, sondern als etwas von sich aus Narratives.“ (Bal 2002, 122) – „Nach meiner Auffassung ist die Erzählung eine Darstellung im Rahmen eines semiotischen Systems, in dem eine subjektiv fokalisierte Reihe von Ereignissen vorgeführt und übermittelt wird.“ (Bal 2002, 123).

indem sie unterscheidet zwischen Gegenständen, die ‚Erzählungen sind‘, und solchen, die narratives Potenzial besitzen.[15]

Zu beobachten ist im Bereich der neueren Museologie insgesamt eine Anknüpfung an strukturalistisch-semiologische Beschreibungsmodelle, welche die Dinge als bedeutsame Zeichen, gleichsam als ‚Vokabeln‘ behandeln und deren Bedeutung dabei auf ihre Zugehörigkeit zu einem Symbolsystem zurückführen. Auch Sammlungen, so könnte man gerade mit Blick auf strukturalistische Ansätze sagen, haben als Formen zeichenhafter Kommunikation narratives Potential, auch wenn man nicht so weit gehen möchte, sie als Erzählungen zu charakterisieren.[16] Dabei können die aus ihnen generierbaren verbalen Erzählungen vielerlei darstellen. Insofern Sammlungen auch etwas mit Selbstdarstellung des Sammlers zu tun haben, bieten sie dem Sammler jedenfalls auch Gelegenheit, von sich selbst zu erzählen.

Die Poiesis des Sammlers

Die Tätigkeit des Sammlers, eine für verschiedene kulturelle Zwecke signifikante produktive Praxis, kann pointierend als eine spezifische Art der Poiesis interpretiert werden. Dies bedingt mehrschichtige metonymische und metaphorische Beziehungen zur literarischen Poiesis.

(a) Sammler agieren in einem Spannungsraum zwischen auktorialem Verfügen über ihr Material und dessen Rezeptivität. Nicht allein, dass sie Sammelobjekte suchen, finden und arrangieren, die eben nicht ihre genuin eigenen Produkte sind, ihr Wirken unterliegt auch vielfältigen Kontingenzen, welche ihnen ihre Dependenzen vor Augen führen – Sammlerglück ist unbeständig, die Objekte sind zunächst fern, oft sind sie rätselhaft – und oft auch unerreichbar. Diese Zwischenstellung zwischen

15 „I propose to make a distinction between ‚being a narrative‘ and ‚possessing narrativity‘. The property of ‚being‘ a narrative can be predicated on any semiotic object produced with the intent of evoking a narrative script in the mind of the audience. ‚Having narrativity,‘ on the other hand, means being able to evoke such a script. In addition to life itself, pictures, music, or dance can have narrativity without being narratives in a literal sense.“ (Ryan 2004, 9).

16 Was Dinge (scheinbar) erzählen, erzählen sie in jedem Fall infolge einer vom Sammler und Arrangeur getroffenen Disposition – und vieles spricht für die These, dass damit Verbalisierungen verbunden sein müssen: Kataloge, Beschreibungen, wenigstens Betitelungen der Dinge. Zumindest müssen die Dinge vermutlich Erinnerungen an Wortsprachliches auslösen, um etwas ‚erzählen‘ zu können – es sei denn, man ist bereit, den Begriff der ‚Sprache‘ und den der ‚Erzählung‘ bewusst auf Nonverbales auszuweiten. Die Behauptung, dass die Dinge selbst ‚erzählen‘, ist in jedem Fall ein Anthropomorphismus und in literarisch-narrativen Kontexten letztlich eine Metapher – aber eine stimulierende.

auktorialem und rezeptivem Akteur ist wohl einer der Gründe, warum man sich für Sammler in jüngerer Zeit nachdrücklich interessiert – in einer Zeit kontroverser Diskussionen über Autorschaft und auktorial begründete Produktivität, in einer Zeit auch, in der die Rolle des Menschen als eines autonomen Subjekts aus verschiedenen Gründen zur Diskussion, wenn nicht sogar zur Disposition steht.[17]

(b) Das Sammeln ist nicht nur eine wichtige Praxisform im Kontext von Memorialkulturen; es steht nicht nur im Dienst kollektiver Erinnerungsbestrebungen. Es ist auch eine Praxis, die der Vergewisserung über private, persönliche und individuelle Erinnerungen dient. Souvenirs erinnern an private Erlebnisse, oft an sehr persönliche Beziehungen, und gesammelte Erinnerungsstücke vermögen ganze Lebensabschnitte zu evozieren. Bei Brief- und Fotosammlungen ist dies besonders evident, aber Erinnerungen können sich an alles Mögliche binden. – Als Medien oder Katalysatoren individueller und kollektiver Erinnerung, im Zusammenhang damit aber auch als Hinweise auf Erinnerungslücken, auf postmemoriale Defizite, auf ‚verlorene Zeit', werden Sammlungen zu wichtigen Modellen des literarischen Textes, der seine eigene memoriale oder postmemoriale Funktion durch Darstellung von Sammlungen thematisiert.

(c) Vielfach (wenn nicht in gewissem Sinne sogar immer) dienen Sammlungen der Selbstdarstellung: Sammler zeigen anhand ihrer Sammlungen, was sie beschäftigt, und wenn sie für sich selbst Erinnerungsstücke sammeln, so umgeben sie sich mit Objekten, in denen sich jeweils ein ‚Stück von ihnen' materialisiert – ein Stück ihrer Geschichte, ein Stück ihrer Vergangenheit, ihrer Träume und Begierden, ihrer Verluste und Defizite. Und man kann durch Sammlungen andere Personen repräsentieren. Der Liebhaber sammelt Objekte, die mit dem Gegenstand seiner Liebe zusammenhängen, und er arrangiert sie so, dass sie ihm Vergangenes oder Ersehntes in Erinnerung rufen.

Sammler sind in der Literatur zu interessanten, manchmal vieldeutigen Reflexionsfiguren geworden. In manchen Texten über Sammler bespiegelt sich – so die im Folgenden leitende These – die literarische Tätigkeit selbst, vor allem, wenngleich nicht nur, mit Blick auf die Spannung zwischen Produktivität und Rezeptivität, auf die Rolle des Schriftstellers respektive des Erzählers zwischen auktorialer und abhängiger Instanz.

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17 Dass ein Ding-Sammler kein souveräner ‚Autor', sondern eher ein ‚Medium' der Dinge ist, die er sammelt bzw. die er mit seiner Sammlung darstellen will, ist nicht unbedingt und eindeutig ein Defizit. Immerhin hebt ihn diese Medialität ja auch über die Rolle dessen heraus, der ‚nur' im eigenen Namen agiert. Wer sammelt, bewahrt kulturelle Objekte, bewahrt sie womöglich vor dem Vergessen und vor dem Untergang – und schafft die Voraussetzungen dafür, dass andere aus seiner Sammlung lernen können.

Orhan Pamuks *Museum der Unschuld* – ein Doppelprojekt

Im Folgenden möchte ich einen literarischen Text über einen Sammler und eine Sammlung als metaliterarischen, selbstreflexiven Text vorstellen, der aber eine Besonderheit aufweist: Dieser Text – ein Roman – ist Teil eine Doppelprojekts. Parallel zur Abfassung des Romans ist eine Sammlung von Dingen entstanden, die dann anschließend in einem Museum tatsächlich ausgestellt wurden. Die Rede ist von Orhan Pamuks Roman *Das Museum der Unschuld*. (Vgl. Pamuk 2008b; dt.: Pamuk 2008a) Neben dem Roman existiert in Istanbul ein von Pamuk konzipiertes und eingerichtetes Museum desselben Namens. (Vgl. Pamuk 2012a)[18]

Wie kommt man auf eine solche Idee? – Wenn ein Schriftsteller eine Sammlung anlegt, arrangiert und ausstellt, dann beruht dies offenbar auf einer Analogisierung zwischen dem Sammeln und Ausstellen von Dingen und dem Schreiben und Publizieren eines Romans. Inwiefern lassen sich Ding-Ensembles und Texte miteinander vergleichen; inwiefern sind sie verglichen worden? Pamuks Projekt lässt sich auf einen entsprechenden theoriegeschichtlichen Hintergrund beziehen. Dazu gehören das seit den 1980er Jahren vieldiskutierte Konzept der Kultur (auch der in Dingen materialisierten Kultur) als „Text“ (vgl. Bachmann-Medick 1996) die semiologische Perspektive auf Dinge als auf ‚Zeichen‘ und die Entdeckung des ‚narrativen‘ Potenzials von Sammlungen.

Der Roman erzählt die Geschichte der Liebe Kemals zu der jungen Füsun. Diese zerbricht, und Kemal sucht lange ergebnislos nach der Geliebten. Als er sie wiederfindet, ist sie (unglücklich) verheiratet; er umwirbt sie jahrelang vergeblich. Als sie endlich zu einer Ehe mit ihm bereit scheint, stirbt sie bei einem Autounfall. Kemal hat während seiner ersten Liebesbeziehung, während der langen Werbungs- und Wartezeit und während der kurzen Verlobungsphase ständig Dinge gesammelt, die in irgendeiner Weise zu Füsun in Beziehung stehen: Objekte, die sie berührt hat, Objekte, die ihn an gemeinsame Erlebnisse erinnern, schließlich Einrichtungs- und Dekorationsobjekte aus dem Haus ihrer Eltern, wo er sie jahrelang regelmäßig besucht, aber auch benutztes Geschirr, weggeworfene Zigarettenkippen, Bilder und Kleider, zuletzt sogar das Auto, indem sie bei einem Unfall zu Tode kam. In seiner Füsun-Sammlung finden sich aber auch viele Dinge, die zu der Istanbuler Welt gehören, in der Füsun gelebt hat – und zur Lebenswelt Kemals, seiner Bekannten und seiner Familie. Nach ihrem Tod beschließt er, ein Erinnerungsmuseum an Füsun zu

18 Die amerikanische Originalausgabe erschien unter dem Titel *The Innocence of Objects. The Museum of Innocence, Istanbul* (vgl. Pamuk 2012b; Özdilek 2022).

errichten, in dem all diese Objekte ausgestellt werden – ein Erinnerungsmuseum für Istanbul und für eine Frau.

Pamuks Roman bietet viele Vergleichsoptionen. Wichtig erscheint mir vor allem die Beziehung zu einem Text, den man bei einem an Sammelkulturen und an Literaturgeschichte so interessierten Autor wie Pamuk als bekannt voraussetzen kann, ohne dass dies allzu gewagt erschiene: Goethes *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*. Goethe hat sich für Sammlungen insbesondere unter dem Aspekt ihrer ‚physiognomischen', den Sammler selbst charakterisierenden Dimension interessiert. Sein Text *Der Sammler und die Seinigen* (1799) besteht aus einer Kollektion fiktionaler Briefe verschiedener Personen, die sich um einen Sammler von Bildern und anderen künstlerischen Objekten gruppieren. (Vgl. Goethe 1997 [1799])[19] Die briefschreibenden Figuren sind alle auf eine spezifische Weise Sammler: der Sammler (Arzt), seine Nichte und der Philosoph. Sie entwerfen eine Typologie der Sammler, um die Eigenheiten der Familienmitglieder und Besucher differenzierend zu beschreiben. Und aus verschiedenen Perspektiven kommen Sammlungen und Motive des Arrangierens von Gesammeltem zur Sprache. Wichtig für unseren Kontext ist in diesem Text vor allem die Geschichte eines Malers, der seine Frau nach deren frühem Tod wiederholt porträtiert – zunächst umgeben von einer Kollektion von Dingen, die zu ihrem Alltagsleben gehörten, dann nur noch gleichsam *via negationis*: Gemalt wurden nun bloß die Dinge selbst, nicht mehr die abwesende Frau, an welche die Dinge aber umso nachdrücklicher erinnerten. Als Bild einer Dingsammlung sind diese Bilder des trauernden Malers nicht allein ‚Bilder der Frau', sondern zugleich Bilder der ‚abwesenden Frau'.[20]

19 Der Text hat die Form einer Briefe-Sammlung. Der Adressat, an den diese Sammlung geschickt wird, ist der Herausgeber der *Propyläen* (also ein textinternes Alter Ego Goethes).

20 „Oft stellte er die kleinen Geräthschaften, die ihr angehört hatten und die er sorgfältig bewahrte, in Stillleben zusammen, vollendete die Bilder mit der größten Genauigkeit und verehrte sie den liebsten Freunden [...]." (Goethe 1997 [1799], 29) – „Es schien, als wenn ihn diese Trauer zum Bedeutenden erhübe, da er sonst nur alles Gegenwärtige gemahlt hatte. Den kleinen, stummen Gemählden fehlte es nicht an Zusammenhang und Sprache. Auf dem einen sah man in den Geräthschaften das fromme Gemüth der Besitzerinn, ein Gesangbuch mit rothem Sammt und goldnen Buckeln, einen artigen gestickten Beutel mit Schnüren und Quasten, woraus sie ihre Wohlthaten zu spenden pflegte, den Kelch, woraus sie vor ihrem Tode das Nachtmahl empfing und den er, gegen einen bessern, der Kirche abgetauscht hatte. Auf einem andern Bilde sah man, neben einem Brote, das Messer, womit sie den Kindern gewöhnlich vorzuschneiden, ein Saamenkästchen, woraus sie im Frühjahr zu säen pflegte, einen Kalender, in den sie ihre Ausgaben und kleine Begebenheiten einschrieb, einen gläsernen Becher, mit eingeschnittnem Nahmenszug, ein frühes Jugendgeschenk vom Großvater, das sich, ohngeachtet seiner Zerbrechlichkeit, länger als sie selbst erhalten hatte." (Goethe 1997 [1799], 29–30) – „[D]as letzte Stillleben das er mahlte, bestand aus Geräthschaften die ihm angehörten und die, sonderbar gewählt und zusammengestellt, auf Vergänglichkeit und Trennung, auf Dauer und Vereinigung deuteten." (Goethe 1997 [1799], 30).

Die Geschichte des Malers, der mit zur Sammlerfamilie gehört, besitzt als Geschichte eines arrangierenden Künstlers eine selbstreflexive Dimension, welche auf das Sammeln und Arrangieren als literarische Praxis verweist. Gerade wenn literarische Texte über Sammler und deren Sammlungen von Lücken oder Leerstellen, von Nicht-Repräsentiertem und Nicht-Repräsentierbarem sprechen, geht es – so meine These – auch um diese Texte selbst. Dadurch dass ein solcher Text über dieses Defizit spricht, erscheint es im mehrfachen Sinn ‚aufgehoben‘: herausgehoben (betont), im Ansatz kompensiert (man weiß immerhin, dass da etwas ‚fehlt‘) und durch Reflexion potenziert.

Roman – Museum – Dokumentation: Profilierungen eines Sammelprojekts

Orhan Pamuks *reales* Museum der Unschuld in Istanbul zeigt eine Kollektion von Objekten, die auf mehrere einander überlagernde und miteinander interagierende Codierungssysteme verweisen und dabei manches zu erzählen scheinen. Der Besucher sieht Alltagsdinge, durch persönliche Erinnerungen semantisierte sowie in einem größeren kulturellen Kontext symbolisch aufgeladene Dinge. In einem Buch zum *Museum*, das zu weiten Teilen einem Katalog gleicht, werden Exponate und Museumskonzeption erläutert; betont wird insbesondere, inwiefern das Museum der Unschuld ein Parallelprojekt zum erwähnten gleichnamigen Roman Pamuks ist. (Vgl. Pamuk 2008a; vgl. auch: Pamuk 2012a)[21]

Der Sammler, der hier die Früchte seines Sammlerfleißes ausbreitet, ist einerseits nicht-fiktiv: Es ist Orhan Pamuk selbst, der diese Dinge zusammengetragen und ins Museum gebracht hat. Andererseits hat er sich in einer sammelnden fiktionalen Figur ein literarisches Alter Ego namens Kemal geschaffen, das innerhalb des bereits erwähnten Romans auftritt.[22] Die Parallele zu Goethes Maler-Geschichte ist offenkundig: So wie dort der Maler seine Frau zuletzt nurmehr als von Objekten umgebene Leerstelle ‚malt‘, so stellt Kemal Füsun durch die Objekte

21 Der „Katalog“ im Museumsbuch gliedert sich in 74 Abschnitte. Diese entsprechen den ersten 74 Kapiteln von Pamuks Roman *Das Museum der Unschuld* (der insgesamt dann 83 Kapitel enthält).

22 Seit Mitte der neunziger Jahre habe er, so Pamuk, in Trödelläden nach Gegenständen für die Roman-Familie Keskin gesucht. Interessante Fundstücke wie die Quittenreibe hätten den Anstoß zur Anreicherung des Romans um „authentische […] und doch auch merkwürdige[…] Detail[s]“ (Pamuk 2012a, 17) gegeben. Zugleich habe er sich vorgestellt, wie einst die Objektesammlung im Museum wirken würde.

vor, die sie einmal umgeben haben. Das ‚Bild' Füsuns besteht in einem Rahmen aus Dingen, an die sich Erinnerungen knüpfen. Nur dass bei Pamuk dieser Rahmen dann auch durch das reale Museum sichtbar gemacht wird. Dieses zeigt natürlich nicht ‚Füsuns Dinge', denn diese ist ja eine fiktive Figur, aber doch Dinge, wie Füsun sie laut Roman berührt oder besessen hat. Als (vermutlich intendierte) Hommage an Goethe beginnt Kemals Sammlung übrigens mit einem von Füsun verlorenen Ohrring, der für ihn eine ähnliche Funktion hat wie eine Schleife von Lottes Kleid für Goethes Werther.

Im erwähnten Bildband zum *Museum der Unschuld* (*Die Unschuld der Dinge*) wird u. a. dessen Geschichte erzählt. Die Dokumentation besitzt als Arbeitsbericht zum Doppelprojekt eine poetologische Dimension. Pamuk ist seinem eigenen Bericht zufolge 1982 erstmals auf die Idee zu Roman und Museum gekommen; diese waren von Anfang an zusammen geplant.[23] Der Held (Kemal) sollte zwar eine erfundene Figur sein, seine Geschichte aber „anhand echter Ausstellungsstücke in einem Museum erzählen", so dass die Museumsbesucher allmählich begreifen würden, „dass er doch echt war" (Pamuk 2012a, 15) – eine gebrochene, selbstreflexive Pseudo-Authentifizierungsstrategie also. Es ging von Anfang an gleichzeitig um die Realisierung eines Romans und eines Museums, konkret: darum, „die ‚echten' Gegenstände einer fiktiven Geschichte in einem Museum auszustellen und von diesen Gegenständen ausgehend einen Roman zu schaffen". (Pamuk 2012a, 15) Durch die „Fokussierung auf Gegenstände" sollte die Romanfigur „auf authentischere Weise in Istanbul verankert sein". (Pamuk 2012a, 15) Der Bezug zu Füsun mag imaginär sein, der zu Istanbul ist real.

Orientierungen an Modellen: Erinnerungsmuseum, Privatsammlung, Lexikon

Konzeptionell und dem Erscheinungsbild nach ähnelt das Museum der Unschuld anderen Museen, die bestimmten Orten (z. B. Städten) und ihrer Geschichte gewidmet sind – es ist (unter anderem) ein Museum zur Kultur-Geschichte des Lebens in Istanbul und versteht die Istanbuler Kultur als einen ‚Text'. Zugleich

23 Anlässlich einer Begegnung mit dem letzten Osmanenprinzen Ali Vasiv Efendi sei im Familienkreis die Möglichkeit erörtert worden, den nach einer Beschäftigung suchenden Prinzen damit zu beschäftigen, den Ihlamur-Pavillon, in dem er einst gewohnt hatte und der nun ein Museum war, als Führer vorzustellen – und so zugleich Bestandteil und Kommentator der durch dieses Museum repräsentierten Geschichte zu sein –, so wie es bei Pamuk dann Kemal wurde (vgl. Pamuk 2012a, 9–11).

orientiert sich das Museum der Unschuld aber noch an (mindestens) zwei weiteren Museumstypen: am Typus des Erinnerungsmuseums für bestimmte Personen und am Museum, das der Kollektion eines bestimmten Sammlers Raum gibt. Was das Museum der Unschuld von den meisten anderen Beispielen dieser beiden Museumstypen unterscheidet, ist, dass die Person, an die hier erinnert wird und auf die alle Exponate semiophorisch verweisen, eine fiktive Figur, eine Gestalt aus eben dem Roman ist, der denselben Titel trägt wie das Museum. Bemerkenswerterweise war als Form des Textes zunächst statt eines relativ konventionell erzählten Romans ein literarisches Wörterbuch vorgesehen – was den ‚Sprach‘-Charakter der dargestellten Welt deutlicher unterstrichen hätte.

> Mir schwebte eine Art enzyklopädisches Wörterbuch vor, zu dessen Einträgen nicht nur Gegenstände (zum Beispiel Radio, Wanduhr, Feuerzeug) oder Orte (das Wohnhaus des Helden, der Taksim-Platz, das Restaurant ‚Pelür‘), sondern auch abstrakte Begriffe (Liebe, Ungeduld, Aufregung) zählen sollten. Und so wie ich Jahre später in diesem Museum Begriffe wie ‚Ungeduld‘ oder ‚Eifersucht‘ zu illustrieren suchte, stellte ich mir damals vor, ich würde eines Tages in jenem Wörterbuch Begriffe erläutern oder zeichnerisch darstellen. (Pamuk 2012a, 15)

Seine Freunde hätten ihm zu einem Lexikonroman geraten, so Pamuk, weil Lexika gerade beliebt gewesen seien[24] – und er habe sich den Roman zeitweilig als „eine Art bebildertes Lexikon“ vorgestellt, „dessen Leser mit der Zeit begreifen sollten, dass sie eigentlich einen Roman in Händen hielten“. (Pamuk 2012a, 16) Auch nach der Umkonzeption vom Katalog zum Liebes- und Familienroman sei – so Pamuk – der Gedanke tragend geblieben, „von Gegenständen auszugehen und darüber Kemals Liebe und eigentlich sogar eine ganze Kultur zu vermitteln“. (Pamuk 2012a, 18)

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24 „Besonders beschäftigte mich der Gedanke eines enzyklopädischen Romans Mitte der achtziger Jahre […]. Damals gab es in der Türkei einen aufblühenden Markt für Lexika […].“ (Pamuk 2012a, 16–17) – Zum Plan, „den Roman aus lauter Notizen zu Ausstellungsstücken bestehen zu lassen“ (Pamuk 2012a, 17): Ende der 1990er Jahre habe dann „als Konzept eine Art Katalogroman mit ausführlichen Texten zu den einzelnen Gegenständen“ (Pamuk 2012a, 17) vorgelegen. „Darin wurde wie in einem Museumskatalog der Leser zuerst mit einem Objekt vertraut gemacht und danach mit den Erinnerungen, die es bei der jeweiligen Romanfigur auslöste. Der erste Gegenstand sollte der Ohrring sein, den Füsun verlor, als sie mit Kemal im Bett lag. Im Museum sollte der Ohrring das erste Ausstellungsstück sein, und im Roman wollte ich als erstes seine Geschichte erzählen.“ (Pamuk 2012a, 17) – (Kapitel 1 endet damit, dass Füsun Kemal sagt, sie habe einen Ohrring bei ihm vergessen [vgl. Pamuk 2008a, 10]; Kemal hat ihn gefunden und behält ihn; das ist der Grundstock zum Museum.) – Das aufgegebene Konzept eines Romans aus einer Sequenz von Lexikonartikeln motivierte schließlich das Buch zum Museum (also das vom Leser gerade gelesene). Ursache für dieses Buch ist laut Pamuk aber auch, dass das Istanbuler „Museum“ mittlerweile eine „vom Roman unabhängige Existenz“ hat (Pamuk 2012a, 18).

Roman und Museum sind der Konstruktion Pamuks gemäß äquivalente Syntagmen; sie erzählen beide dieselbe (fiktive) Geschichte, Ersterer mit Wort-Zeichen, Letzteres mit Ding-Zeichen – die allerdings maßgeblich von Wörtern begleitet sind und erst in deren Begleitung ihre narrative Qualität gewinnen. (Pamuk ist sich der Differenz zwischen Wort-Zeichen und Ding-Zeichen auch durchaus bewusst.)[25] Dass er auch zu seinem realen Museum der Unschuld wieder ein Buch (mit-)verfasst und die Vitrinen und Exponate dabei nochmals explizit an den Roman zurückbindet, unterstreicht die Signifikanz des Textes für die ‚narrative' Dimension der Dinge. Nicht an und für sich erzählen diese etwas, sondern im Verbund mit Roman und Museumsbuch. Die *Unschuld der Dinge* ist, zugespitzt gesagt, ein durch den Roman und das museale Arrangement erzeugtes Phantasma. Dabei werden sie allerdings zu Ausgangspunkten der Erinnerung an weitläufige andere kulturelle Syntagmen, historische Erfahrungen und persönliche Erlebnisse. Ding-Zeichen scheinen dem Museums-Gründer übrigens zur relativ bilderarmen islamischen Kultur besonders gut zu passen.[26]

Poetik des Romans, Poetik musealer Sammlungen

Bei Pamuk erweitert sich der Roman gleichsam ins Museum hinein – in eine museal arrangierte Ding-Kollektion. Bezogen auf die Dinge in den Museums-Vitrinen erfolgt eine Überlagerung der an sich bestehenden Codierung der gesammelten Dinge (als Relikte der türkischen Alltagskultur der 1960er/1970er Jahre) mit dem Bedeutungsgeflecht, in dem sie als ‚Illustrationen' der im Roman geschilderten Objekte lokalisiert sind. Der ‚Autor' in seiner ambigen Rolle zwischen souveränem, auktorialem Gestalter auf der einen Seite, Abhängigkeit und Medialität auf der anderen Seite findet ein neues Betätigungsfeld, das genau dieser Doppelrolle entgegenkommt. Das Thema Autorschaft und die Frage nach der theoretischen Modellierbarkeit von Autorschaft begleitet sowohl den Roman als auch das Mu-

25 „Die im Museum ausgestellten Dinge entsprechen den Gegenständen, von denen im Roman die Rede ist, aber ein Wort ist nun mal ein Wort, und ein Gegenstand ist etwas anderes. Die Assoziation, die durch ein Wort in uns ausgelöst wird, ist nicht das gleiche wie die Erinnerung an einen Gegenstand, den wir einst benutzt haben. Assoziationen und Erinnerungen sind einander aber sehr nahe, und daher haben mein Roman und mein Museum soviel miteinander zu tun." (Pamuk 2012a, 18).

26 „[I]n islamischen Ländern, in denen die bildende Kunst nicht sehr weit entwickelt ist, und überhaupt in weiten Teilen Asiens wäre es doch naheliegend, die Geschichte der dort lebenden Menschen vermittels der von ihnen gebrauchten Gegenstände zu erzählen und ihrer spezifischen Menschlichkeit gerade dadurch gerecht zu werden." (Pamuk 2012a, 52–53).

seumsprojekt samt seiner Darstellung im Buch zum Museum. So wird im Roman die Geschichte des Protagonisten Kemal zunächst in der Ich-Form erzählt, bevor sich ein Erzähler namens Orhan Pamuk zu Wort meldet und erklärt, er habe die vorangegangene Erzählung auf Bitten Kemals in der Ich-Form verfasst. Wer also ist der Autor? Es ist nicht Kemal, diese fiktive Figur, aber nicht eigentlich auch der romaninterne Pamuk, der angeblich auf Kemals Verlobung anwesend war; diese Figur ist ein Alter Ego des Schriftstellers Pamuk – der sich insofern als Autor selbst konstruiert und ironisch dekonstruiert. Das zum Museum verfasste Buch, in dem sich viele Selbstkommentare Pamuks finden, zeigen den Schriftsteller Pamuk in seiner ‚anderen‘ Rolle als Sammler, Kurator und Museologe. Das Museum ‚illustriert‘ zwar eine fiktive Geschichte, aber so, dass ein verbindendes Anliegen von Kemal und Pamuk deutlich wird: Beide wollen Istanbul ein Denkmal setzen.

Als Repräsentation der fiktiven Liebesgeschichte unterliegt das Museum der auktorialen Steuerung durch den Schriftsteller Pamuk. Als Istanbul-Museum besteht es aus Dingen, die der Schriftsteller selbst ganz konkret gesammelt hat – wobei er von Kontingenzen verschiedener Art abhängig war. Davon erzählt er ebenfalls. So mussten passende Dinge erst gefunden werden, und wenn sich das eine nicht finden ließ, fand sich etwas anderes etc. Aber eben in dieser flexiblen Verfahrensweise konvergieren Sammlertätigkeit und die Arbeit des Romanciers.

Pamuk verlängert nicht nur seinen Roman ins Museum hinein, er transferiert auch die Reflexion über Autorschaft an Romanen in die über die Autorschaft an Sammlungen und Museen. In beiderlei Hinsicht zeigt sich, dass ein starres Modell der Komplexität des Sachverhalts nicht gerecht wird. – Der schreibende Autor, der Sammler und der Museologe schaffen Konstellationen von Dingen und Zeichen, in denen Erzählungen Gestalt annehmen – erfundene Geschichten werden erzählt, aber auch wirkliche, etwa Geschichten über das Leben in Istanbul. Und je mehr dem Schriftsteller und Sammler an Geschichten gelegen ist, die er nicht selbst erfunden hat, desto eher wird er in den Dingen Verbündete suchen. Aber damit diese anfangen, etwas zu ‚erzählen‘, muss er sich selbst etwas einfallen lassen.

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Tibor Žilka

Metafiction in (Post)modern Slovak Prose

Abstract: In a realist novel, the fiction takes place within real-world frames but the author or the narrator pretends it was reality, as if he/she has not made up anything, as if the entire story was merely transferred into the text from reality. A contemporary author discloses how his/her writing proceeds; he/she also reveals fabrication, fiction, and when something is brought over into the text directly from reality. Metafiction has a distinct function and rich representation in the well-known *27 alebo Smrť vás preslávi* [27 – Death Makes the Artist] by the author Alexandra Salmela (2012), who became famous through the fact that, despite her Slovak origins, she wrote her debut novel in Finnish. In Slovak literature, this effect most often features in the writings of Pavel Vilikovský.

Metafictional processes are typical signs of a postmodern text, although similar elements are detectable in the literature of previous centuries, albeit not to the same extent as today. At the end of the 1990s and in the course of the first decade of the twenty-first century, there were a growing number of authors who displayed significant signs of postmodern prose in Slovak literature, such as Peter Pišťanek, Pavel Vilikovský, Viliam Klimáček, Daniela Kapitáňová, Michal Hvorecký, Pavol Rankov, and others. Metafiction indisputably belongs to the typical characteristics of the postmodern text, due mainly to greater presence of these elements than in the past.

Keywords: metafiction, narrator, postmodernism, reception, self-reference, world literature

In contemporary prose, there are passages which show that the narrator's role is interrupted by the role of the fictional author of the story.[1] This is accomplished by using metafictional processes. Metafiction is characterized as a process whereby a novel (a work of fiction) refers to its own literary nature, a process in which the fictional author enters the story and becomes a character or directly replaces the narrator.

One novel in which metafiction has a distinct function and is richly represented has been written by the author Alexandra Salmela, who became famous through the fact that, despite her Slovak origins, she wrote her debut work in Finnish. The well-known novel in question is *27 alebo Smrť vás preslávi* [27 –

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Death Makes the Artist] (2012), in Czech *27 aneb Smrt vás proslaví* (the latter will be the basis of our considerations, because this translation is more faithful to the original than the Slovak one). Alexandra Salmela is not the only Slovak author to promote herself in a foreign language; before her, another author, Irena Brežná, also took this path. She has been living in Switzerland since 1968, where she writes her texts in German, though she continues to consider the Slovak language her *Muttersprache* (mother tongue). German is her *Vatersprache* (paternal language). True, Brežná once emigrated for political reasons (Žilka 1995, 133–138), but Alexandra Salmela herself chose Finland as her second home. Her work is thematically set in a Finnish environment, although its origins are linked to Central Europe – the Czechoslovak region.

Previous reviews of her work have focused primarily on its textual composition, its structure. The novel has four alternating storytellers, creating a patchwork variation of narration in telling the story. As she herself has said, the novel has two plotlines, and in the second one there are more, diametrically opposed, narrators. Angie represents the first plotline; the second plotline consists of three different narrators: Kassandra the cat, a toy pig – Mr Piggy – and an old Opel Astra.

While Kassandra represents a rather negative attitude, Piggy is a friend of the children of the Finnish family, in which the mother Piia is the character described in most detail. Besides her, the daughter Fazolka, the twins Ziggy and Merlin, and Marko the father constitute the family. The story takes place in the Finnish countryside, and the family is portrayed from a Central European perspective on (family) life in Finland. Principally, I have in mind here the view supported by the comic vision of the Finnish family – the life, the mentality of the people.

The main plotline, however, is the story of Angie as a foreigner in a Finnish environment, although the story begins against a Czechoslovak background. From Czechoslovakia, the main heroine goes to Finland to collect the material for her diploma work on the symbols of the *Kalevala*. This is a study visit, and it is constantly prolonged because Angie does not concentrate exclusively on her diploma work but on writing texts of a literary nature – poems, prose, scripts – and writing a funny textbook for beginners. Naturally, it is a textbook on the Finnish language for Slovaks (Czechs).

In addition, since the author thematizes the origin of texts of various natures in her work in detail, the parts in which she does so are typical examples of metafiction, which highlights the postmodern character of her prose, her novel.

The term “metafiction” is derived from the Greek *metá* “in the middle, in between; beyond; after” and *fictio* “creation, formation,” thus meaning “fiction over fiction” or “fiction about fiction.” Metafiction as a genre is created by metafictionality, literary autoreference (self-reference) or self-reflectivity (Nünning, Trávniček, and Holý 2006, 501–502). Metafictional passages are those self-reflective

testimonies and narrative elements that do not focus on the content of an artwork as an apparent fact, but help the recipient to realize that the text (story) is imaginative, fictitious, unreal, and literary, and thus constructed (Nünning, Trávniček, and Holý 2006, 501). The prerequisite for identifying metafiction is the distinction between referring telling and scenic showing. On the one hand, metafiction is about the preference for the truth, the preference for the reality of the text; on the other hand, it is about the questioning of this truth, about the realization of facticity, textuality, and the fictionality of the story, of the events in its own or in a foreign text. Based on two spheres set out by Helmut Bonheim in the study *The Narrative Modes* (1982), metatextuality can also be deduced from (*a*) a physical sphere defined by spatial entities (description) and time (action, message, and speech), and (*b*) a metaphysical sphere defined in the text by reflection (comment). Metafiction belongs to the sphere of reflection, that is to say, commentary (Sládek 2008, 52–53).

This includes instructions for understanding the text and the story, thematization of the creation of the text itself, and explanations of the various functions of the narrator in texts by Lajos Grendel and Pavel Vilikovský, but also in Vincent Šikula's *Majstri* [Craftsmen].[2] It is often claimed that metafiction is a typical feature of postmodernism, but we need to add that it has long existed in literature. It is mainly found in Western literature, in its purest form in the novels *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, *Tom Jones* by Fielding, *Tristram Shandy* by Stern, and *Jacques the Fatalist and His Master* by Diderot (Nünning, Trávniček, and Holý 2006, 502). Postmodernism, however, accredits greater importance to metafiction and makes heavier usage thereof than previous periods of literary evolution. It can be said that autobiography as metafiction is often present in contemporary literature (Hornung 1997, 224–225). Metafiction also occurs in the works of authors who cannot be categorized unambiguously as postmodern writers, which only employ some postmodern expressive properties.

Metafiction has a distinctive representation in the novel *27 aneb Smrt vás proslaví* by Alexandra Salmela. The centre of attention is the twenty-seventh year of artists' lives; this is the basic motif for developing the story about Angie. The novel is heuristic and original by virtue of the fact that the main heroine is ap-

2 Lajos Grendel (1948–2018) was a Hungarian prose writer living in Slovakia, a representative of postmodern prose. His works have been translated not only into Slovak but also into other languages. Pavel Vilikovský (b. 1941) is currently the best prose writer in Slovak literature. In his writings, there is a significant presence of postmodern elements; he is the author of several satirical works. Vincent Šikula (1936–2001) was a Slovak prose writer, author of the trilogy *Majstri* (1976), which takes a new look at the events of World War II in Slovak territory.

proaching this age and realizes how many artists died in the twenty-seventh year of their lives (Kurt Cobain, Brian Jones, Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix). Finally, in the chapter "Angie: Mystical Numbers," she lists up to fifty names with exact details of their age and mode of death (suicide, drug overdose, car accident, excessive alcohol consumption, and so on). Mostly, they are the representatives of the popular culture for which Angie expresses her admiration, but she wants to promote herself with literary work – apart from her attempt at writing a funny textbook. The excerpts from this fictional textbook function exotically in the text itself: "Heikki: Hei, mina olen Heikki Heikkinen. Minä olen opiskelija" [Heikki: Hey, I'm Heikki Heikkinen. I am a student] (Salmela 2012, 148).[3]

However, poems, prose, and scripts of her creation are also embedded in the main narrative sequence. Although they are fictional texts, the entire story of Angie and her efforts to establish herself as a writer in many ways resembles the author's biography (attempts at writing and gaining recognition in the Central European environment, transition to Finland, continued literary creativity, and so on). The very context of literary creation offers many comic situations, making the text attractive and the literary artwork captivating. What is important, however, is that the four narrators are not only involved in producing the extraordinary aesthetic and artistic value of the text, but are also a suitably applied element of postmodern literary artworks – metafiction. Thus, Alexandra Salmela is to be classified among the authors who tend towards postmodernism or whose *oeuvre* reminds us of the representatives of postmodernism in a foreign literary context.

From the point of view of metafiction, the novel in postmodern times has its own forms, some of which can be listed here with examples from international and domestic production, sometimes also from earlier periods:

– a novel about a person writing a novel or other text (André Gide: *The Counterfeiters*, Rudolf Sloboda: *Rozum* [Sense], Alexandra Salmela: *27 aneb Smrt vás proslaví*);
– a novel about a person reading a novel (Milorad Pavić: *Hazarski rečnik* [Dictionary of the Khazars];
– a work that reflects on specific conventions of literary creation (Lajos Grendel: *Ostrá streľba* [Live Fire], Pavel Vilikovský: "Štvrtá reč" [The Fourth Speech], Pavel Vilikovský: *Krásna strojvodkyňa, krutá vojvodkyňa* [The Beautiful Engine Driver, the Cruel Duchess]);

3 All translations in this article are my own.

- an author who is a character in his/her work (Vladimír Nabokov: *Lolita*, Denisa Fulmeková: *Konvália: Zakázaná láska Rudolfa Dilonga* [Konvália: The Forbidden Love of Rudolf Dilong]);[4]
- characters who are aware of the fact that they are in a literary work (Cervantes: *Don Quixote*);
- an author who peculiarly comments on the literary genre (Vincent Šikula: *Majstri*, Pavel Vilikovský: "Štvrtá reč," Pavel Vilikovský: *Krásna strojvodkyňa, krutá vojvodkyňa*).

In Slovak literature, this effect most often features in the writings of Pavel Vilikovský. After all, the entire text of the novel *Posledný kôň Pompejí* [The Last Horse of Pompeii] (2001) is almost lacking a storyline; it is just a commentary and a collection of material for an academic work on the topic *Prvky slovanskej citovosti v diele Josepha Conrada* [Elements of Slavonic Sentiment in the Work of Joseph Conrad], and everything happens in London.

However, it is not our goal to select authors who are representatives of postmodernism in Slovak literature, but more importantly to show that certain components and processes characterize the writings of our authors. Let us note that some of the works mentioned so far cannot be categorically included in the literary stream described as "postmodernism" on the basis of how modernism is characterized. It is rather that new elements and processes can be analysed in the writings of Slovak authors.

Let us return to metafiction. In a realist novel, the fiction takes place within the frame of the real world but the author or the narrator pretends it was reality, as if he/she has not made up anything, as if the entire story was merely transferred into the text from reality. The contemporary author discloses how his/her writing proceeds; he/she also reveals fabrication and fiction, and when something is brought over into the text directly from reality. At least one quotation from Klimáček's work *Horúce leto 68* [Hot Summer 68] is necessary here:[5] "I am writing a documentary novel. I have changed the names of my heroes, but Darina's name is real. The fact that she has appeared, what she has done, might seem like authorial pulling at emotional strings. But so it happened [...]" (Klimáček 2011, 150). In what follows, I present some other examples of metafictional phenomena.

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4 Denisa Fulmeková (b. 1967) is a Slovak prose writer, granddaughter of Rudolf Dilong, a poet and Catholic priest. In her novel *Konvália* (2016), she focuses on the love affair of Rudolf Dilong and her grandmother, who was of Jewish origin.

5 Viliam Klimáček (1958) is a playwright, poet, and prose writer. He is the head of the alternative theatre GUnaGU, where he is a stage director, scriptwriter, and actor.

(1) The author explains that someone else (an anonymous author), who also relies on quotations from other texts, has ceded the text to him/her. An example is the "Note" at the end of *Večne je zelený* [Ever Green Is] by Pavel Vilikovský:

> The proof of the phenomenal abilities and encyclopedic education of the anonymous author (we preserve their incognito status for understandable reasons) is also the fact that, in support of their views, they modestly and perhaps unawares interweave the narrative with quotations from the leading works of scholarly literature. (Vilikovský 1989b, 87)

"In this note we mention those works whose quotes we were able to identify safely," says the author (Vilikovský 1989b, 87). There are sixteen altogether. Naturally, this is a comment of the author Pavel Vilikovský; the anonymous author is the narrator who has the cheek to quote from other, mostly scientific works. This is the case when the presence of the narrator (the so-called anonymous author) of the text is emphasized.

(2) The work contains the text of another author; it may even be a text of the same author worked into the novel. This process is present in the novel *Hľadanie strateného autora* [In Search of a Lost Author] by Dušan Mitana, into which he inserted his short story "Ihla" [Stylus] from the 1970 collection of short stories *Psie dni* [Dog Days] (Mitana 1991, 23–24).[6] Rudolf Sloboda deliberately put foreign texts into his works, to which he also admits:[7]

> But later on, I never thought of where the idea came from, actually when needed, I copied whole sentences from a book, like for example during the conversation of Urban's protagonist with Hegel in the novel *Narcis* [Narcissus]. I assumed I had excited the experts on Hegel by doing so, who would like this insertion of *direct speech*. (Sloboda 1988, 39; my emphasis)

(3) The narrator (author) leaves the completion of a protagonist's characteristics or description to the reader. The reader may feel honoured to be allowed to do so, honoured that the narrator-author does not force his feelings or, God forbid, his style on them. Viliam Klimáček uses this procedure in his novel *Horúce leto 68*, for example when judging a character:

> What does a woman look like who feels disgust in her heart upon hearing the word cabriolet? I will leave it to you. In the novel, I deliberately omit descriptions of characters or landscapes. I skip them for you. As a reader I have always skimmed through them and I imagine you a bit like myself, therefore I hope you will not miss that padding. (Klimáček 2011, 8)

6 Dušan Mitana (1946) is a Slovak prose writer. He is the author of the novella *Patagónia* (1972), which has been translated into several languages.

7 Rudolf Sloboda (1938–1995) was a Slovak prose writer, dramatist, and screenwriter. In his novels *Narcis* (1965) and *Rozum* (1982), he appears to be a critic of totalitarian society.

(4) The narrator (author) admits that the character may think otherwise, allowing for their views to diverge:

> Would Imro be thinking about this? Hardly. Aye, maybe yes. He could be thinking, but a little bit differently, why he should think as the writer of this book. Why should he think like me? The writer is pretty cheeky to tell the dear reader that he is a bit sympathetic with Imro and whispers to him many a thing; he simply imposes his opinions of Imro. (Šikula 1976, 41)

Imro is the main character of the novel *Majstri*; the author-narrator (scribe) imposes his thoughts, opinions, reflections on this protagonist. We may ask ourselves a question: was Vincent Šikula a postmodern author? Definitely not, but metafictional elements in his novel are already a precursor of postmodern narrative strategies that were naturalized in the following period in the evolution of Slovak literature.

(5) The narrator reports that one of the characters collects material for writing a novel (André Gide: *The Counterfeiters*; the novel by Alexandra Salmela also belongs here, except that, in this novel, other characters, for example a fictional editor of a literary journal, also comment on the written texts). If the content of the text is writing a novel, that is, thematizing its creation, we can speak of a metafictional novel, an autonomous literary subgenre. *Nenapísaný román* [The Unwritten Novel] (2004) by Stanislav Rakús is such a text. *Rozum* (1982) by Sloboda is a metafictional novel in a certain sense, since the central topic of the text is writing the script *Don Juan zo Žabokriek* [Don Juan of Žabokreky] as a post-text on a "Don Juan" theme. The whole story is about how a scenario is made, how entire passages are fabricated, and how the finishing touches are put to some parts:

> I wrote this much during my nocturnal last-minute pursuance of tasks. Jano runs to catch the morning bus; but what about him now? How does Hanka avenge him? Will she report against him? Who is that lad who came with Hanka after Hrsc? Is he a fiancé, a brother? – This has yet to be made up. – Those who want to know what I was still thinking about a motif for a film, should read the next chapter. (Sloboda 1982, 178)

In her novel *27 eli kuolema tekee taiteilijan* (2010), to give it its original title, Alexandra Salmela also chose this procedure, for which she received the prestigious award of the Finnish daily *Helsingin Sanomat*.

(6) The narrator becomes a character he himself or she herself has created ("Borges and I"). In his text "Prvé víťazstvo supermarketov" [First Victory of Supermarkets] in the volume *Lovci & zberači* [Hunters & Pickers] (2001), Michal Hvorecký made the narrator-hunter into a customer in a supermarket, specifically a passionate shopper. The story is about how manipulator becomes manipulated, hunter the hunted, supermarket designer the buyer of goods.

(7) Narrative footnotes as commentaries are parts of and references to the story. Pál Závada (1999) uses this metafictional practice in his *Jadvigin vankúšik* [Jadviga's Pillow], which is built on the diary of Andás Osztatní (first level) and the writings of his wife Jadviga inscribed into the text (second level); in addition, there are notes by their son Mišo Osztatní, who not only translates Slovak sentences into Hungarian but also duly comments on them.

(8) The work can reflect on specific literary procedures, categories; it can play with them and parody them. In *Ostrá strelba*, Lajos Grendel wittily comments on the narrator:

> After a few weeks and a few months he [the narrator] found that a utilitarian narrator resided in him, in addition to a rascal narrator, a deceitful narrator, a bloodthirsty narrator, an immoral narrator, a cynical narrator, an exuberant narrator, a cowardly narrator, a compromising narrator, an avaricious narrator, and many other narrators about whom he had yet barely known anything due to an incomplete self-knowledge. (Grendel 1985, 88)

In this spirit, the author (narrator) considers the narrator types in the chapter in question; he even analyses and explains each of these types (Grendel 1985, 88–93). Daniela Hodrová (1989) points out that postmodern prose emphasizes the moment of the making of the text, that is, that the creation of the text itself is thematized. Thus, within its frame the author can discuss his own poetics, focusing on the moment of generating, constituting the text. In this way, a game based on irony develops. In the novel *Rozum*, Rudolf Sloboda also used this metafictional process: the subject matter of the text is the origin of the script with the title *Don Juan zo Žabokriek*, which is itself a source of humour. The surname of the main character, who is called Jano Hrsc, also sounds funny, and the story develops in the spa town of Luhačovice at the hotel Miramare (the hotel still exists). The novel is about the making of the text, about the constant rewriting of the storyline, in which the committee and its boss intervene, requiring the author to write about work in the spirit of the principles of writing under Socialism.

(9) In "Štvrtá reč" by Pavel Vilikovský, Gabriel, the protagonist of the short story, collects material in the form of oral history about the crimes of Communism and Fascism, but relativizes his own character in doing so:

> Gabriel could be a character as well as a narrator. In that case, the story would be in the first person, however, when the narrative is in the third person, we have freer hands, and we can speak about Gabriel behind his back. He could not do this behind his own back, it is impossible. We would never know what his buttocks or the hair on the crown of his head look like, because he does not see them, and maybe he would not even want to talk about such things. (Vilikovský 2013, 143)

In his novel *The Counterfeiters*, André Gide first used the motif of the origin of the text (the "I write about writing the text you read" principle) in 1925.

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Texts can include short stories by their authors (Dušan Mitana: *Hľadanie strateného autora*), news articles (Pavel Vilikovský: *Kôň na poschodí, slepec vo Vráble* [A Horse Upstairs, a Blind Man in Vráble], 1989a), or even oral history (Pavol Rankov: *Matky* [Mothers], 2011). In the process, texts usually lose their original meaning and become a source of self-parody or acquire a parodic character. Naturally, this does not apply to the text by Pavel Rankov. His is rather a historiographical metafiction, or a metahistoriographical fiction, based on the fictitious adaptation of historical reality and thinking about this process on a metalevel (Nünning, Trávniček, and Holý 2006, 502–503). Accounts in oral history of a young woman being dragged into the Gulag deal with the fictional adaptation of historical reality, and thinking about this fiction on a metalevel constitutes the writing of a diploma thesis on the subject.

Metafictional processes are typical features of postmodern texts, although similar elements appeared in the literature of previous centuries, albeit not to the same extent as today. At the end of the 1990s, and during the first decade of the twenty-first century, various authors appeared who used significant features of postmodern prose: Peter Pišťanek, Pavel Vilikovský, Dušan Taragel, Lajos Grendel, Viliam Klimáček, Daniela Kapitáňová, Michal Hvorecký, Pavol Rankov, Vladimír Balla, and others. Undoubtedly, Alexandra Salmela, with her debut novel in Finnish, belongs among them.

However, the contours of postmodernism cannot be precisely defined in Slovak literature; therefore the whole problem needs to be solved by grasping the oscillation between *old* and *new*, that is, between modernism and postmodernism. It is possible to talk about certain tendencies characteristic of postmodern prose rather than precisely defining the boundaries of the postmodern. Metafiction, however, unquestionably belongs to the typical features of postmodern texts, mainly due to the greater occurrence of these elements than in the past.

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Katarína Zechelová

Kommunikation (?) und Schweigen in Prosatexten von Arthur Schnitzler und Stefan Zweig

Abstract: Die Epoche der Wiener Moderne gehört bis heute zu großen Inspirationsquellen der Kunst und der Wissenschaft. Im Klima der alten Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie wachsen an der Wende vom 19. zum 20. Jahrhundert junge Künstler, Schriftsteller und Intellektuelle, die eigene Ausdruckssprachen suchen. Und es gibt vieles, was unter dem Deckel dieser Epoche brodelt – der Kampf mit der älteren Generation, der Verlust der moralischen und geistigen Werte, die Infragestellung des menschlichen und wissenschaftlichen Erkennens, politische Starrheit, die Judenfrage, der Aufstieg der Masse, die Entdeckungen der Psychologie, die Krise des Individuums, usw. Wie aber sollte man das alles zum Ausdruck bringen, wenn man darüber schweigen muss, wovon man nicht sprechen kann (L. Wittgenstein)? Der Beitrag sucht die Antwort anhand der Prosawerke zweier bedeutender Autoren der Wiener Moderne: Arthur Schnitzler und Stefan Zweig. Ist das Schweigen bei Schnitzler definitiv, oder kann es noch durchbrochen werden? Welche Funktion erfüllt der Erzähler bei Zweig und um welche Art der Kommunikation handelt es sich in den meisten seiner Erzählungen? Wer spricht (und wie) in ihren Werken? Der Beitrag untersucht durch Kontextualisierung die Verknüpfungen zwischen Text, Autor und Kontext. Ausgehend vom Text werden das Motiv des Schweigens bzw. der Kommunikation, die narratologischen Kategorien und Kompositionstechniken als Widerspiegelungen der Poetiken beider Autoren miteinander verglichen. Die theoretischen Grundlagen für diese Art der Interpretation bilden die Studien und Publikationen der slowakischen Literaturwissenschaftler Dionýz Ďurišin und Mária Bátorová.

Keywords: Wiener Moderne, Arthur Schnitzler, Stefan Zweig, Kontextualisierung

Sowohl die Kommunikation als auch das Schweigen sind mehrdimensionale Phänomene. Es ist oft kompliziert, ihre klaren Grenzen zu bestimmen und umso komplizierter, ihre Bedeutung zu erraten. Sind es Antonyme? Kann man durch Schweigen kommunizieren? Welche sind ihre Schnittpunkte?

Der vorliegende Beitrag versucht diese und weitere Fragen anhand der Prosawerke von Arthur Schnitzler und Stefan Zweig zu beantworten. Die theoretischen Grundlagen des Vergleichs bilden die Studien und Publikationen der slowakischen Literaturwissenschaftler Dionýz Ďurišin und Mária Bátorová.

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Die Methode, die Maria Bátorová in den Studien *Kontextualizácia literárneho diela* (2004) [*Kontextualisierung des literarischen Werkes*] und *Stopy ‚autobiografie' vo fikcii* (2011) [*Die Spuren der ‚Autobiographie' in der Fiktion*] beschreibt, stellt den Text in den Mittelpunkt der Forschungsarbeit. Ausgehend vom Text wird dann der Leitfaden durch die Kategorie des Autors und seiner individuellen Welterfassung bis zur Struktur, d. h. zur Sozietät geführt, in der der Autor lebt und das Werk entsteht. Der Text ist als Primärquelle zu verstehen, in der die analysierten Zusammenhänge zu anderen Texten, zum Autor und zum Kontext zu suchen sind. Es handelt sich dabei aber nicht nur um explizite Verweise, wie z. B. im Falle direkter Daten aus dem Leben des Autors, die im Text angegeben sind. Mária Bátorová konzentriert sich auf Charakter und Art der Texte, die für den jeweiligen Autor charakteristisch sind, also auf die „Zerstreuung des Autorensubjektes im Text" (Bátorová 2011, 46). „Es geht um die Sehweise, um den charakteristischen Stil, um wechselnde Perspektiven von Zeitpassagen des Erzählers, also um deutliche Poetik, die ausschließlich diesem einen Autor eigen ist." (Bátorová 2011, 46) Bátorová versteht unter dem Text eine Aussagebasis, die über den Autor gewisse Botschaften vermittelt und ihn abbildet. Darüber hinaus lassen sich im Text Bezüge zum außerliterarischen Kontext finden.

Bedenkt man, dass ein literarischer Text im Kontext vernetzt ist, erweist sich die Frage nach den Möglichkeiten des Vergleichs mit einem anderen Text, der aus demselben Kontext stammt, als mehr als interessant.

Der slowakische Literaturwissenschaftler Dionýz Ďurišin (1929–1997) definiert das Objekt der komparatistischen Forschung als „mannigfache Beziehungen zwischen literarischen Erscheinungen", wobei die Forschungsbasis aus Äquivalenz der Erscheinungen erfolgt. (Ďurišin 1975, 103) Die möglichen existierenden Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den literarischen Werken teilt er auf in solche, die durch direkte Kontakte erregt werden (d. h. durch gewisse Arten unmittelbarer oder vermittelter materieller Beziehung), und in Ähnlichkeiten, die unabhängig von direkten Kontakten sind, die aber aus allgemeineren, typologischen Zusammenhängen folgen (vgl. Ďurišin 1975, 105). Die direkten Kontakte bezeichnet er als genetische Kontaktbeziehungen; die typologischen Zusammenhänge unterteilt Ďurišin in gesellschaftlich-, literarisch- und psychologisch-typologische Zusammenhänge. Die gesellschaftlich-typologischen Zusammenhänge gründen in sozialen und ideellen Faktoren und spiegeln sich in der Gesamtstruktur der Werke. Sie reflektieren vor allem die Weltanschauung und philosophische Ansichten des Autors und der Epoche. Die literarisch-typologischen Zusammenhänge umfassen die spezifischen literarischen Erscheinungen, deren Erforschung die Analogien und Verschiedenheiten im Rahmen der literarischen Gattungen, Richtungen und Genres mit einbezieht. Außerdem gehören hierzu

die Komposition, Sujet, Motive oder Figurenkonstellationen. Die psychologisch-typologischen Zusammenhänge ergeben sich aus der individuellen psychologischen Gestaltung der Künstler und deren Schriftstellernatur.

Die schon erwähnte slowakische Komparatistin und Literaturwissenschaftlerin Mária Bátorová reflektiert mit eigener Methode die Theorie von Ďurišin und erweitert sie, indem sie „Gewicht auf die innere Bedeutungsstruktur, auf den anthropologischen und psychologischen Aspekt der Kunstwerke und auf die Interdisziplinarität legt". (Bátorová 2004, 140)

In dem vorliegenden Beitrag wird anhand der typologischen Zusammenhänge und Unterschiedlichkeiten die Frage der Kommunikation und des Schweigens in Prosawerken von Arthur Schnitzler und Stefan Zweig analysiert, wobei der Forschungsleitfaden vom Text zum Autor und zum Kontext führt. Den gemeinsamen Hintergrund bildet die philosophisch-theoretische Arbeit von Wolfgang Pilz *Die Philosophie des Schweigens – Das Schweigen in der Philosophie* (1987), die diverse Gesichtspunkte des Themenkomplexes „Schweigen als Teil der Kommunikation" bearbeitet und anhand literarischer Werke der Moderne exemplifiziert.

Beginnen wir also mit dem Text. In welcher Form sind in den Prosawerken von Arthur Schnitzler und Stefan Zweig die Motive des Schweigens und der Kommunikation zu finden?

Wenn man die Prosawerke von Arthur Schnitzler analysiert, muss man eher vom Schweigen bzw. von einer verweigerten Kommunikation als von einer echten Kommunikation sprechen. Was könnte das besser demonstrieren als zwei der berühmtesten Erzählungen: *Leutnant Gustl* (1901) und *Fräulein Else* (1924), für die Schnitzler die Form des inneren Monologs gewählt hat. In beiden Fällen geht es um eine Darstellung von inneren Reaktionen, Gedanken und freien Assoziationen. Sowohl Gustl als auch Else sind junge Menschen, die plötzlich in eine extreme Lebenssituation geraten. Ihr gewöhnlicher, oft sogar langweiliger Alltag wird durch eine *unerhörte Gegebenheit* erschüttert. Diese zwingt die beiden zur Selbstbefragung und jagt sie bis an die Grenzen ihres Lebens. Keiner von den beiden bringt aber sein Problem nach außen. Sie verarbeiten es in völliger Einsamkeit, von ihren Mitmenschen entfernt (sowohl räumlich, als auch emotional). Sie wenden sich an niemanden, um es zu besprechen, um Rat zu bitten oder mindestens Trost zu finden. Sie suchen einfach keine Kommunikationspartner und verschließen sich in ihr Inneres. Trotzdem muss man manche Passagen als äußerst dialogisch bezeichnen. Sowohl Gustl als auch Else befragen nämlich sich selbst, sie widersprechen, überreden, trösten bzw. beklagen sich selbst und machen sich zu eigenen Gesprächspartnern. Die Kommunikation wird verinnerlicht; der innere Monolog wird aber eigentlich zum inneren Dialog. Damit dies möglich ist, muss sich die Persönlichkeit spalten. Und das ist meines Erachtens gerade das,

was Schnitzler dem Leser zeigen will. Eine gespaltene und verwirrte (hysterische[1]) Persönlichkeit. Den Gustl schildert er deswegen als „dummen Bub", der denkt, er habe schon alles gesehen. Er hat keine Lebensziele und ist auch nicht fähig zum Handeln. Auch Wolfgang Pilz bringt das Schweigen u. a. mit dem fehlenden Handeln zusammen. In diesem Sinne versteht er es als das Auslassen jeder aktiven Bewegung, als fehlenden Willen oder als Entscheidungsunfähigkeit. Wenn sich das Individuum in seiner Befindlichkeit nicht wohl fühlt und es an der Welt leidet, will es laut Piltz sein Bewusstsein zum Schweigen bringen. Das gilt auch für Gustl. Das fehlende Handeln symbolisiert meines Erachtens seine totale Entfremdung vom Leben und von sich selbst. Seine Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft bilden für ihn keinen festen Grund. Die Absenz jeglichen festen Punktes in seinen Werten, Umständen oder Beziehungen sind die Ursachen der Labilität seiner Persönlichkeit.

Ähnlich ist es im Falle von Else. So wie Gustl zieht sie sich lieber in die Einsamkeit zurück, anstatt ihre Probleme mit jemandem anderen zu besprechen. Beide Figuren beklagen die Oberflächlichkeit der Beziehungen in der Familie, das fehlende gegenseitige Interesse und die eigentliche emotionale Einsamkeit, in der sie sich inmitten der Gesellschaft befinden. Sie selber sind daran gewöhnt, ihre wahren inneren Gedanken und Gefühle nicht zu zeigen. Sie behalten sie für und in sich. Ihre Äußerungen spiegeln nicht ihr Inneres wider, die Kommunikation wird durch leere und unaufrichtige Konversation ersetzt. Laut Piltz ist es ebenso gefährlich, sich im „Gerede"[2] zu verlieren, wie zu schweigen. „Das Gerede verdeckt das innerweltlich Seiende. Das Daseinsverständnis ist entwurzelt [...]." (Piltz 1987, 114) Bei Schnitzler kann man die leeren Phrasen v. a. in seinen Dramen als Symbol der Entwurzelung vom tiefsten Sinn des Daseins ansehen.[3]

Die Figuren von Schnitzlers Prosawerken sind entweder dazu gezwungen, ihre Äußerungen nur auf diese Art der Konversation zu beschränken, oder sie verschweigen lieber. Ihr Schweigen entfremdet sie nicht nur von anderen Menschen, sondern auch von ihrem Leben und der Welt. Laut Piltz zieht sich „ein Dasein, das in diese Welt nicht zu passen meint, mit anderen nicht zu Recht kommt, sie nicht versteht oder das ausgestoßen wird, in die Einsamkeit zurück oder wird dorthin vertrieben und lebt sich selbst oder in Kommunikation mit der Natur." (Piltz 1987, 68) Die Schnitzlerschen Figuren kommen in der Welt nicht zurecht.

1 Die Erforschung der weiblichen und männlichen Hysterie war zu Zeiten Schnitzlers ein viel besprochenes und höchst aktuelles Thema. H. Bernheim, J. M. Charcot und S. Freud publizierten zahlreiche Studien über diese geistige Krankheit. Schnitzler beschäftigte dieses Thema sowohl medizinisch als auch literarisch und künstlerisch.

2 Das ist ein Ausdruck Heideggers. Heidegger begann sich mit dem Schweigen erst um das Jahr 1925 herum zu befassen. (Vgl. Piltz 1987, 177).

3 Vgl. *Anatol* (1893), *Liebelei* (1895), *Reigen* (1920) usw.

Ihr Leben erscheint deswegen oft nur als eine Mischung aus Phantasien, Träumen oder Erinnerungs- und Erlebnisfetzen.

Die Ablehnung der Kommunikation symbolisiert in den Prosawerken von Schnitzler die Ablehnung der Lösung einer Problemsituation und endet oft mit dem Tod. Auch laut Piltz gehört die Rede „konstitutiv dem Leben zu. Es ist eine seiner Äußerungen. Wo sie verstummt, ist der Tod nahe." (Piltz 1987, 44) Die Figuren lehnen das Reden und damit auch das Leben ab. Sie sind nicht fähig, sich jemandem anzuvertrauen und dadurch einen Rat, Trost oder Erleichterung zu finden, oder sie wollen es aus irgendwelchen Gründen auch nicht. Dadurch fehlt ihnen die Möglichkeit einer Selbstbestimmung und Selbst- und Weltreflexion. Ihr einsames Ich zerfällt; der Dialog mit sich selbst bringt kein erwünschtes Ergebnis und die Figuren scheitern. Laut Piltz ordnet der Mensch gerade durch das Reden die Dinge der Welt für sich.

> Durch die Sprache schafft der Mensch die Ordnung zwischen Chaos und Kosmos. Schon laut Baudelaire bringt das Reden Entspannung, Lösung und Klärung. [...] Reden ist Hermeneutik des Daseins, existenzielle Auslegung als Grundgeschehen des Daseins, Auslegung des Sinnes. Das Selbst legt mit seiner Sprache sein Sein aus, versucht, sein Sein zu verstehen und zu erhellen. (Piltz 1987, 45–46)

Die erwähnten Figuren von Schnitzler verbleiben im Chaos, in Unsicherheit und Desorientierung (oft auch zeitlich und räumlich). Ihre emotionale Einsamkeit führt sie zum Verschweigen, zur Isolation bzw. zum Tod.

Die Beziehung Schnitzlers zum Schweigen und zur Kommunikation lässt sich anhand der Beziehung zu seinen Mitmenschen bzw. anhand seiner Einsamkeit definieren. Schnitzlers Biographie, seinen Tagebüchern und seiner Korrespondenz lassen sich mehrere Gründe für seine inneren Zwiespältigkeit und Einsamkeit entnehmen. Einerseits ist es der Zwiespalt zwischen seiner gesellschaftlichen Position als Arzt und als Künstler. Einen weiteren Grund für seinen Zwiespalt stellte seine spezifische Position im Hinblick auf die Religion dar. Schnitzler war jüdischer Abstammung und hat sich, wie seine Familie, an die Wiener christliche Gesellschaft assimiliert. Mit den anwachsenden antisemitischen Stimmungen in Österreich wuchsen auch die impliziten oder expliziten Angriffe auf das Judentum. Als weiterer Grund sind seine direkten Beziehungen zu Menschen zu nennen. Als junger Schriftsteller pflegte er den Kontakt zur Wiener Künstlergesellschaft. Sowohl in den Kreisen seiner Freunde, als auch in seinen Beziehungen zu Frauen gab es viele Auseinandersetzungen und gegenseitige Zusammenstöße, die zu einem paradoxen Zwiespalt führten.[4] Die Einsamkeit trifft ihn auch später in seinem engsten

4 Vgl. seine Beziehung zu Hugo von Hofmannsthal (vgl. Le Rider 2008, 13–17), zu Adele Sandrock (Rothe 1997) oder zu Marie Glümer („Mizzi") und Olga Waissnix.

Familienkreis. Seine nicht funktionierende Ehe mit Olga Gussmann zerfiel im Jahre 1921, und 1928 beging seine Tochter Lili Selbstmord. Mit zunehmenden Jahren transformieren sich seine innere Einsamkeit und sein innerer Zwiespalt fast in Aversionen gegen Menschen, die durch seine Schwerhörigkeit nur noch wachsen. Anstatt direkter Kommunikation wählt Schnitzler oft lieber die Form des Briefes, um seine Sorgen und Gedanken loszuwerden. Die ambivalenten Beziehungen und die Verweigerung der offenen persönlichen Kommunikation führen zu ständiger Selbstanalyse, zu Selbstzweifeln und zum Bedürfnis nach einer ständigen Selbst-Bestätigung.[5] Diese kommt durch Tagebuch- und Briefe-Schreiben zustande, also durch eine Form monologischer Aussprache.

Die mit dem Alter wachsende Abneigung gegenüber Menschen ist auch charakteristisch für den zweiten Autor des Vergleichs – Stefan Zweig. Auch seine Biografie, Korrespondenz und Tagebücher zeigen, dass die Beziehungen zu seinen Mitmenschen mehr als ambivalent gewesen sind. Trotz seiner Berühmtheit (und vielleicht gerade ihretwegen) hatte er oft jeglichen persönlichen Menschenkontakt über. Seit 1915 erscheinen in seinen Tagebüchern Einträge über Aversionen gegen Menschen, darüber, dass er seine Freunde meidet, über seine Entfremdung von Anderen, über seine unendliche Ermüdung und innere Erschöpfung. (Vgl. z. B. Zweig 1984, 87, 169, 220, 248–249 usw.) Er hatte viele Freunde, war zweimal verheiratet, verreiste aber trotzdem oft allein. Er liebte seine Freiheit und Einsamkeit – solange er ihre Grenzen selbst setzen konnte. Als er wegen seiner jüdischen Abstammung seine Heimat und sein Zuhause verlassen musste und zur Emigration gezwungen war, transformierte sich die Einsamkeit in eine innere, später auch räumliche Isolation, die zu seinem Selbstmord führte. Außer dem Zwiespalt eines assimilierten Juden teilt er mit Schnitzler auch den Zwiespalt seiner Schriftstellerposition. Obwohl er gerne die Wiener Kaffeehäuser besuchte, diskutierte er lieber mit jungen Studenten, als Mitglied der Stammtischgesellschaft von Schnitzler oder Hofmannsthal zu werden. Er wurde ihrerseits nie anerkannt und fühlte sich selbst nicht zu ihnen hingezogen. Anstatt persönlicher Kommunikation bevorzugte er oft die Korrespondenz, die aber durch ihre Menge oft belastend wurde. Er liebte es zwar, ein Vertrauer der Geheimnisse anderer zu sein, behielt aber die eigenen für sich. Ähnlich wie der Erzähler bzw. Zuhörer in seinen Prosawerken, wollte auch Zweig am liebsten anonym[6] die Welt, Städte, Menschen und ihre Geschichten beobachten.

5 „Schnitzlers Einsamkeit im menschlichen und künstlerischen Bereich liegt [...] vor allem in einem allgemeinen Misstrauen gegen sich und andere, das wiederum auf seine schwache Ich-Stärke zurückzuführen ist." (Rothe 1997, 155).

6 „Anonymität in jedem Betracht des Lebens ist für mich eine Notwendigkeit." (Zweig 1946, 169).

Ähnliche Muster findet man in seinen Prosawerken. Der größte Teil seiner Erzählungen und Novellen ist narratologisch ähnlich konstruiert und in Rahmengeschichte und Innengeschichte aufgeteilt. Die Rahmengeschichte beschreibt das Treffen zweier Menschen, meistens zwei Unbekannte, die ein zufälliges Ereignis zu Kommunikationspartnern macht. Ihre Kommunikation ist aber kein wechselseitiger Dialog. Die eine Figur, die meistens der Erzähler der Rahmengeschichte ist, bleibt während der ganzen Zeit in der Position eines zufälligen Zuhörers, der die erzählte Geschichte weder beurteilt noch kommentiert. Die zweite Figur der Rahmengeschichte ist also zugleich der Erzähler der Innengeschichte. Sie beschreibt ein entscheidendes Erlebnis aus ihrem Leben, das sie bisher verschwiegen hatte. Das Schweigen belastete aber die Figur, verursachte ihr innere Unruhe und Drang. Deswegen bedeutet die Möglichkeit, sich einem fremden, zufälligen Zuhörer anzuvertrauen, für sie große Entspannung und Hilfe. Der Erzähler der Innengeschichte erwartet von seinem Zuhörer keinen Rat und keinen Meinungswechsel, er will nur angehört werden. Er vergisst manchmal sogar die Anwesenheit des Zuhörers und vertieft sich in die eigenen Aussagen. Der Zuhörer akzeptiert diese passive Rolle, da er sich von den Geheimnissen anderer Menschen angezogen fühlt. Das Zuhören bzw. das Hören-auf bedeutet laut Piltz gleichsam das Sich-Öffnen für die Dinge und Menschen. „In schweigender Hingabe erwacht da die Ahnung eines die Grenzen des Individuums Öffnenden. [...] Jedes schweigende Hören-auf geschieht im Modus der Ansprechbarkeit. [...] Um mit anderen Welten kommunizieren zu können, muss das Dasein auch schweigen können." (Piltz 1987, 159) So ist es auch in den Prosawerken von Zweig. Das Schweigen des Erzählers der Rahmengeschichte bedeutet seine Bereitschaft zuzuhören, seine Offenheit gegenüber jenem, der sprechen will. Er ist deswegen der ideale Zuhörer für seine Kommunikationspartner und wird wegen seiner Bereitschaft zuzuhören auch ihrerseits bewusst und gezielt auserwählt. Er steht offen für sie, für ihre Geschichte, für die Welt.

Welche Gefahren die Unmöglichkeit der aufrechten Kommunikation mit sich bringt, schildert Zweig z. B. in der Novelle *Geschichte eines Unterganges* (1910). Die Hauptfigur, Madame de Prie, ist hier gezwungen, den kaiserlichen Hof zu verlassen und auf ihr Schloss auf dem Lande umzusiedeln. Sie verliert ihre gewohnte Umgebung und Lebensart und geht allmählich an der Einsamkeit zugrunde.[7] Sie leidet darunter, dass sie keinen Kontakt mit Menschen hat, keine Gespräche führt, niemandem zuhören kann. Sie war auf dem Pariser Hof an reiche Gesprä-

7 Piltz betrachtet den Rückzug in die Einsamkeit, also auch räumlich bedingte Unmöglichkeiten der Kommunikation, als ein Eigenphänomen. Diese Distanz ermöglicht es dem Individuum, sich auf seine Eigentlichkeit zu konzentrieren. (Vgl. Piltz 1987, 68) Madame de Prie stößt in ihrer Einsamkeit aber auf die Leere und Sinnlosigkeit ihres Lebens, was sie zum Selbstmord bringt.

che gewöhnt, die jedoch voll von Lügen und Verstellung waren. Das Wort wird nicht nur als Lebensnotwendigkeit beschrieben, sondern auch als Mittel zum Spiel mit Menschen, als Gegensatz des Handelns und als Verheimlichungsform der inneren wahren Gefühle und Gedanken. Der zwischenmenschlichen Kommunikation und dem Wort wird dadurch zweifaches Gewicht gegeben: Beide sind für das Individuum lebenswichtig, ohne die Möglichkeit der Kommunikation geht man zugrunde. In den Fällen, wo man trotz der Offenbarung eigener belastender Geheimnisse den Selbstmord wählt, dient die Kommunikation als letzte Beichte, die die Seele erleichtert und reinigt.

Beide Autoren thematisieren also dasselbe Problem: den Defekt der Kommunikation in der Gesellschaft. Die Menschen verbergen ihre wahren Gefühle, Meinungen oder traumatischen Erinnerungen. Sie drücken sie tief in ihr Inneres und bewahren sie dort als Geheimnis. In beiden Fällen wird die Kommunikation außerhalb der eigenen Familie bzw. des eigenen Freundeskreises gehalten, wo die Demaskierung des Inneren unerwünscht ist. Beide Autoren beschreiben ein Kommunikationsmodell, das sie in der Gesellschaft selbst erlebt haben. Der Unterschied zwischen beiden Autoren liegt darin, dass in den Prosawerken Zweigs die Figuren nach einer gewissen Zeit das Unterdrückte nach außen bringen müssen, weil sie den inneren Druck nicht mehr aushalten können. Durch ein einmaliges, anonymes Sich-Aussprechen suchen sie Erleichterung. Sie wählen eine „Fremdtherapie" statt Schnitzlerscher „Selbsttherapie".[8] Die Kommunikation ist zwar auf eine monologische Aussage ohne aktive Rolle des fremden, zufälligen Zuhörers begrenzt, stellt aber trotzdem einen positiven Gesichtspunkt dar, indem die Kommunikation überhaupt zugelassen und ausgesucht wird. Sie bildet den Kern der narratologischen Struktur der Rahmengeschichte seiner Erzählungen. Im Unterschied zu Schnitzler ist das Gewicht auf das *telling* statt auf das *showing* gelegt. (Vgl. Chatman 2008, 43) Das einheitliche Verbalisieren des Geschehenen setzt das erzählende Subjekt über das Ereignis und objektiviert es.

In den Prosawerken von Schnitzler wird keine äußere Kommunikation mehr gesucht und eine Selbsttherapie gewählt. Jede Diskussion verläuft im Inneren durch eine Spaltung der Persönlichkeit. Das Unterdrückte bleibt verschwiegen und verheimlicht; das Erleben wird über das Erzählen gesetzt und höchst subjektiv dargestellt. Die fehlende Objektivität durch eine Auseinandersetzung mit anderen Personen verursacht die innere und äußere Orientierungslosigkeit und das Scheitern am Leben. Das Erlebte pluralisiert sich als Traum, Phantasie und subjektive Empfindung und zerfällt. Es exponiert sich nicht nach außen und bleibt

8 Die Begriffe „Selbsttherapie" und „Fremdtherapie" stammen aus der Studie von Georg Dietrich *Der Einsame Mensch in der Dichtung. Literaturpsychologie der Einsamkeit und der Einsamkeitsbewältigung.* Dietrich versteht unter Selbsttherapie eine Forme der Entfremdung von anderen und zugleich von sich selbst. (Vgl. Dietrich 1989, 178).

verschwiegen. Die Wahl des Schweigens anstatt der Kommunikation verursacht die tiefliegende innere und äußere Vereinsamung und Entfremdung von der Gesellschaft.

Wie lässt sich die Kommunikation bzw. das Schweigen in den Prosawerken beider Autoren kontextualisieren? Warum bearbeiten und thematisieren sie diese Probleme überhaupt? Wie verstand man sie in ihrer Zeit? Laut Piltz ist die Dichtung der Moderne „voll von Schweigen und Verstummen: von der ‚musique du silence' der Symbolisten über den Ermetismo der Italiener bis zu Becketts ‚Endspiel' und Celans und Eichs verschwiegener Lyrik." (Piltz 1987, 3) Melissa de Bruyker charakterisiert in ihrer Studie *Das resonante Schweigen* (2008) die Figuren der literarischen Moderne als schweigende, zum Schweigen gebrachte oder etwas verschweigen wollende. Das Schweigen wird desto auffälliger, je mehr das Individuum seine Selbstbestätigung an eine andere Person bindet. Die Ursache des wachsenden Bedarfs an der Bestätigung des eigenen Ichs durch externe Meinungen sieht de Bruyker in der wachsenden sozialen Entfernung des modernen Menschen. (Vgl. De Bruyker 2008, 20) Monika Schmitz-Emans beschreibt mehrere Formen und Bedeutungsdimensionen, die das Schweigen in der Moderne gewinnt. Es weist vor allem darauf hin, „was jenseits der Grenzen der Wörter und des Sagbaren liegt." (Schmitz-Emans 2002, 7) Interesse am Schweigen wächst laut Schmitz-Emans komplementär mit dem Interesse der modernen Literatur an der Sprache. Man beklagt die Unzulänglichkeit, Missdeutbarkeit und Falschheit des Wortes und gibt das oberflächliche Wort auf. Thematisiert wird aber auch die Rückkehr aus dem Schweigen, die Wiedergewinnung des Wortes oder die neuerliche Artikulation nach erzwungenem oder selbstauferlegtem Verstummen.

Das Schweigen bzw. die verweigerte und unterdrückte Kommunikation gehören zur Moderne. Viele moderne Autoren an der Schwelle zum 20. Jahrhundert zweifeln daran, dass die Wirklichkeit objektiv zu erkennen und durch Wörter zu beschreiben ist. Diese Skepsis wurzelt bereits in der Philosophie und den Gedanken von Ernst Mach, Fritz Mauthner, Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Schoppenhauer, später Ludwig Wittgenstein. Die Wirklichkeit wird als höchst subjektiv und durch das Individuum nicht durchschaubar empfunden. Dadurch ist es nicht möglich, sie darzustellen oder mit den Wörtern zu beschreiben. Deswegen suchen die Künstler den Ausweg in einer rein poetischen Sprache und in Kunstwelten bzw. Phantasiewelten und Träumen, die ihnen als Ersatz der Realität dienen.[9] Obwohl diese Autoren auf die Wiedergabe der Wirklichkeit verzichten und die Mimesis

9 H. Motekat weist in diesem Zusammenhang darauf hin, dass die Moderne wegen der Unmöglichkeit der Realitätsdarstellung mit der aristotelischen Tradition bricht und die mimésis durch semiósis ersetzt. (Vgl. Motekat 1962, 14–33).

durch Semiósis ersetzt haben, bilden ihre Werke trotzdem das ab, was sie empfinden, erleben und um sich beobachten. Das alltägliche Versagen der Kommunikation, das die Autoren selbst in der Wiener Gesellschaft erfahren, wurzelt in mehreren Faktoren.

Das Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts bringt eine rasche Entwicklung der Wissenschaft und Technik mit sich. Erfindungen wie Radio, Telefon, Kino, Automobil usw. ändern die Welt – aber nicht nur die Welt, sondern auch die Menschen und ihr Leben. Alles wird zwar schneller und bequemer, die Menschen werden aber trotzdem sich gegenseitig fremder und entfernter. Diese Tatsache wird häufig auch von Zweig in seinen Essays angesprochen.

> Das neunzehnte Jahrhundert war in seinem liberalistischen Idealismus ehrlich überzeugt, auf dem geraden und unfehlbaren Weg zur ‚besten aller Welten' zu sein. [...] Wir, die wir im neuen Jahrhundert gelernt haben, [...]. Wir mußten Freud recht geben, wenn er in unserer Kultur, unserer Zivilisation nur eine dünne Schicht sah, die jeden Augenblick von den destruktiven Kräften der Unterwelt durchstoßen werden kann [...]. (Motekat 1962, 17–19)

Freud und seine Theorien gehören unbedingt zum Kontext der verweigerten Kommunikation, des Schweigens und vor allem des Verschweigens im Gesamtkomplex der Moderne. Freud diagnostiziert die Probleme seiner Zeit. Er sieht die Folgen der Unterdrückung von wahren Gedanken, Träumen und Sehnsüchten. Er begreift die Gefahr, die entsteht, wenn man sich nicht frei aussprechen darf. Er versucht, seine Patienten zum Reden zu bringen und sie von dem Druck, den das Schweigen verursacht, zu befreien. Es gibt nämlich trotz allen „modernen" Strömungen und Bewegungen in dem Bereich der gesellschaftlichen Umgangsformen immer noch Dinge, über die man laut der traditionellen Moral nicht sprechen darf. Die Tiefe der menschlichen Persönlichkeit wird geheim gehalten und statt Kommunikation die oberflächliche Konversation gewählt.

Das Einsamkeitsgefühl des Individuums inmitten der Gesellschaft wächst auch mit der neuen Notwendigkeit, sich mit der Masse zu konfrontieren. Seit den 1880er Jahren verdoppelt und vervielfacht sich die Bevölkerung Wiens. Es entstehen neue Stadtteile, in denen sich die neue Schicht der Arbeiter entwickelt. Politik, Architektur, Literatur, Mode, Wissenschaft und Technik versuchen der Masse näher zu kommen. Das Individuum fühlt sich trotzdem in der Masse verloren, orientiert sich nicht in ihr und empfindet sie als negativ. Der Verlust der alten Traditionen im Bereich der Moral, Kultur und Politik führt zur existenziellen Krise des Individuums. Die zerfallene Stabilität des Ichs kann deswegen als keine Stütze in Beziehung zu anderen Ichs wirken. Laut Piltz ist die aktuelle Kommunikation ein Symptom des kommunikativen Austauschs. Sie gründet in der Kommunikationsbeziehung und diese in der „basalen Kommunikationsfigur des Darinnen-Seins." (Piltz 1987, 21) In diesem Sinne fühlen sich die jungen Wiener Intellektuellen, die

Schriftsteller sowie die Figuren ihrer Werke nicht „Darinnen“. Die Welt, ihre Umgebung und ihre Mitmenschen betrachten sie als entfremdet. Die Kommunikation erfüllt nicht die Funktion, die sie bräuchten. Sie wenden sich nach innen, leben in der Einsamkeit eigener Kunstwelten.

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Lívia Paszmár

Péter Esterházy: The Author, the Text, the Reader, or All of Them?

Abstract: The end of the 1970s meant the beginning of a poetic shift that completely changed the language of Hungarian literature. It affected the language of prose and poetry as well. According to the outstanding literary theorist Ernő Kulcsár Szabó, the year 1986 was of great importance in relation to that shift, because two key works were published that cemented the process of change: *Emlékiratok könyve* [A Book of Memories] by Péter Nádas and *Bevezetés a szépirodalomba* [An Introduction to Literature] by Péter Esterházy. In my work, I deal with the latter author, who is evidently one of the key figures of postmodern Hungarian literature. I have focused on the aspect of intertextuality in the works of Péter Esterházy, and I have also investigated the interpretation of that aspect in his Slovak reception – essays, studies, and journals of various kinds. However, Slovak cannot be the only literary-cultural environment that is interested in questions of intertextuality in the works of Esterházy, because after meeting with a warm response in a German context, he has gained prestige throughout Europe and has become the subject of studies outside the borders of Hungary.

Texts of other authors are natural components of Esterházy's texts: some of his works contain an (incomplete) bibliography or footnotes, and some of them do not. The latter kind I consider more complex and therefore more interesting objects of comparative analysis: they question the author, the text, and also the reader, who, in the manner of Barthes, can situate him or herself in relation to the author's position. In this article, I focus on the author, the text, and the reader in Péter Esterházy's world of texts.

Keywords: Hungarian literature, intertextuality, originality, Péter Esterházy, postmodernism

1 Instead of an introduction

A few days before the 21st World Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, on 14 July 2016, came the sad news that, following a long and serious illness, Péter Esterházy had died. This significantly changed the context for further research on Esterházy's *oeuvre*. Since death has put an end to his

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work, it is now possible to re-examine its periods, which during the life of the author were considered as open, changing sections.

2 Postmodern, Hungarian, author

It is widely accepted that, during the second half of the twentieth century, an approach, namely postmodernism, arose that has changed the interpretation of the author–text–reader triangle. As the outstanding semiotician Roland Barthes claims, the author has died and the reader has been left alone with the text (Barthes 1996).

In Hungarian postmodernism, this manifests itself through the radicalization of the language of the text. Compared to anglophone literature, a certain delay can be observed: the Hungarian postmodern shift started in the middle of the 1970s and reached its peak in 1986 with the publication of two crucial books: *Emlékiratok könyve* [A Book of Memories] (1986) by Péter Nádas and *Bevezetés a szépirodalomba* [An Introduction to Literature] (1986) by Péter Esterházy. The importance of the year 1986 is emphasized by a collection of studies, *Diptychon* (1988), selected by Péter Balassa and focusing on the two publications just mentioned, and also by the literary theorist Ernő Kulcsár Szabó in his monograph *A magyar irodalom története 1945–1991* [History of Hungarian Literature 1945–1991] (1993). Here, he argues that, after the appearance of Esterházy, it has been impossible to write as before.

From that time, Péter Esterházy met with a significant critical response far beyond the borders of Hungary. As in the case of many of authors from East-Central Europe, the key role in his European success was played by his German reception: after he was acknowledged on the German literary scene, his further rise became possible. In my research, I concentrate on the Slovak context, where Esterházy was also partially encountered via his German reception.

3 Esterházy in Slovak

The first Slovak translations of Esterházy's works, which represent the first stage in foreign reception (the second stage is critical response), were published after 2000, but they are from the latter period of the author's *oeuvre*, with only one exception: *A szív segédigéi* [Helping Verbs of the Heart] (Esterházy 1985), translated by Juliana Szolnokiová as *Pomocné slovesá srdca* (Esterházy 2009). This means that the Esterházy of the postmodern shift is still completely unknown to the Slovak reader. The absence of translations of epoch-making significance presupposes a context that lacks the confidence of the original context. However,

when it comes to interpreting the works of Péter Esterházy, the original context plays the greatest role – a context which, in case of the early works, differs markedly from the current reception environment. Therefore, it is not only the time-gap that hinders interpretation (this can only affect translations), but also the lost context (this can affect readers of the original text as well – if they are, for example, members of a younger generation).

It is also important to underline the name of Renáta Deáková, who has made most Slovak translations of Esterházy´s works,[1] and the publisher Kalligram, which has been responsible for them. It is to be noted that Kalligram primarily focused on literature in Hungarian, but later broadened its profile with Slovak publications and has acquainted Slovak readers with many notable works of Hungarian literature. This outstanding publisher has recently met with several difficulties and has undergone reorganization, albeit not, unfortunately, in a happy manner.

4 Intertextuality vs plagiarism

Intertextuality can be regarded as a cornerstone of the works of Péter Esterházy, but the foreign reception of the Esterházyesque method is largely polemical. The Slovak critical response, however, does not reflect that contradiction: building the text from passages borrowed from various authors has been interpreted in some cases as plagiarism, but not by Slovak reviewers.

The key work of Esterházy from this point of view was published in 2000 under the title *Harmonia cœlestis*.[2] In its original version, there is no list of sources, despite the fact that its first part consists mostly of texts by others and the second part also contains unmarked quotations. At first glance, this appears to be plagiarism, and thus some translations included an incomplete list of sources and the Hungarian digitalized version included a supplement translated from the German edition.

1 Translations by Renáta Deáková: *Harmonia cœlestis* (2005; trans. of Harmonia cælestis [Celestial Harmonies: A Novel]), *Opravené vydanie* (2006; trans. of *Javított kiadás* [Revised Edition]), *Jedna žena* (2011; trans. of *Egy nő* [She Loves Me]), *Jednoduchý príbeh čiarka sto strán – šermovacia verzia* (2013b; trans. of *Egyszerű történet vessző száz oldal – a kardozós változat* [Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – the Sword-Brandishing Version]), and *Jednoduchý príbeh čiarka sto strán – verzia podľa Marka* (2014; trans. of *Egyszerű történet vessző száz oldal – a Márk-változat* [Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – Mark's Version]).

2 The English version, entitled *Celestial Harmonies: A Novel*, translated by Judith Sollosy, was released in 2004.

The German translation (Esterházy 2001) is crucial from this perspective – even its carefully constructed structure with a list of sources did not make it possible to avoid accusations of plagiarism.[3] This edition consists of three books that are packed in a box: *Harmonia cœlestis* itself; its metatext, *Verbesserte Ausgabe* [Revised Edition]; and *Marginalien* [Marginalia], a booklet that contains extra information about the author and the text. However, as was mentioned earlier, the list of sources is insufficient: it seems to be part of the artwork. In 2010, a Hungarian literary portal, *Litera* (www.litera.hu), reported that the German author Siegfrid Gauch had accused Esterházy of stealing his text. The accusation concerned a chapter from the novel *Vaterspuren*, but Gauch did not succeed: he was legally informed that any kind of citation could be used by another author if it is part of that author's artistic language.

This was not the only challenge which Esterházy had to face because of his intertextual methods. The same report on *Litera* mentioned some other accusations in the US that preceded the Gauch case. It has to be highlighted that the English version (Esterházy 2004) also contains a list of sources which is not complete; but it was constructed according to more strict rules than the German one.[4] As US reception took up the book immediately after its publication, the question of stolen texts was not thematized. The Hungarian discourse started to deal with the problem after the cases just mentioned, nearly ten years after publication of the original text.[5] The subject of copyright was shifted to the centre of attention, and therefore the literary portal *Litera* asked for professional help from Artisjus, an agency dealing with copyright protection. A public letter from Artisjus informed readers of *Litera* that there had been no regulation declaring the maximum length of citations and exact usage of quotation marks.[6] An interesting result of this in the Hungarian environment was online forums that functioned as games with a quest for hidden quotations in *Celestial Harmonies*. One of them, entitled "Ajtó ablak nyitva van – szövegkereső társasjáték, ki mit lel a HC-ben?" [Doors and Windows Are Open – a Game of Quest for Texts, Who Finds What in *CH*?] (n.d.) was made public at *Litera*, and after a few years of unavailability it is now accessible again. Not only lay readers, but also many critics and authors using nicknames, whose true identity was later revealed in most cases, took part in the discussion. The subjects of this forum

3 The German version, translated by Terezia Mora, was released in 2001; its second edition, with *Revised Edition* and *Marginalien*, in 2003.

4 The German list contains the names of authors and/or titles of quoted works; in the English version, some pages are also identified, and the structure is different.

5 See Forgács (2007) or Z. Kulcsár-Szabó (2011).

6 For details, see the articles "Plágiummal vádolják Esterházy Pétert" (2010), "Cáfolta az Esterházyt ért vádakat Terezia Mora" (2010), and "Szerzői jogok" (2007).

included, in particular, legal questions about the difference between intertextuality and plagiarism. The other channel for discussion has been *evocatio.blog.hu*, which was created with the intention of mapping as many citations in *Celestial Harmonies* as possible (see "Megidézett írók – irodalmi iwiw" 2008).

In the end, however, Esterházy was not obliged to defend his intertextual methods officially: because of the intense discussions, the Hungarian re-edition of *Celestial Harmonies* published in 2008 was extended with the list of sources translated from German, and his later works reflect some changes influenced by the cases we have discussed.

What are the main features of Esterházy's language and intertextuality? Can he, despite his controversial methods, be recognized as an original author? In what follows I will try to answer these questions.

5 Intertextuality vs originality

Intertextuality in its broad sense has been present in literature since its beginnings. However, until the 1970s, it was not the subject of any research. Péter Esterházy appeared on the literary scene in the era when the theoretical basis of intertextuality was being established – in Hungarian literature, this also meant the emergence of postmodernism. The author's prose invented a radically new language that influenced the language of other authors but was unique at the same time. As Péter Nádas, another outstanding author of the period, declares:

> It is no accident that we have got a Péter Esterházy in Hungarian literature. Somebody has come who looked at the language used by the people unwittingly, used by all of us. His work is the most grandiose act of linguistic criticism that has ever been achieved in the Hungarian language. He raised expressions of stupidity to the language of literature, ennobled them, and at the same time, made fun of them. […] A whole generation started to use Esterházyesque language, and they started to make fun of the regime in an Esterházyesque way. (Mihancsik 2006, 255; my translation)

Thus, because of the nature of intertextuality, we should go further than just questioning the originality of Esterházy.

The author's originality can be discovered in language use generally, which has several components. The above quotation mentions the term "Esterházyesque language," which hints at highly complex details: intertextuality, but also the merging of language varieties (sometimes also foreign passages), double coding, and so on. However, intertextuality cannot be entirely separated from the other aspects. For instance, material can be borrowed from another text in a distorted form, as can foreign-language passages or those which are placed next to each

other representing different language varieties. On the one hand, it seems that intertextuality and originality are hardly reconcilable phenomena. On the other hand, Péter Esterházy might be a good example of the contrary. In his understanding, anything can be an intertext – as Julianna Wernitzer writes in her book about Esterházy's quotations:

> Esterházy uses a wide range of quotations in his works: from literal and non-literal, through literary and scientific ones, and aspects of subject and form, to marked and unmarked quotations. Texts in their original meaning are taken by him, in a form that can be estranged or split in two, in changed meaning. From long, extensive quotations, through sentences, to short quotations, anything can happen in Esterházy's texts. Under certain circumstances, even one word is a quotation; however, this is possible only if word usage and context support the quoted word appropriately. (Wernitzer 1994, 26; my translation)

I would add that all of the Genettean (1996) categories of transtextuality play an important role in his works: sometimes he uses footnotes, sometimes footnotes take the function of the main text, sometimes even the footnotes are misleading; but titles, subtitles, mottos, or prefaces also influence interpretation decisively. It follows that Esterházy's texts not only pick and steal, and place the stolen passages next to each other: they are always the result of an extremely complex concept.

In the course of the past few decades, the intertexts of Esterházy changed a lot. The following examples are intended to demonstrate that change. His first novel, *Termelési-regény (kisssregény)* [Production Novel], which was published in 1979, forced Hungarian readers to learn to read for the second time. The main text is a parody of the production novel as a genre that was typical of socialist propaganda, and it is interrupted by notes that follow the main text and form a separate unit, virtually a separate novel. Obviously, there are some nodes connecting the two parts, but the connections are not always obvious. The narrator of the main text holds himself at a distance from the story; however, the main feature of the narrator of the notes is referentiality, which was always characteristic of this author's works.

The radicalism of *Production Novel* was, in a sense, exceeded by *Introduction to Literature*, which consists of five previously published but slightly modified booklets of Esterházy, extended with new texts. It contains illustrations and marginal texts, and lists the names of the authors whose texts were used by Esterházy. As the notion of the (prose) text as such was radically reinterpreted by Nádas and Esterházy, this book, along with Nádas's novel, was labelled the end and beginning of a period of Hungarian literature at the same time.

The next *grand roman* was *Celestial Harmonies: A Novel*, which Esterházy worked on for more than ten years. The title is borrowed from a composition referred to as a work of Pál Esterházy, an ancestor of the author from the turn of

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this book, Péter Esterházy returned to a division into two parts: as Zoltán Németh suggests in his monograph *A posztmodern magyar irodalom hármas stratégiája* [The Triple Strategy of Postmodern Hungarian Literature] (2013), the first part involves characteristics of so-called non-referential postmodernism, while the second part is comparatively anthropological. The first part is constructed out of numbered paragraphs – its title, "Számozott mondatok az Esterházy család életéből" [Numbered Sentences from the Lives of the Esterházy Family], refers to this – which are actually sentence-long only in exceptional cases. On the other hand, the second part – "Egy Esterházy család vallomásai" [Confessions of an Esterházy Family] – straddles the boundary of fiction and non-fiction. It takes place in the twentieth century and focuses largely on the narrator's lifetime. The central character of the whole novel is the father, who travels through the centuries, changing location and form as a timeless and shapeless sign, and who can also be a present, physical, and authentic father-figure. Focusing on intertextuality, because of the reasons analysed above, *Celestial Harmonies* can be described as the most radical work of its author. However, in case of *Celestial Harmonies*, literally interpreted originality becomes marginal, and the accent is put on the concept behind the book. It could be studied from any perspective; concentrating on its Slovak reception, it can be stated that each of the two studies published about the novel demonstrates its complexity. One of the studies focused on historicity (Görözdi 2014), the other on referentiality (Görözdi 2013); both were written by the Hungarologist Judit Görözdi.

After the ambivalent reactions provoked by the unmarked intertexts, Esterházy's texts appeared to change and their radicalism became moderated. One of his last books, *Egyszerű történet vessző száz oldal – a kardozós változat* [Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – the Sword-Brandishing Version] (2013a) is a good example of that change: it is heavily footnoted, but the narrator also frequently makes associations between seemingly random texts and other seemingly random texts, and sometimes the role of footnotes and main texts is transposed – footnotes become main texts and main texts become footnotes. In this novel, pages stand for chapters, but one page in this sense does not equate to one conventional page: it is usually shorter or longer. The storyline goes back to the seventeenth century, when the current territory of Hungary was occupied by Ottoman troops. However, the phrase "simple story" in the title is tricky: there is no coherent story, and even if there is, it is not possible to tell it. Due to such a complex structure, the change in Esterházy's approach cannot be taken seriously; it is instead illusory.

Esterházy's originality can also be discovered from the reader's perspective. On the one hand, when a reader without preconceptions about the Esterházy-text starts to read it, he/she easily realizes what the author calls "trembling," "move-

ment," or "split," the perfunctorily hidden intertext itself. On the other hand, the suspicious reader reckons with intertexts, but this does not mean that he/she will find all of them. On the contrary, it is impossible to find all the passages borrowed from other texts. Moreover, the author renders the hunt more difficult: sometimes he pretends to use intertexts when he actually does not.

6 Comments

Compared to the period when my research began, the works of Péter Esterházy have gone through some cardinal changes. In 2013, when *Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – the Sword-Brandishing Version* was published, it seemed that the novel, along with its sequel *Egyszerű történet vessző száz oldal – a Márk-változat* [Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – Mark's Version] (Esterházy 2014a), was setting the stage for a work of great importance that would mark the end of a literary period. In the end, however, the long-awaited novel was never published.

Hasnyálmirigynapló [Pancreas Diary] (Esterházy 2016b), whose first passage was written in spring 2015, continuously documented the author's disease and psychological state. The reader was actually introduced to the text only after it had been published as a book which closed the author's *oeuvre*. Besides concentrating on his illness and its textual results, Esterházy was active in many fields.

Apart from excerpts from *Pancreas Diary* in the journal *Élet és Irodalom* [Life and Literature], Esterházy published various texts. When his health made it possible, he attended interviews and readings where his disease was also thematized. At the end of 2015, he released *A bűnös* [The Sinner] with the visual artist Miklós Szüts; the book was the result of mutual inspiration between the two artists and the two art forms. According to the blurb, Szüts prepared a diary of paintings and Esterházy was to comment on them so as to create a chain of detective stories. Finally, life events provoked the story of a murder which conquered all the other circumstances (Esterházy and Szüts 2015). This book also includes one of Esterházy's most preferred motifs: the detective story is filtered through the motif of family, through a variation on the theme of parents getting to know each other. Page numbers are missing, which, along with the thematization of death and love, makes the harmony of pictures and text timeless. Death and love are connected to Pancreas, the main character of *Pancreas Diary*, which was published in 2016. The author personified his disease: the narrator treats it as if it were his loved one. The 87th Festive Book Week (Ünnepi Könyvhét), the prestigious book fair in Budapest, was opened by Péter Esterházy in 2016 and was the occasion for

the publicaton of *Pancreas Diary*. It was already evident that Esterházy would not write another book. He died on 14 July 2016, and on 2 August his urn was placed in the family mausoleum in Ganna, Hungary.

The book market reacted intensely to the death of Esterházy. In 2016, two posthumous works were published: *Drámák* [Dramas] (Esterházy 2016a) contains his then-unpublished plays, which had been performed in various theatres, and *A megrendülés segédigéi* [Helping Verbs of the Trauma] (2016), edited by József P. Kőrössi, collected texts written on the occasion of Esterházy's death. *Drámák* contains the historical revue *Mercedes Benz* (Esterházy 2015), which was written at the request of the Slovak National Theatre and whose premiere took place on 7 January 2017. The work follows the tradition of thematizing family and history: *Celestial Harmonies* and *Simple Story Comma One Hundred Pages – the Sword-Brandishing Version* are its intertextual pre-texts. Like *Celestial Harmonies*, *Mercedes Benz* also goes back in time to periods which were of great importance in the history of the Esterházy family, but it places all of them in the frame of a bet between God and Lucifer: can we (the Esterházy family) stay human in inhuman circumstances? The hypotext of the drama is a classical *Faustiade*: *The Tragedy of Man* by Imre Madách.

While *Pancreas Diary* puts an end to the *oeuvre*, *Mercedes Benz* summarizes human existence and presents nearly all the characteristics of the texts of Esterházy. In this text-universe, all treatises are connected. On the one hand, in a broad sense – as Esterházy claims – this connectedness concerns all existing texts; on the other hand, in a narrow sense, his own works can be interpreted as a conglomerate which makes it possible to reuse passages from it – from a word up to longer units. Thus, elements of the conglomerate are freely combinable, and readers can easily find themselves in a trap set by the author: that of losing the ability to recognize which work of Esterházy they are reading.

7 Conclusions

In the works of Péter Esterházy, the key status of intertextuality is unquestionable; the questions concern instead how it appears in them and how it is original. In this article, I wanted to stress originality of the kind that is not related to the literal understanding of the term. I have demonstrated with some examples how the intertexts of Esterházy can be seen as authentic, and where his significance can be found. Whether he was the author, the reader, or the text of his works, is a question that might be answered with a quotation from *Production Novel*: "The grammatical space is me" (Esterházy 1979, 167; my translation). It now seems that

that statement has more to tell us than ever before: the "grammatical space" is closed – open to never-ending research.

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Krištof Anetta

Neo-Sincere Theory?

Abstract: This article plays with the possibility of applying the tenets of New Sincerity, an American literary movement, to the practice of literary theory. The characteristics of the resulting Neo-Sincere theory could include simplification and popularization, irony, broad syntheses and interdisciplinarity, and finally institutional irreverence.

Keywords: institutional reform, irony, literary theory, New Sincerity, popularization

It seems to me that, in the last few centuries, very few applied academic disciplines have proved as flexible – almost invertebrate – as literary theory, so sensitively has it reacted to every gust of wind in philosophy and literary practice, always becoming an amalgamation, periodically replacing most of its basic assumptions. In this article, I will be playing with the possibility of an approaching paradigm shift, anticipating some aspects of a movement which could, theoretically, appear in the timeline after modernist and postmodernist literary theory. Because of issues of power and politics, I do not actually believe this will happen on a large scale, but I am certain it would be a very healthy, fresh, and most cleansing gust of wind.

If we view the progression of alternating movements in literary theory in terms of structuralist binary oppositions, an interesting candidate for replacing postmodernism seems to be New Sincerity, a loose category of writing styles emerging in the late 1980s in the US, characterized by writers stepping back from postmodern irony and distant cynicism, and getting to grips with the realities of human existence. Perhaps the best introduction to the Neo-Sincere mindset can be found in the musings of David Foster Wallace:

> The next real literary "rebels" in this country might well emerge as some weird bunch of "anti-rebels," born oglers who dare to back away from ironic watching, who have the childish gall actually to endorse single-entendre values. Who treat old untrendy human troubles and emotions in U.S. life with reverence and conviction. Who eschew self-consciousness and fatigue. These anti-rebels would be outdated, of course, before they even started. Too sincere. Clearly repressed. Backward, quaint, naive, anachronistic. Maybe that'll be the point, why they'll be the next real rebels. Real rebels, as far as I can see, risk things. Risk disapproval. The old postmodern insurgents risked the gasp and squeal: shock, disgust, outrage, censorship, accusations of socialism, anarchism, nihilism. The new rebels might be the ones willing to risk the yawn, the rolled eyes, the cool smile, the nudged ribs, the parody of gifted ironists, the "How banal." Accusations of sentimentality, melodrama. Credulity. Willingness

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> to be suckered by a world of lurkers and starers who fear gaze and ridicule above imprisonment without law. Who knows. (Wallace 1993, 192–193)

Imagine literature as a pendulum that had swung through modernism to the very apogee that is postmodernism, stalled, and is now coming back to realism, though transformed and more sophisticated after the experience. The question is: can someone do to literary theory what David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Franzen, and Dave Eggers did to literature? What would a Neo-Sincere literary theorist be like? How could the maxims of New Sincerity translate to literary theory?

1 Wuthering words

Modernist and postmodernist literature utilizes many convoluted literary devices that reinforce the feeling of belonging to an educated elite. While they can be considered advancements in the narrow field of "high literature," these devices not always contribute to answering the basic questions of the *conditio humana*, or, for that matter, to authentic narrative pleasure. New Sincerity writers know and often use many of these devices, but they put special emphasis on returning to a full, non-evasive treatment of the basic "human troubles and emotions." They have retained their erudition but they have developed a new awareness of how to apply it to what is important for society as a whole in the ancient sense of the word.

Can you think of any elitist aspects of academia? To save you the time spent enumerating, can you think of any non-elitist aspects of it? Let us start with terminology. Humanities scholarship is often rendered unreadable by the use of highly complex concepts: no matter what is being said, nobody outside literary theory will ever get to use it because it is simply out of reach by definition. A Neo-Sincere theorist could attempt to communicate and maybe even create meaning in a way similar to that of fiction, with elaborate structures built from simple concepts, so that the quality of scholarship can be verified from the outside.

Consider Milan Kundera and his *Art of the Novel* (1988). He is able to deliver an intriguing analysis of several centuries of the European novel using, if not downright simple language, then at least concepts mostly familiar to educated people without a literary background. An even more popular example is Kurt Vonnegut's theory of the "shapes of stories," in which he attempts to categorize narratives based on charts mapping the emotions of the protagonists (originally appearing in his master's thesis, this theory became the subject of several lectures and was included in his essay collection entitled *A Man without a Country* [2005, 23–38]).

I should stress that this does not mean literary theory would do well to get rid of its concepts, the fruits of centuries of careful analysis, but rather that it should talk about them in a different way, revisit its channels of dissemination. I am not the first one to suggest that, since literary theory claims to serve the public and at the same time depends on people paying taxes (or at least tuition fees), it might want, in order to be sincere with itself, to ask "who cares about this?", to process its product accordingly, and to present it for the enjoyment and intellectual growth of the public. It is true: In the humanities, we do not measure direct utilitarian benefits like those that arise from the natural sciences; but that does not imply that we should not measure the degree of intellectual inspiration that ordinary people draw from a given humanities discipline. In order to improve in this respect, Neo-Sincere literary theory could

– stop endlessly producing papers and books no non-literary theorist ever reads, and start teaching more, organizing events, and enriching the public sphere with applied skills of interpretation and relevant cultural commentary; and
– leverage the methods of the digital humanities and learn how to pass on knowledge in a clearer and more easily digestible way, making use of sound, image, and movement.

2 Irony inversion

One of the defining features of New Sincerity fiction is that it relinquishes much of the irony and cynicism brought by postmodernism in order to address genuine emotional issues facing the contemporary citizen. If literary theory wants to get closer to "human troubles and emotions," maybe it should do the opposite and start being a bit more ironic and cynical. Maybe it should look in the mirror, see how far from the actual readers of literature it has gone, and reflect – which, in this case, is hardly possible without making fun of itself in the process. A good example of this is Pierre Bayard's *How to Talk about Books You Haven't Read* (2007). It ironically depicts the rigid, hypocritical conventions that require a certain kind of static knowledge about an arbitrary set of books and their interrelations, but at the same time it foregrounds the literary text as an infinitely mobile object that works best when it is constantly reinvented. The most important thing is that the irony is productive. Bayard is obviously critical of the institution, but he makes it clear that its subject – literature and literary enquiry – is crucial to society. He does not say that the enterprise is pointless; he says that it is very important but being done in the wrong way.

3 Holistic hope

According to Wallace, New Sincerity fiction writers "have the childish gall actually to endorse and instantiate single-entendre principles" (1993, 192) – they risk being laughed at as naive, they willingly embark on the impossible mission of reconciling the abundance of moral ambiguities and contradictions in human life in a futile attempt at reaching something like truth (which, they claim, is being avoided or audaciously relinquished in postmodernist prose). They risk failure in an attempt to achieve something even more valuable for society than what their predecessors have achieved. What could an analogous aspiration be in the case of Neo-Sincere theory?

Narrow specialization in technology and the natural sciences turned out to be a major evolutionary advantage which catapulted Western civilization to an unprecedented level of prosperity and individual freedom. But can narrow specialization, when applied to the humanities, be justified as more effective in creating value? If reading, discussing, and remembering counts, the answer is a resounding "no": the holists win by a wide margin. The "pop idols" of literary theory celebrated in the latter half of the twentieth century all had a heavily contextual, interdisciplinary approach to global ethical issues. Just like Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, Jean-François Lyotard, or Slavoj Žižek, the Neo-Sincere theorist could attempt to factor everything in and surround detailed knowledge with a broader synthesis, a unique worldview that is relevant to the lives of non-literary-theorists. There is a very high risk of failure in this kind of enterprise, failure to say something really new about the big topics, but writers would be able to maintain a particular kind of moral integrity that can be a reward in itself, just like the ethical mission pursued by New Sincerity writers.

4 Institutional irreverence

By challenging their predecessors, New Sincerity writers contradict and subvert the literary canon, the institution that seeks to control literary value. Literary theorists also have an institution which controls the value of their theory – the academic community and its nodes (individual universities and institutes). Like any other sizeable public or private entity with an internal hierarchy of power that is at the same time connected to external funding, academia is extremely susceptible to corruption and oligarchic tendencies. There are individuals and groups who monopolize both financial and intellectual resources by restricting what is worth researching and who is fit to do it on the basis of personal gain, material

or immaterial. Anyone who has ever seen academic institutions from the inside knows that public scandals merely scratch the surface of the subterranean volcano, of all that is so deeply wrong with the institution.

Where would a Neo-Sincere theorist stand? Foucault comes in handy again here for a different purpose: Neo-Sincere theory could produce a Foucauldian archaeology of academia as an institution of power, stand up face-to-face against the system that it springs from, and deconstruct it, revealing how power mechanics deform authentic social relations and genuine intellectual curiosity.

A fine example of an academic and renowned literary critic who also devotes painstaking effort to thoroughly exposing and criticizing academia and universities is David Lodge, the author of the campus-novel trilogy *Changing Places*, *Small World*, and *Nice Work* (Lodge 2011). These novels are at the same time disarmingly hilarious and almost academically accurate in their observation of the social, psychological, and economic absurdity of 20th century academia. Throughout the trilogy, Lodge gains momentum; while *Changing Places* is mostly entertainment without any grave ethical questioning of the institutions, *Nice Work* builds a binary opposition between a female scholar and a male factory manager and thus takes on the almost impossible task of reconciling liberal and conservative values, addressing some of the most important questions by juxtaposing the importance of free-market capitalism and the value of liberal-arts education.

5 Conclusion

Why am I writing all this for a comparative literature publication? It seems that the basic defining features of comparative literature predispose it to adopting many of the maxims I have mentioned. One could say that it is already partly Neo-Sincere because it compares the writing of radically different cultures, crosses boundaries, and redefines the basic concepts that are relevant for actual living beings inside those cultures. This aspect is even more prominent when literature is compared with other spheres of human activity such as history, politics, philosophy, art, or science. It is part of the definition of comparative literature that it speak to all people, be interdisciplinary, and constantly challenge our understanding of what literature is and what it means to be human.

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5 Philosophies of Language

John M. Kopper

Alternative Émigré Places: Berberova, Makine, and the Russian Escape from Paris

Abstract: In their novels *Poslednie i pervye* and *La Vie d'un homme inconnu*, Nina Berberova and Andrei Makine, respective representatives of the first and third waves of Russian emigration in Paris, carve out hybrid spaces based on a similar premise: the materialistic life of the French capital threatens the Russian exile with spiritual disintegration. However, their particular fictional constructs differ in the temporal dimension, and the goal of this essay is to show that spatial solutions to an émigré population's position are inseparable from the community's view of itself in time. Berberova describes with historical fidelity an émigré effort at farming in the French Midi in the 1920s, and, borrowing from the Slavophile agrarian ideal, views the experiment as a cultural "fix" appropriate for the short-term survival of the emigration. Makine's hero develops a nostalgia for the difficult years Russians experienced in the 1930s and 1940s, only to realize that by entering this world he has become doubly exiled from the Paris of today: not just in space but in time. Berberova sees cultural identity marginally surviving through its very self-forgetfulness, and Makine's hero lives on to write the obituary for a culture that was never his.

Keywords: Berberova, exilic literature, Makine, Proust, Russian Paris

For Russians who left their country after the Revolution, the lapse of a decade brought the realization that the Bolshevik takeover was permanent and that their native country was being altered beyond recognition. Several artists returned – Marina Tsvetaeva, Aleksandr Kuprin, and Sergei Prokofiev, to name a few – but most chose permanent exile. Surrounded by a world of seeming (though illusory) durability and by indifference toward their native culture, the Russian emigrants struggled to invest their newly discovered Europe with a significance peculiar to their condition, all the while anticipating that any meaning they found would be invisible to, or at least misunderstood by, the local community. Dmitri Merezhkovski took refuge in politics and religion and became a writer of tracts, while Ivan Bunin, a decade later, would resort to nostalgia in his semi-autobiographical story collection *Temnyi allei* [Dark Avenues]. Bunin tacitly conceded that Russians could not construct a relation to a place where they had no history, and, conversely, that the émigrés' own past could not have much allure for Parisians, who saw the Russian community as a destitute and likely transient minority.

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The spatial dimension of the exilic experience was thus inseparable from that of time, and émigré literature dramatizes both. By "émigré literature" I mean works composed by authors who left their native country and assumed they would not return, whether perforce or as a matter of choice.[1] The language of composition chosen by émigré writers affects the audience but not the status of the author as an émigré. Nabokov wrote in Russian, English, and French after emigrating. Although both were residents of Paris, Berberova wrote in Russian and Makine in French. Their choices of idiom shed light on their understanding of cultural bilingualism, to which both allude, and, as in his earlier, nuanced exploration of a diglossic imagination in *Le Testament français* [Dreams of My Russian Summers], Makine uses bilingualism in *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* [The Life of an Unknown Man] as a thematic marker of superimposed cultures and layered historical timelines. But Berberova's and Makine's choice of language per se is less relevant to this essay than their use of bilingualism as a way of recreating, only to dismiss, a contemporary Paris that neither novel is ultimately about.

How should an émigré population define itself in a world that tolerates it only in a temporally provisional space? Most Russian émigré literature consistently addresses, or at least poses, the conundrum of temporal and spatial displacement. Some émigré texts, like Mikhail Osorgin's novel *Vol'nyi kamenshchik* [The Freemason] or the stories collected in Nina Berberova's *Biiankurskie prazdniki* [Billancourt Tales], stage a drama of assimilation, and others foreground various failures to assimilate, but a small number of émigré narratives propose alternative spaces for the exiled culture to inhabit. This essay first inspects the imagined alternative space-time world of one of them, Berberova's *Poslednie i pervye* [The Last and the First], published in Paris in 1930. I introduce as a point of comparison *La Vie d'un homme inconnu*, published in Paris in 2009 by Andrei Makine, a member of the "third wave" of Russian emigration and best known as the Goncourt Prize laureate for *Le Testament français* (1995). Both authors address the plight of Russian émigrés in Paris. Since most exilic theory today grounds its idea of hybrid identity in the existence of a *sui generis* mental territory, an extraordinary personal space created by the émigré, the fact that these two novels offer an alternative exilic locale that is concrete and precise, neither conjectural nor theoretical, gives them a notable place in current conceptualizations of the émigré text. But they differ from each other in one significant way. Berberova assumes that a permanent return to Russia is not an option, while Makine, having begun his ca-

1 This definition would exclude Andrei Bely, despite his extended stays in Switzerland and Germany both before and after the Revolution. Ivan Turgenev and Maksim Gorky are not normally considered émigré authors, but the reasons for their prolonged sojourns in Europe are so complex that any account of them must consider their perspectives as voluntary émigrés.

reer as a novelist in the early 1990s, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, asks, "Why not cross back?", "Can one *not* be an exile?", and "Can one be an exile in one's homeland?" Taken together, though written nearly eighty years apart, the two novels are startlingly similar in anchoring their imagined universes in real historical conditions, but Makine explicitly takes up a question foreclosed to Berberova by precisely those circumstances: whether one can end one's exile without surrendering anything.

The first half of Makine's novel introduces the protagonist Ivan Choutov, a Russian émigré writer living in Paris, who ironically defines himself as an almost cartoon-like caricature of a self-absorbed, insecure, and depressive artist, living out a life of borrowed literary clichés. Even when imagining his own future, Choutov does so in terms of similes drawn from novels and stories. Choutov symptomatically quotes from the Russian literary canon, particularly Anton Chekhov, the master of ironic stories of impotence and existential entrapment. But Choutov also *behaves* like one of Chekhov's characters, caught up in a vexed relationship with a woman and mired in the minor tragedy of a trivial, constrained existence. He obsessively repeats a line from Chekhov's short story "A Joke," the Russian title of which is "Shutochka," close to his surname and symbolically binding him, as he acknowledges, to Chekhov's universe.

Visiting St Petersburg in 2009, Choutov discovers a world which does not differ markedly from contemporary Paris. He stays in an apartment with the "new Russians," one of whom markets mass-trade books and proudly oversees a popular series written by several authors publishing under one name. In this post-Soviet world where authors have become interchangeable and words issue from untraceable sources, contemporary culture appears sated with an excess of information and thrives in an environment devoid of chronological and topographical markings: the Hermitage Museum remains open all night, people are where their cell phones are, and as Choutov remarks: "Every opinion is present" (Makine 2009, 102).[2]

A modernity emptied of the past deprives it even of the "near future." Gheorghe Derbac has written that in *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* one finds "a civilization that has lost all its landmarks, where its so-called 'meta-narratives' are no longer relevant [...] a society where people prefer living in a kind of *eternal present* instead of remembering the past" (Derbac 2012, 292; emphasis in original). It is only when Choutov stumbles on Guéorgui Volski, a taciturn old man living in his friends' apartment, that he finds a temporally distinct Russia, a Russia of memory, disclosed as a privileged space for "remembering the past." Volski's reminiscences to Choutov

2 All translations in this article are my own.

about his earlier life in the Soviet Union produce the novel's most extended and significant anachronism.

Like Choutov the émigré writer, Guéorgui Volski has a text-like persona, constructed out of both the stories he tells and his calculated mute resistance to contemporary Paris, embodied by his silent response to the noise of the television flooding his apartment. In the Soviet Union, Volski worked as a singing instructor and often used song as a political response. He recounts a time after World War II when Communist Party henchmen, seeing that documents in the Museum of the Leningrad Siege passed over the role of the Communist government during the Blockade, ordered that the museum archives be burned. Volski responded to this coercive moment when free speech was suppressed with a career as a teacher of singing. At the novel's end, he works in an orphanage training mentally and physically disabled students to stage operas. In his past and present life, Volski has stood on the side of words and language, and the weighty resonance of his own cognomen – *volia* derives from the Slavic root for "liberty," or "the free exercise of will" – contrasts sharply with the clownish-sounding "Choutov."

The contested place which language occupies in *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* cries out for a Bakhtinian gloss, which Edward Welch has provided. In addressing the "linguistic conscience" in Makine's novels, Welch notes, "we are dealing with narrators who have become sensitive to the speech surrounding them and managed to grasp its contours" (Welch 2005, 120). Within Volski's narration, the liberating discourse represented by song struggles with the stifling, collective political cant on all sides, while in the world of contemporary St Petersburg, a parallel polarity in the novel sets Volski's uncommunicative presence in the bedroom against the pleonastic verbiage of television, advertising, and cheap mass-trade fiction that fills the world outside the apartment.

By the time the two chronologies of Makine's novel merge – Volski dies shortly after finishing the story he tells Choutov – Volski's autobiography-within-the novel has converted Choutov, denizen of an ultramodern Paris, to the world of Volski's Soviet past. The dull Choutov comprehends that Volski has made something of his life by acting for the collective whole, despite the fact that the impact of his perseverance was severely restricted by dehumanization, tyranny, war, and a culture of suspicion. On the surface, therefore, *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* counter-intuitively evokes nostalgia for a world in which individual effort counted for practically nothing. Choutov ends by seeing present-day Paris and St Petersburg as two indistinguishable allomorphs of European urban culture. But though Makine offers Volski's defunct Soviet Russia as an oppositional culture, it does not present a viable alternative to modernity. Choutov's newfound, substitutive "place" can only be entered virtually. It is specific but unreal. In this manner, Makine opens up and enlarges the

space of exile, inviting readers to join him in an alienated and unattainable historical dimension.

In *Poslednie i pervye*, Nina Berberova makes perhaps the first attempt by a Russian émigré realist novelist to extricate herself from formulaic descriptions of a ghettoized émigré community. In describing the disorder of émigré life – hybrid values, unconventional careers, the dissolution of cultural and political boundaries – she portrays a world that would seem to offer no anchor to the Russian diaspora, and she explicitly rejects the solution discovered by Vladimir Nabokov almost at the same time in émigré Berlin: a private mental space occupied by the obsessive, anxious, super-talented artist.

Poslednie i pervye begins with the premise that Russian culture cannot survive in cities, and Berberova's novel attempts from the outset to solve the Russian emigration question outside the French capital. Her settlers enter the brave new world of the French economy as asparagus farmers in Provence, and by situating the narrative in the context of interwar émigré politics, Berberova prevents the novel from lapsing immediately into utopian rhetoric.[3] The heroine Vera Gorbatova identifies herself as a Russian woman "off the farm" (Berberova 1930, 15). She proclaims to her fellow countrymen, including an old admirer who has arrived from Africa, that "as long as we're not in Russia, our place is on the land" (27). Her stepson Ilia Stepanovich, the "first man" (13) of the Russian agrarian future and the referent of Berberova's title, is positioned to interpret culture outside of normative conventions like native language or religion. As he announces to a vagrant who comes to the door: "Our time doesn't flow like yours" (18). Return to the land resets the émigré clock.

Berberova's displaced community faces geographic choices: Paris, the French Midi, French Africa, and even Communist Russia. Vera's husband Stepan Gorbatov has remained in the Soviet Union; flourishing under the USSR's capitalism-friendly New Economic Policy, or NEP, of the years 1921–1928, he has made himself a fortune from beaver furs. The Gorbatov couple, a figurally rich Franco-Soviet dyad, sets in motion a series of ironic reversals within the novel. Berberova invokes a cliché of Russian émigré fiction, the topos of the "return trip," only to parody it with the creation of a wealthy émigré businessman who enriches himself travelling

3 Indeed, *Poslednie i pervye* is historically accurate. The French Midi played an important role in the lives of Russian émigrés in the 1920s and 1930s. Boris Poplavsky spent several summers on the Côte d'Azur at Le Lavandou, scene of much of the action of his novel *Domoi s nebes* [Homeward from Heaven]. During the summer of 1923, Nabokov worked as a fruit-picker on the Domaine de Beaulieu, the Bezpalovs' estate near Toulon (Boyd 1990, 205–211). In "Argentina" [The Argentine], a story in Berberova's *Biiankurskie prazdniki*, there is talk of Russian workers being sent to the south of France to do agricultural work (Berberova 1997, 14).

back and forth to the Soviet Union. This plot device undercuts the Soviets' claim of Marxist economic equality but leaves Western, specifically Parisian capitalism equally suspect. Like Makine, then, Berberova explodes the easy dichotomy of capitalist Paris and Communist Soviet Russia, collapsing them both into a repugnant materialism to be rejected by the novel's "first man." The counter-worlds for the Russians' rural life in the Midi are the Soviet Union *and* Paris. Indeed, the quasi-capitalist Russia of the NEP mirrors the Russians' nineteenth-century image of Paris as a bourgeois hell of corrupt urban business types, the despised *deiateli*.[4] An early reviewer of *Poslednie i pervye*, Ekaterina Bakunina, claimed that Berberova's novel fosters a spiritual liberation in the face of European rationality, and that this "celebration of the spirit" is "a specifically Russian characteristic" (Bakunina 1932, 258). But while the latter part of this assertion may be true, the principal contaminant in Berberova's world is clearly not Western rationality at all but materialism, exemplified by both Paris and Moscow. Furthermore, any rhetoric of nationality centred on Bakunina's essentializing concept of a Russian "spirit" can only be adopted by the "last," or older émigré generation. The younger cohort of exiles is fast losing its native Russian, has forgotten its culture, and is internationalist to such a degree that it is now uniquely resistant to the nationalist, stereotyping agendas of its forebears.

The chief suspense of *Poslednie i pervye* turns on the characteristic émigré ambivalence about returning. As Judith Kalb notes of Berberova, her "complicated relationship with the past involves holding on and letting go simultaneously" (Kalb 2001, 151). To the Russians in Provence, Stepan Gorbatov appears fat and coarse. But Gorbatov, vexed that his son Ilia is obstinately tied to a future on the land, simultaneously attempts to lure his other son back to Moscow to join him in business. In a mordant anachronism, Berberova pits this Soviet world of NEP capitalism against a pre-revolutionary, populist agrarian ideal – Russian by derivation, but now renascent in rural France. The brittle generation of Russians remaining in Paris amusingly assumes that to live outside the city means to be ill or at one's dacha (Berberova 1930, 114), but Berberova views her hybrid Provençal village as the only place where Russians can create a cohesive identity. Returning to the homeland, remarks Ilia, is the worst of all choices, and assimilation the next

4 In a review of Makine's novels, Katherine Knorr addresses this history of inconsistent Gallomania: "Makine's mixed feelings about France [...] fall into another tradition, one he knows well, that of Russian writers and travelers who were both attracted and repulsed by France" (1996, 33). Berberova's vacillating attitude toward France above all reflects Alexander Herzen, the nineteenth-century social philosopher and harsh critic of the Revolution of 1848. In principle, Berberova would support Herzen's view that the individual can only be redeemed in small communities, placed far from the influence of government institutions.

worst (50), but Berberova goes further, showing that both of Ilia's options are untenable. Assimilation may possess many salutary benefits, including material ones, but the émigré's native culture then becomes nothing more than a vanishing import. As for the alternative of holding on to the notion of a Russia that has been destroyed, the position of *Poslednie i pervye* is bleakly clear. The Russians that have remained in Paris live in slums by the Champs de Mars, and their small children rifle through garbage near the acerbically named "City of Kiev" pub.

As in much fiction produced in Russian Paris between the wars, including the novels of Mikhail Osorgin and Boris Poplavsky, Berberova poses the question of cultural destruction with her depiction of the younger generation. Vera Gorbatova's daughter Marianna loves a local French boy, to whom she speaks in Provençal, and the vagrant deems it unimportant whether she marries a Russian or a Frenchman, as long as he is "of the soil." This reshuffling of Russian cultural priorities uncouples language from ethnic identity, while the prosperous stability of the colony in the Midi suggests that its defining Russian feature is actually the rural economy, functioning in a capitalist market but spiritually segregated from capitalist values. Berberova's stance reflects the notion of what Petr Lavrov called "conscious historical solidarity" in nineteenth-century Russian socialism,[5] as well as embodying Nikolai Mikhailovskii's ideal of self-sufficiency, but her position departs from the populist platforms of the 1870s and 1880s in her refusal to renounce the capitalist economy. Indeed, the degree of labour specialization required by asparagus farming as described in *Poslednie i pervye* would make its world an anathema to Russian populism, not to speak of turn-of-the-century Russian Marxism.

At the same time, the novel implies that freedom requires a complete disengagement from the past. In *Poslednie i pervye* one can "become" a new species of exilic personality, choosing to live entirely for the future. Michael Seidel has written of Henry James's expatriate Americans in *The Ambassadors* that "exiles become, in a sense, voluntary; they cross to a zone of opportunity that readily serves as a metaphoric space for the state of their altered consciousness" (Seidel 1986, 137). In Berberova's universe, that "zone of opportunity" is very real, where her youthful characters are licensed to adopt a new understanding of their exilic positioning. The phrase from the Gospel of Matthew invoked by the novel's title reminds the reader that the leading figures of emigration, "first" in generational terms, are now the "last" people, encumbered by too much cultural baggage to develop a postexilic consciousness. And the reverse is also true. The young are truly the last Russians to have been born in a nation dissolved by the Revolution, but they will be the first to create an exilic identity dissociated from that catastrophe.

5 For Lavrov's phrase, cf. Walicki (1979, 242).

Berberova's imaginative pastoral sacrifices virtually every aspect of the Russian experience in order to save what the writer believed to be the moral core of her culture. To do so, Berberova redoubles the loss, for in the rush to escape the erasure of their present culture, her Russians return to a historical moment – a pre-industrial Russia – that itself has already been erased by Soviet Communism. Berberova begins with the premise that exile itself constituted a story which could not be read in reverse, and how to work "back" to Russia, the object which was taken away, remains for her a question that cannot be answered. In this regard, Berberova's literary achievement exemplifies the evolving debate among Russian émigré artists in Paris after the Revolution. As Maria Rubins writes, "Russian Montparnasse presents an early case of implicit contestation of the idea that 'proper' Russian culture can only arise on Russian territory" (2015, 235).

Today's conceptualizations of nomadism are usually expressed in a vocabulary of liberation. The migration narratives they parse might in turn be said to mimic the equally liberating normative premise of the nineteenth-century novel: incomplete, partially severed relationships which are discarded and replaced with whole, healthy ones. Plots of nomadism often imply an inherent *Bildung*, propelling a character into an alien environment where possibility, and the forking narratives allowed by choice, serve to both condition and free the subject. In stark contrast, Berberova saw exile as a foreclosure of possibility for the individual *as Russian*. By putting community *Bildung* on a par in the narrative with the evolution of the individual, she finds a realistic way of imagining exile. Berberova is pessimistic about the individual émigré's ability to survive as a reservoir of Russian cultural knowledge, but sanguine that a Russian way of life may be reprised unconsciously by Russian émigrés on the land. This transposed land loyalty, modelled on the literary cult of the land nourished by Leo Tolstoy, anchors Berberova's Russian community in Provence. And while the microsociety in the Midi succeeds for very few of its characters, it is not dystopian. It portrays an experiment, rather than completed and ossified worlds. Nor is it utopian in the fashion of Socialist Realism, where progress toward perfection requires a state of exceptional circumstances and vigilance against enemies, both of which constrain the behaviour of characters. In the Gospel of Matthew, the "last shall be first" is followed by the words "few will be chosen"; in the context of *Poslednie i pervye*, this implies a winnowing of the older generation, a Darwinian struggle to survive. But the destination to which Jesus refers, the "kingdom of heaven," is suggestively dropped by Berberova, leaving the reader to ponder whether the Russians' flight from Paris has led them to any sort of paradise at all.

The social experiments offered, qualified, and occasionally exalted in the narratives of Berberova respond to a central concern, the survival of a lost Russia abroad. Community emerges as the distillation of Russianness, an attenuated no-

tion of peasant society which serves to embody Russian culture. Unlike the Slavophiles, who invented the concept, exiled artists in Paris in the 1920s and 1930s speculated about whether this notion of community was portable. The pre-Bolshevik Russian world that lay behind them was not, but the underlying idea remained, and it drove Berberova far from the Romantic "ur-narrative" that both preceded and followed her in the history of European fiction: the glorification of a sometimes momentary, sometimes permanent disengagement of the individual from society, and the triumph of a subjecthood rooted in that individuality. Her narrative looks on exile as a social prison, compelling its inmates to examine themselves as social creatures pure and simple, and in doing so, forcing them to decide for themselves what émigré society means. In *Poslednie i pervye*, Berberova proposes that the Russian emigration can preserve traces of its Russianness only through an emphasis on community. And because it ran against the émigré experience in France, her idea was itself counter-cultural in its time.

Berberova does not describe a completely self-sufficient society, nor does she envision the survival of the Russian language in emigration, but she does discover in Russia's "near past" a cultural template for émigrés' "near future". Makine does the same, pessimistically and conservatively diagnosing modernity as a decentred machine of materialism, an instance where the West has infected Russia and the two have fused. Without changing his outward life, the protagonist Choutov migrates into history, and he does so by learning at the feet of the book's only true émigré, Volski, who is trapped in an uncomfortable exilic present. Makine's plot, then, undermines the reader's conventional expectations about the two principal characters: Choutov, the Parisian Russian who travels back and forth to Russia, is stripped of his role as émigré, while Volski, who has never left Russia, becomes the expatriate.

If Berberova's "exit strategy" for the Russian diaspora was communal village life, a position promoted by Slavophile writings in the nineteenth century, it is not surprising that Makine, whose narrative approach in *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* persistently foregrounds textuality, appears to find his novel's cultural anchor in earlier writings as well. That programme – a paradox at first glance – is Socialist Realism. With few exceptions, Volski's tale meets the requirements of that aesthetic as it was promulgated in the 1920s by Anatoly Lunarcharsky, the Commissar of Education, and codified by his successors. The Volski plot glorifies individual sacrifice in the service of a collective endeavour and, like Socialist Realism, allows for the malfeasance, mendacity, and venality of high officials, while simultaneously holding up the efforts of the lowly worker as a paragon of conduct. In a discussion of clichés in *Le Testament français*, Adrian Wanner goes so far as to assert that "the commonplaces are mainly those of Soviet propaganda" (2011, 25). Those of *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* are not, for Volski directly indicts

the Communist regime's cruelty and misconduct; the conventions of his life narrative, however, do mirror the Socialist Realist aesthetic. The magnetism of Volski's account finally draws Choutov into the true exile with which the novel concludes. On his return trip from Russia to Paris, he notes:

> In the airplane, he feels for the first time in his life that he is travelling from nowhere to nowhere, or rather that he is on a journey without a true destination. But up till now he has never experienced such an intense sense of belonging to a native land. Except that this homeland happens to coincide with an epoch, not a territory. Volski's epoch. That dreadful Soviet epoch. The only one Choutov knew when he lived in Russia. (Makine 2009, 285)

Although Makine's hero despises the Bolshevik era, he discovers that only the Soviet generations that suffered the deprivations of perpetual war and poverty led meaningful lives. On the one hand, Volski's native land has become a time, not a place. But that time in its own way is also "nowhere" – no place at all, since the Soviet epoch now belongs solely to a dying generation. Untethered from their once lofty position as a revolutionary era in Russian history, the early decades of Communism now survive precariously in memory. Ultimately, they fail to furnish Choutov with a place of nostalgic repose. Rather, they destabilize him. On his return to Paris, Choutov now finds himself to be "nowhere," an impoverished émigré hack who lives in a world of metaliterary clichés. Stephanie Bellemar-Page has remarked that in all of Makine's work one finds "an uncertainty about one's identity, the feeling of strangeness that remains in a foreign country, and a discomfort about the role one must play to find a home in the Parisian literary scene" (2009, 111). In *La Vie d'un homme inconnu*, Makine effectively converts Choutov's reception of Volski's oral history into a metaphor for exile. Choutov's acceptance of that history makes it difficult for him to reinsert himself into Parisian life, which exists for him only as a present-day nightmare. The lot of the émigré is "discomfort about the role one must play."

Choutov's Proustian resolution – and seeming solution – at the end of the novel is fatuous and historically naive: "What he would have to write about was precisely this: the 'unknown women' and 'unknown men' who had loved each other and remained speechless" (Makine 2009, 292). Writing about the exiled subject from the place of the exile – Choutov writing about Volski – cannot be redemptive in Makine's universe, since in the world of 2009 pictured in *La Vie d'un homme inconnu*, no one will read a book like Choutov's. *Makine's* book – *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* – thus predicts in advance the failure of the virtual book that Choutov will write about Volski. In making this distinction, Makine morbidly reverses Proust's optimistic conceit about the success of Marcel's writing project.[6]

6 Makine himself has mentioned Proust's influence on his work, and Margaret Parry has acutely written: "We might say that Makine's work, like *In Search of Lost Time*, is above all the story of a

The plot engagements with the Russian homeland in *Poslednie i pervye* and *La Vie d'un homme inconnu* conclude, respectively, with the erasure of memory and with the idiosyncratic restoration of an explicitly *literary* remembering. Choutov adopts the conventions of Socialist Realism to portray the era when that movement predominated. Berberova creates an émigré universe of incredible specificity – soon to be monolingual and neglectful of the past, yet unconsciously following a Russian tradition of attachment to the land which predates the rise of the Bolsheviks. But where Berberova actually invents a unified culture that has forgotten its roots, the elegiac Makine improvises the culture of an implied readership, trained to identify exiles in unexpected temporal dimensions.

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literary calling, and its key terms are time, death, memory, childhood, beauty, poetry, and eternity" (2004, 104). Like *La Vie d'un homme inconnu*, Gaito Gazdanov's 1929 Parisian novel *Vecher u Kler* [An Evening with Clair] also employs split time frames to straddle the past and the moment of reminiscence.

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Arndt Kremer

Vielstimmige Weltansichten: Herders und Humboldts Sprachphilosophien als Wegbereiter moderner Mehrsprachigkeitskonzepte

Abstract: Dieser Aufsatz versucht zu zeigen, dass die Sprachphilosophien von Johann Gottfried Herder und Wilhelm von Humboldt im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert als Pionierleistungen für moderne Konzepte von Mehrsprachigkeit gelten können. Unter diesem Gesichtspunkt erscheint die Fokussierung auf Einsprachigkeit in der Sprach- und Bildungspolitik bis in die 1990er Jahre und teils noch darüber hinaus fast wie ein Rückschritt. Seit einigen Jahren hat sich jedoch, befördert noch einmal durch den Zustrom von Migranten in Deutschland im Jahr 2015 und 2022, die Einstellung gegenüber der Vielfalt unterschiedlicher Muttersprachen in deutschen Klassenzimmern geändert. Immer mehr wird didaktisch produktiv auf die positiven und nicht nur auf die problematischen Aspekte multikultureller und mehrsprachiger Heterogenität reagiert. Herders und Humboldts tolerante und interkulturelle Sprachideen bieten zwar keine Ratschläge für die praktische Realisierbarkeit von Mehrsprachigkeit im Schulunterricht; sie liefern aber frühe Grundlagen, um die Notwendigkeit und Nützlichkeit von Mehrsprachigkeit besser verstehen zu können.

Keywords: Mehrsprachigkeit, Sprache und Bildung, Herder, Humboldt

1 Der „monolinguale Habitus“ im deutschen Bildungssystem: Vergangenheit oder Gegenwart?

Lange Zeit eher ein Randthema der Sprachwissenschaft und Erziehungswissenschaft, ist das Thema Mehrsprachigkeit mittlerweile en vogue: Kaum ein Kommentar zu Sprache, der nicht auf die Bedeutung mindestens bilingualer Kompetenzen hinweist, ob nun aus kulturellen, politischen oder ökonomischen Gründen.[1] Auch die offizielle Linie der EU fördert den Erhalt der 24 EU-Amtssprachen und verfolgt

1 Einen guten Überblick dazu bietet Riehl 2014, 144–160.

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seit Jahren das ehrgeizige Ziel, „dass alle EU-Bürgerinnen und -Bürger zusätzlich zu ihrer Muttersprache zwei Fremdsprachen sprechen." (Europäische Kommission 2007, 67) Die Schulpolitik und Schuldidaktik haben darauf reagiert: mit einer wachsenden Zahl bilingualer Schulen und Kindergärten, mit Frühenglisch und sprachsensiblem Unterricht in allen Fächern. Dabei sollte allerdings nicht vergessen werden, dass der „monolinguale Habitus", den die Erziehungswissenschaftlerin Ingrid Gogolin dem deutschen Bildungssystem mit seinem lange verfolgten Fokus auf Deutsch als exklusiver Bildungssprache vor einiger Zeit vorgeworfen hat (Gogoglin 2008), immer noch nicht völlig überwunden ist. Der Paradigmenwechsel von einer Defizithypothese, die sprachliche Heterogenität vor allem als Problem sieht, zu einer These der Differenz, welche die Chancen von Mehrsprachigkeit betont (vgl. Krumm 2003, 413) und folgerichtig eine „Pädagogik der Vielfalt" fordert (Prengel 1993), ist noch nicht vollständig vollzogen.

So taucht die Aussage, dass Kinder, die mit zwei Sprachen aufwüchsen, am Ende keine der beiden Sprachen richtig sprechen könnten, in den öffentlichen Diskussionen nach wie vor auf – und das, obwohl die moderne Sprachwissenschaft diese These der so genannten doppelten Halbsprachigkeit oder des Semilingualismus[2] als „populären Mythos" entlarvt hat. Er beruhe, so seine Kritiker, auf einer Fehleinschätzung von sprachlicher Vielfalt, sei empirisch unhaltbar und begründet in sozialen Bewertungen, worunter auch das Prestige einer Sprache als soziale Setzung zu zählen sei (Wiese 2012a, 276; Crystal 1993, 363[3]). Zwar ist im verbindlichen Schul-Kerncurriculum des bevölkerungsreichsten und also auch schülerstärksten Bundeslandes, Nordrhein-Westfalen, im Jahr 2012 das Handlungsfeld 5 installiert worden, in dem „Vielfalt als Herausforderung an[zu]nehmen und Chancen [zu] nutzen" gefordert wird (Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen 2011, 8); zwar gilt es demnach, Heterogenität in allen Lerngruppen anzunehmen und sinnvoll zu nutzen sowie den Sprachstand differenziert zu erfassen – gerade der Begriff Mehrsprachigkeit taucht aber im gesamten Kerncurriculum von 2012 an keiner Stelle auf. Zudem wird in den inhaltlichen Bezügen des fünften Handlungsfeldes allein die „Förderung in der deutschen Sprache in allen Fächern" erwähnt. Dies hat sich mittlerweile zumindest insofern geändert, als

2 Der Begriff wurde 1968 von Nils Hansegård eingeführt. Ausgehend davon hatte Cummins 1979 die Hypothese vertreten, wonach ein Kind in „doppelter Halbsprachigkeit" endet, wenn es nicht zunächst bis zu einem bestimmten Entwicklungsstadium, etwa bis zum 10. oder 11. Lebensjahr, seine Erstsprache ausentwickelt hat (Cummins 1979, 3).

3 Nach Crystal 1993, 363, erreichen zweisprachige Kinder das Stadium, in dem sie separate Systeme von Grammatikregeln entwickeln und dann kontinuierlich lexematisch ausfüllen, im Alter von vier Jahren. Beim Schuleintritt habe die Mehrheit der zweisprachig aufgewachsenen Kinder die gleiche sprachliche Entwicklungsstufe erreicht wie ihre einsprachigen Altersgenossen.

dass in einer novellierten Fassung des Kerncurriculums von 2016 und dann noch einmal in der aktuellsten Fassung von 2021 das frühere Handlungsfeld 5 nun die Leitlinie bildet, nach der Lehrerinnen und Lehrer an einer Stelle Mehrsprachigkeit immerhin „wertschätzen" sollen (Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen 2021, 6). Insgesamt scheint die Ressource differenter Familiensprachen aber immer noch, wie Sarah Fürstenau und Mechthild Gomolla konstatieren, vor allem unter der Frage zu stehen, inwiefern diese den Erwerb von Deutschkenntnissen behindern oder befördern können. Dies führe so weit, dass es nach wie vor Bildungseinrichtungen gebe, „in denen der Gebrauch der ‚anderen' Sprachen per Schulordnung untersagt ist." (Fürstenau und Gomolla 2011, 13). Die institutionelle Diskriminierung ist also trotz einiger Verbesserungen noch nicht überwunden.

Wenn man sich beispielsweise die Verteilung der Sprachen auf bundesweit 287 bilinguale Grundschulen im Jahr 2014 anschaut, dann zeigt sich auch in der Schulwirklichkeit, wie einseitig der bilinguale Unterricht bis dato erfolgt ist: Ganze 44 % setzen auf die globale *lingua franca* Englisch, 13 % auf das noch im 18. Jahrhundert in Deutschland sehr dominante Französisch, immerhin 13 % auf die „minor language" Dänisch als anerkannte Minderheitensprache in Schleswig-Holstein, aber nur verschwindend geringe 1 % auf Türkisch (Verein für frühe Mehrsprachigkeit 2014, 1) – und dies, obwohl unter den über 18,6 Millionen Menschen in Deutschland mit Migrationshintergrund allein 1,5 Millionen oder 8,1 % türkischstämmig sind (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018, 527). Die Quintessenz dessen ist eindeutig: „Zuwanderersprachen [...] sind stark unterrepräsentiert." (Verein für frühe Mehrsprachigkeit 2014, 1) 2020 haben laut Mikrozensus rund 38% der Schülerinnen und Schüler in Deutschland einen Migrationshintergrund (Statistisches Bundesamt, Mikrozensus 2020, 32). Jedes dritte Kind wächst demnach in Deutschland mit mehr als einer Sprache auf. In einer Großstadt wie Berlin liegt der Anteil an Schülerinnen und Schülern mit einer nichtdeutschen Herkunftssprache im Schuljahr 2020/21 bei 39,3%; in einzelnen Stadtteilen verfügen teils bereits über 73% der Kinder und Jugendlichen an allgemeinbildenden Schulen über mehr als eine Herkunftssprache (Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie 2021, 18–19) – viele davon mit Türkisch und, durch den ansteigenden Zuzug von Flüchtlingen in Deutschland 2014 und 2015 insbesondere aus Syrien, dem Irak und Afghanistan, auch mehr und mehr mit Arabisch als Familiensprache. Man sieht: Der monolinguale Habitus mag zwar nicht mehr so ausgeprägt sein wie in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren, in denen der Unterricht in den Herkunftssprachen der Kinder als „muttersprachlicher Ergänzungsunterricht" ein zeitlich sehr limitiertes Randdasein führte; aber von einem bilingualen, gar multilingualen Habitus im deutschen Bildungssystem, das von einem verengenden Sprach- und Sozialprestige gänzlich abzusehen versteht, ist man noch weit entfernt.

2 Historische Gründe: die Hochsprache als nationalistische Norm

Woran liegt das? Verschiedene Sprachforscherinnen und Sprachforscher wie Linke (vgl. Linke 2008) und Gogolin (vgl. Gogolin 1998) haben die Gründe im historischen Sonderweg des deutschen Bildungsbürgertums verortet, das vor und nach der späten Einigung Deutschland 1871 sich nationalistisch und eben auch sprachnationalistisch verstieg, indem es die so genannte deutsche Hochsprache zur Norm erhob und alles andere Fremdsprachige, aber auch Dialektale als Normabweichung deklassierte. Wer sich als Deutscher beweisen wollte, wer – wie die deutschen Juden – emanzipatorisch gleiche Rechte einforderte, der hatte ein reines Deutsch als Leitvarietät zu sprechen und zu schreiben (vgl. Kremer 2007, 73–89). Dessen Konstruiertheit wurde freilich nicht problematisiert, sondern als eine phylogenetisch oder besser: nationalgenetisch gewachsene Einheit vorgestellt, als „Ursprache" eines „Urvolkes", wie es der antifranzösisch justierte Philosoph Johann Gottlieb Fichte in seinen nationalistischen *Reden an die deutsche Nation* 1806 ausgedrückt hatte (Fichte 1808, 7. Rede, 359).[4]

Neben Fichte ließen sich noch viele weitere Denker wie Ernst Moritz Arndt oder Ludwig Uhland anführen, welche die Exklusivität der deutschen Hochsprache einforderten und damit auch den schleichenden Verfall des Reichtums dialektaler Varietäten in Deutschland einleiteten. Diese unterschiedliche Sozialprestigegrade betreffende „Hierarchisierung von Hochsprache und Dialekt" (Linke 2008, 49), welche Reichmann (2000, 457) als „Vertikalisierung" des deutschen Sprachraumes bezeichnet hat, hält in gewisser Weise bis heute an. Aufzeigen lässt sich dies beispielsweise an der meist populärwissenschaftlichen und sprachpolitisch beeinflussten Abwertung von Jugendsprachen und Ethnolekten als defizitäre Sprachnormverfehlungen (vgl. Wiese 2012b) – ein Phänomen, das, wie 2010 bei der Sarrazin-Debatte, sogar in idiomatisch-kulturelle Untergangsszenarien des westlichen Abendlandes gipfeln kann (vgl. Kremer 2015, 143–153; Kremer 2016, 66–68).

Ist also das 19. Jahrhundert, in welchem der Liberalismus als Großideologie zunehmend durch den Nationalismus ersetzt wurde, ein schlechter Ratgeber, wenn es um die Suche nach Vorprägungen moderner Mehrsprachigkeitskonzepte geht? Es kommt, wie immer, darauf an, welche Quellen man heranzieht. Denn ausgerechnet zwei der größten und einflussreichsten Sprachphilosophen des 18. und der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts verfolgten gerade keinen monolingua-

4 Vgl. dazu auch Kremer 2007, 55–60.

len Habitus, sondern ein Konzept der sprachlichen Vielstimmigkeit: Herder und Humboldt. Hierauf soll im Folgenden wieder der Blick gelenkt werden.[5]

3 Kognitivität und Kulturgebundenheit: Spracherwerb und Sprachbetrachtung bei Herder

Johann Gottfried Herder ist vor allem in dreierlei Hinsicht ein Vordenker von Mehrsprachigkeit: erstens durch seine These der Kognitivität des Spracherwerbs, zweitens durch seinen Hinweis auf die Kulturgebundenheit sprachlicher Kompetenz und Performanz und drittens aufgrund seiner Idee der Humanität als einer Multikulturalität, die bei ihm wie eine *conditio humana* wirkt. In seiner Theorie vom Ursprung der Sprache als eines zweifachen Prozesses von Interiorität und Kognitivität im unaufhebbaren Zusammenhang von Sprechen und Denken hat Herder die evolutionäre Perspektive neu belebt, ohne die moderne Spracherwerbskonzepte nicht auskommen. Menschliche Wahrnehmung ist nach Herder, das stellt er in seiner preisgekrönten Abhandlung von 1770 *Über den Ursprung der menschlichen Sprache* klar, nicht von Instinkten geleitet. Daher kann der Mensch aus dem Strom der Empfindungen einzelne Merkmale (Herder nutzt als Beispiel das Blöken des Schafs) absondern und sie als Kennzeichen eines Tieres wahrnehmen und erinnern. Diese Merkmale sind laut Herder nicht nur Keime der Wörter, sondern bereits Sprache, und die Fähigkeit, solche Merkmale reflektiert zu erkennen, fasst er unter den Begriff der „Besonnenheit". Herders scharfe Abgrenzung von Bonnot de Condillacs (2006 [1746], 173–180) Theorie des Sprachursprungs aufgrund kommunikativer Erfordernisse hat hier ihren Grund, denn auch Tiere kommunizieren aus unmittelbaren Bedürfnissen wie Hunger, Schutz etc. Über „Besonnenheit" aber verfügt nach Herder allein der Mensch. Der im Menschen liegende Gedanke als reflektierte Kennzeichnung des Schafs „Ha, du bist das Blökende" ist bereits Sprache (Herder [1770] 1989, 29), weshalb Sprache und Denken eins sind. Die menschliche Sprache, die in ihrer Grundform schon im Moment der Entstehung vollendet ist, erwächst also, als kognitiver Akt, aus der Verbindung von rationalen und empirischen Voraussetzungen.

Viele Aspekte bleiben in Herders *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* ungeklärt, etwa wie sich Menschen auf Merkworte einigen, wie sich Sprache von

5 Die folgenden Überlegungen in den Kapiteln 3 und 4 basieren teilweise auf meiner Dissertationsschrift (vgl. Kremer 2007, 40–54).

diesen Merkworten weg entwickelt, wie Abstrakta benannt werden und wie Grammatik überhaupt entstehen kann. Vor allem angesichts der Leerstellen und Schwächen in Herders Narration vom Ursprung der Sprache mutet aus heutiger Sicht Condillacs Theorie auf den ersten Blick fast moderner an, wenn man annimmt, dass dem konkreten Sprechen in kommunikativen Verwendungssituationen eine eigene Kompetenz zukommt, die es zu erwerben und folglich auch linguistisch zu untersuchen gilt. Gerade die Schuldidaktik greift diesen sehr eingängigen kommunikativen Kompetenzbegriff seit der so genannten pragmatischen Wende in den 1970er Jahren bis heute dankbar auf, weil er ermöglicht, Redesituationen an soziale Beziehungen zu binden, und zu suggerieren scheint, dass es eine didaktisch vermittelbare kommunikative Basis-Fähigkeit gebe.

Aber es ist Herder, der in der kognitiven, die Welt erschließenden Funktion der Sprache das eigentlich Menschliche der Sprache gesehen und diese Erkenntnis an einen evolutionären Prozess gebunden hat. Denn mit dem Konzept der Interiorität und Kognitivität weist Herder trotz aller Unterschiede eine große Nähe zu modernen Sprachtheorien auf, etwa der Transformationsgrammatik Noam Chomskys (vgl. Trabant 2001, 5).[6] Wenn, wie in Chomskis (1973) Universalgrammatik, ein angeborenes, interiores System von Restriktionen für die Struktur natürlicher Sprachen angenommen wird, das im Prozess des empirischen Spracherwerbs kognitiv nach Parametern fixiert und um einzelsprachliche Spezifikationen erweitert oder transformiert wird, dann kann nicht nur jeder Sprecher jede Sprache erlernen, sondern jeder Sprecher auch mehrere Sprachen im simultanen oder sukzessiven Spracherwerb beherrschen. Ob daraus tatsächlich Diglossie bzw. Bilingualität entsteht, ist weniger erheblich als die menschliche Potenzialität und der menschliche Habitus zu Mehrsprachigkeit. Es ist gerade diese Sicht auf den kindlichen Spracherwerb als eines natürlichen, der menschlichen Entwicklung quasi inhärenten Prozesses, welche eine wichtige Grundlage für Mehrsprachigkeitskonzepte bildet – und gleichzeitig gute Argumente gegen das Schreckgespenst doppelter Halbsprachigkeit liefert.

Neben der Kognitivität des Spracherwerbs ist ein zweiter Aspekt zentral, der Herder als einen „Archäologen der Sprachigkeit“ ausweist, um sich einen Begriff von David Martyn (2014) auszuleihen. Herder hat in den auf die Abhandlung folgenden Schriften als einer der Ersten die Kulturgebundenheit von Sprache deutlich gemacht – und es ist diese Bindung von Sprache an die Kultur einer Sprachgemeinschaft, die ein interkultureller Sprachunterricht in den Blick nehmen muss (vgl. Roche 2008, 225–234). Moderne Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik berücksichtigt und nutzt die Tatsache, dass eine von mehreren Sprechern benutzte Sprachvarietät – sei es

6 Vgl. Trabant 2001, 5: „Herder is the first Chomskyan in the history of linguistic theory.“

ein Ethno- oder Soziolekt, sei es ein Dialekt oder eine Jugendsprache – immer die sprachliche Ausdrucksform und das Identitätsfenster einer ganz bestimmten sozialen Gruppe ist, wodurch sich im unterrichtlichen Austausch Unterschiede und Gemeinsamkeiten jenseits strukturalistischer Phänomene ergeben. Herders bündiger Chiasmus: „Jede Nation spricht also, nach dem sie denkt, und denkt, nach dem sie spricht“ (Herder [1768] 1877a, 18)[7], koppelt nun beide Komponenten, Sprache und Sprachgemeinschaft, aufs Engste aneinander, verschränkt sie regelrecht zu einer Art Komplementärideologie: Sprachen bedürfen der Nationen, die sie sprechen, und Nationen können wiederum nicht anders sein als sprechend. Eine Nation ist für Herder immer eine Gruppe von Menschen, die sich aufgrund einer besonderen Sprache, Lebensweise und Kultur von anderen Gruppen unterscheidet; Nationalität in diesem Sinne bedeutet die positive Konzentration einer Nation auf ihre Besonderheit. Die Weltanschauungen, Traditionen und Grundsätze sind wie das ganze Denken einer Nation in der Sprache enthalten und werden im täglichen Umgang mit ihr interaktiv weitergegeben.

Aus heutiger Sicht und in Zeiten der Betonung von Heterogenität wirkt Herders daraus sich ergebende axiomatische Folgerung, dass der beste Staat einen besonderen und letztlich auch harmonischen Nationalcharakter aufweisen müsse,[8] perspektivverengend. Man darf aber sein Konzept der Nationalsprachen nicht mit dem nationalistischen Sprachchauvinismus eines Fichte oder Ernst Moritz Arndt verwechseln, die im antifranzösischen Impetus den Wert der eigenen Sprache wesentlich qua Abwertung anderer Sprachen betonten, worauf Andreas Gardt (1999, 91–93) verweist. Denn der Prozess der Nationenwerdung geschieht für Herder immer auch in der aktiven und positiven Auseinandersetzung mit den Sprachen und kulturellen Selbstentwürfen anderer Völker (vgl. Irmscher 2001, 45). Damit ist schon angedeutet, was Herder drittens unter dem für ihn so wichtigen Begriff der Humanität versteht. Er stellt jede Nation vor die Aufgabe, eine solidarische Wertegemeinschaft mit anderen Nationen zu bilden. Die Potenzialität des Menschen drängt über die Grenze des Individuellen und Nationalen hinaus, denn, wie es Herder in den *Briefen zur Beförderung der Humanität* ausdrückt: „Die Tendenz der Menschennatur fasset ein Universum in sich, dessen Aufschrift ist: ‚Keiner für sich allein, jeder für Alle, so seid ihr alle euch einander werth und glücklich.‘“ (Herder 1883 [1793–1797], 300). Historisch gilt Herders Kritik einerseits der partikulären Interessenspolitik und kulturell-politischen Frankomanie des deutschen Adels; sie

7 Vgl. dazu auch Irmscher 1994, 198.

8 Herder 1887 [1784–1791], 384: „Der natürlichste Staat ist also auch Ein Volk, mit Einem Nationalcharakter.“

zielt aber auch ab auf die Vertreter eines übersteigerten Nationalismus, die sich blind zeigen für die geistigen Reichtümer fremder Nationen. „Humanität“ sei

> der Schatz und die Ausbeute aller menschlichen Bemühungen, gleichsam die Kunst unsres Geschlechtes. Die Bildung zu ihr ist ein Werk, das unablässig fortgesetzt werden muß, oder wir sinken, höhere und niedere Stände, zur rohen Tierheit, zur Brutalität zurück. (Herder 1881 [1793–1797], 183.)

Dies schließt die Verpflichtung mit ein, sich nicht nur mit den Sprachen, der Literatur und der Volkspoesie anderer Völker zu beschäftigen, sondern darin auch Kompetenz zu entwickeln. Die Offenheit für andere Sprachen ist dem Verständnis der eigenen kulturgebundenen Individualität genauso förderlich, wie die Pflege der Primärsprache dem Erlernen von Sekundärsprachen hilft. Herder konstatiert in der Schrift *Über den Fleiß in mehreren gelehrten Sprachen* von 1764: „Wenn wir unsere Muttersprache auf der Zunge behalten: so werden wir desto tiefer in den Unterschied jeder [fremden] Sprache eindringen.“ (Herder 1877b [1764], 6). Das ideale Resultat polyglotter Kenntnisse ist ein kosmopolitischer Horizont des Denkens. Einer der besten Kenner Herders, Hans-Dietrich Irmscher, hat es untermauert: Das Eintauchen in eine andere Sprachgestalt sichert für Herder „den Zusammenhang des Menschengeschlechts“ (Irmscher 2001, 46–47).

4 Analogie und Objektivierung: Fremdsprachenerwerb bei Humboldt

Viele von Herders Überlegungen sind von Wilhelm von Humboldt aufgegriffen und weiterentwickelt worden. Der Prozess der Aneignung von Sprache, der eigenen als L1 wie einer weiteren als L2, folgt zirkulären Prinzipien, die, obwohl sie Humboldt mit dem beschränkten begrifflichen Repertoire seiner Zeit markiert, insgesamt sehr modern anmuten. Während die von Humboldt betonte Arbitrarität der Zeichen Ferdinand de Saussures Semiotik vorwegnimmt, hat der von ihm konstatierte wechselseitige Prozess der Aneignung und Weiterbildung des grammatischen, phonetischen, morphologischen und lexematischen Systems von Sprache mittels Analogie Folgen für moderne Mehrsprachigkeitstheorien (z. B. im Hinblick auf Überlegungen zur dominanteren Referenzsprache, zu Transfer, Entlehnungen etc.[9]). Alles Lernen ist Verstehen, alles Verstehen geschieht durch Analogie, auf der folglich „Alles in einer Sprache [...] beruht.“ (Humboldt 1904 [1812], 297).

9 Vgl. Müller et al. 2006, 63–94 (Sprachdominanz und Spracheinfluss) und 119–182 (Transfer).

Ganz eng bei Herder ist Humboldt mit seiner emphatischen Betonung der reziproken Bindung von Sprechen und Denken, durch die sich in der Nationalsprache eines Volkes dessen „Geisteseigentühmlichkeit“ veräußere: „Die Sprache ist gleichsam die äußerliche Erscheinung des Geistes der Völker; ihre Sprache ist ihr Geist und ihr Geist ihre Sprache.“ (Humboldt 1907b [1830–1835], 42). Humboldt wendet sich sowohl gegen eine rein instrumentalisierende als auch gegen eine allzu strukturalistische Darstellung von Sprache. Einerseits sei Sprache kein bloßes „Mittel“ zur Abbildung von Wahrheit, sondern entdecke diese erst; andererseits sei die „Verschiedenheit“ der Sprachen keine nur phonetisch-semiotische, keine „von Schällen und Zeichen, sondern eine Verschiedenheit der Weltansichten selbst“ (Humboldt 1907a [1827–1829], 127). Die Konsequenzen daraus sind weitreichend und bis heute für das Fremdsprachenerlernen und für die unzähligen Theorien interkultureller Kommunikation gültig. Da die Sprache für Humboldt vor allem eine kulturell-geistige Tätigkeit (*energeia*) darstellt, soll auch der Sprachunterricht nicht in erster Linie der Aneignung von Alltagskommunikation dienen, sondern der Erweiterung des eigenen kulturellen Horizontes, was wiederum die Basis bildet für jegliche Form interkultureller Kompetenz.

Mit Kant geht Humboldt davon aus, dass Erfahrung nicht bloß rezeptives Schauen von etwas Vorgegebenem sein kann, sondern stets schon kategorial gesteuerte Gegenstandskonstitution ist. Der Geist versucht immer wieder, bestimmte Abschnitte der Erfahrung zu einer Einheit zusammenzufassen. Um die Momente seiner subjektiven Akte als objektive Einheiten behandeln zu können, muss er sie aus sich herausstellen, sie sich und anderen objektivierend gegenüberstellen. Ohne Sprache und Sprechen wäre all dies, wie gesagt, unmöglich. Die anschauende Tätigkeit der Sinne bildet im Denken ein Objekt. Sinnentätigkeit und Geisteshandlung wirken dabei wie zwei Kräfte, die sich „synthetisch verbinden“ (Humboldt 1907b [1830–1835], 55). Aus dieser Synthesis „reisst sich die Vorstellung los“, und zwar mit Hilfe des Sprachlautes (Humboldt 1907b [1830–1835], 55). Sie steht also kurze Zeit außen vor, ‚distanziert‘ sich sozusagen, und kehrt dann, wahrgenommen und somit objektiviert, in die Synthesis zurück. Doch dieser Prozess ist dynamisch, die Offenheit wird wieder zur Enge. Humboldt beschreibt dies in seiner Schrift *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaus* in einer regelrecht dramatischen Metaphorik: „Durch denselben Act, vermöge welches der Mensch die Sprache aus sich herausspinnt, spinnt er sich in dieselbe ein, und jede Sprache zieht um die Nation, welcher sie angehört, einen Kreis [...].“ (Humboldt 2016, 223).

Humboldt bringt hier ein zentrales Problem des Fremdverstehens zur Sprache. Für ihn ist die Sprache kein Gewebe, gleich einem Text, sondern ein Gespinst, gleich einem Kokon, der Hülle der Seidenraupe vergleichbar. Dieses Gespinst geht vom Sprecher aus, er bringt es hervor. Allerdings spinnt er sich selbst – der Seidenraupe gleich – darin ein, bleibt aber, anders als diese, dauerhaft darin. Doch es gibt zum Glück einen Ausweg. Es ist das Erlernen anderer Sprachen, denn aus dem „Kreis“ ist

es „nur insofern hinauszugehen möglich [...] als man zugleich in den Kreis einer anderen Sprache hinübertritt“ (Humboldt 1907b [1830–1835], 60). Durch Fremdsprachenkompetenz vermag das Subjekt den Geist – enger gefasst: die Kultur – eines Volkes so kennen zu lernen, als würde es ein bestimmtes Individuum kennen lernen; erst dadurch kann es wirklich aus der Innenperspektive seines Geistes heraustreten, der ihm die Gegenstände der Welt immer nur in Sprache vermittelt. Das Subjekt überprüft seine überkommenen Ansichten anhand neuer Standpunkte, korrigiert oder verteidigt das Alte, wird offen für Neues, mit einem Wort: Es objektiviert seine individuelle Weltsicht, es erweitert, um einen Begriff Jan Assmanns zu benutzen, sein „kulturelles Gedächtnis“ (Assmann 1992). Und indem der Einzelne den Geistesgedanken anderer Völker nähersteht, wenn er deren Sprache erlernt, nähert er sich dem „allgemeinen Endzweck“ menschlicher Existenz, von dem Humboldt spricht: dem Wissen um die ganze Menschheit, das jedem menschlichen Individuum innewohnt. Humboldt folgert:

> Die Erlernung einer fremden Sprache sollte daher die Gewinnung eines neuen Standpunktes in der bisherigen Weltansicht seyn und ist es in der That bis auf einen gewissen Grad, da jede Sprache das ganze Gewebe der Begriffe und die Vorstellungsweise eines Theils der Menschheit enthält (Humboldt 1907b [1830–1835], 60).

‚Emische‘, also kulturangepasste Spezifika jeder Sprache verbinden sich zu ‚etischen‘, das heißt kulturübergreifenden Aspekten. Hierin und in dem Gedanken einer transnationalen Ursprache aller Idiome mit entsprechenden ‚Universalien‘ zeigt sich wohl am deutlichsten die humanistisch-kosmopolitische Dimension der Humboldt’schen Sprachphilosophie. So konstatiert Humboldt, „dass die Sprache eigentlich nur Eine, und es nur diese eine menschliche Sprache ist, die sich in den zahllosen des Erdbodens verschieden offenbart.“ (Humboldt 1907a [1827–1829], 112). Dabei ist es nicht der bloße Lernprozess, sondern der Gebrauch der neuen Sprache und der Umgang mit der in ihr gespeicherten Überlieferung, der die Objektivierung der je eigenen „Weltansicht“ bewirken kann. Wenn tatsächlich durch parallele Sprachtätigkeit in mehreren Sprachen eine Relativierung und Erweiterung der eigenen Denkkonzepte erfolgt, dann ist diese gegenseitig bereichernde Erfahrung des kognitiven und epistemischen Grenzübertritts eine der besten denkbaren Begründungen für sukzessiven Fremdsprachenerwerb sowie die Einbeziehung von Mehrsprachigkeit im Unterricht.

5 Schlussbemerkung

Herders und Humboldts Stimmen bildeten ein Kontrastprogramm zu den auch sprachnationalistischen Überhitzungen des ausgehenden 18. und der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland. Chauvinistisch-sprachnationalistische Passa-

gen im Werk Herders oder Humboldts, in der sich diese beiden Denker über die angebliche Minderwertigkeit einer anderen Sprache in *expressis verbis* auslassen, sind nicht zu finden. Im Gegenteil: Ihre Sprachansichten als Weltansichten propagieren nicht nur die positiven Effekte vieler Stimmen im Konzert der Sprachen, sondern sehen im Prinzip jede dieser Sprachen als stimmig, als gleichwertig an. Humboldt verwahrt sich zudem ausdrücklich gegen eine bloß instrumentalisierende Funktion der Sprachbetrachtung und -verwendung, die heutzutage vielfach vorherrscht, wenn das Erlernen einer Fremdsprache vor allem an die wirtschaftliche Bedeutung des Mutterlandes dieser Sprache geknüpft wird.

Wenngleich Herders und Humboldts Sprachphilosophien keine Anleitungen für konkrete didaktisch-pädagogische Konzepte der Mehrsprachigkeit liefern, so haben sie doch essenzielle Grundlagen vorgedacht, die natürlich auch prägend für humanistische Bildungskonzepte und Aspekte der Interkulturalität wurden. Denn ganz in ihrem Sinne kann so die Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik als eine Pädagogik der sprachlichen Vielfalt einseitige, zum Beispiel eurozentrische Konzepte und Konstrukte des Verstehens immer mehr zu einer Wahrnehmung differenter kultureller Werte und Normen zu wandeln helfen.

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Katie Lally

A Home in the Universe: The Curious Spinozism of Clarice Lispector and Stefan Zweig

Abstract: This article considers the work of Clarice Lispector and Stefan Zweig in terms of their shared interest in Baruch Spinoza. While the two twentieth-century authors had several biographical details in common, their writing differs greatly in terms of philosophical approach and form. The divergence in their respective treatments of Spinoza in particular offers a valuable opportunity for a comparative analysis of their individual relationships to thought, literature, and the world at large. When we read through Zweig's and Lispector's textual incorporations of Spinoza, the philosopher emerges as a figure through which these two secular Jewish authors were able to engage with mystical forms of thought and with place or displacement in a world of shifting national and cultural systems of value. The treatment of him in their works ultimately reveals not only the authors' philosophical or ideological frameworks but also the radical openings for secular Jewish imagination that Spinoza offered through his own *oeuvre*.

Keywords: Austrian literature, Baruch Spinoza, Brazilian literature, Clarice Lispector, colonialism, cosmopolitanism, exile, Franz Kafka, Gershom Scholem, Holocaust, humanism, Jewish literature, Jewish mysticism, Jewish studies, Kabbalah, memory studies, migration, twentieth-century literature, Stefan Zweig

The appearance of Spinoza in works of literature has occurred over the course of centuries and continues into the present day with texts that take up his philosophy in terms of content, express it through form, or harness Spinoza himself as a figure through which to explore some aspect of his historical or philosophical life. Among Jewish writers, moreover, Spinoza can be adopted as a mode for meditation on Jewish experience that does not have to defer to religious texts.[1] By looking at Spinoza's appearance in the work of two such authors from the twentieth century, Clarice Lispector and Stefan Zweig – both of whom began their lives in Europe and died in South America, and both of whom struggled to resist a patent or primary Jewish identity – we find radically divergent approaches to navigating the known world that speak to the Jewish experience of these writers in spite of, or perhaps through,

1 This article will focus solely on Lispector and Zweig, but examples from further afield include Auerbach (1854); Singer (1961); Ostashevsky (2008). See also Goldstein (2017).

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their respective disavowals of Jewishness. Lispector's Spinoza is not Zweig's, nor is Zweig's Lispector's, yet the two authors' relationships to the ponderable or sensible universe and their place in it arise in Spinoza's presence. Insofar as the seventeenth-century lens-grinder, apostate, and formative philosopher for Enlightenment thinking figures in a comparative reading of Lispector and Zweig, he grants a manifold sense to the Jewish place in a chaotic world and in literary imagination, with the capacity to exceed prefabricated stereotypes of wandering and nationalism, or traditional practices based on obligation.

Lispector's *oeuvre* is known for having a curiously mystical element to it, though the source of this element remains disputed. Perhaps this is why Lispector herself has continued to accrue an aura of mystique posthumously. This lusophone Brazilian novelist, journalist, and author of numerous short stories, who was born in 1920 and lived most of her life in Brazil, published prolifically before her unexpected death in 1977, and has enjoyed a resurgence among English-speaking readers in the past decade. Yet it is not uncommon for a study of the author to begin with a meditation on her appearance rather than on her literature. On one hand, it seems abusive to her rich body of work, if only by way of negligence, that so much attention be devoted to the fact that Lispector was perceived as beautiful and exotic both in Brazil and abroad. However, by investigating the world of her reception and the home that she constructed and reconstructed through language, one must to some degree reinflict these abuses in order to imagine how her public aura of glamour or foreignness might relate to her world of literature and thought.

Benjamin Moser (2009, 46) writes in his biography of Lispector that she often gave people the impression of foreignness; whether it was her name, which sounded to the Brazilian public like a pseudonym, her outdated and glamorous clothing, which gave the faint impression that she was outside of her time, or her lisp and throaty *r*s – her oddness seemed to disturb others. Yet these cultural aspects of her public image may just as importantly have been tools for fashioning a self that could not be fixed and thus could not be apprehended. Lispector's self-presentation was in many ways an elegant fiction that would not curtsy to an outside order of truth but rather crafted its own. Readers' frustrations at the contradictions in the details of her life often result in accusations of deceit, placed around the femme-fatale icon of "Clarice" like shiny adornments. In a 2005 *New York Times* article, for example, which opens with the renowned translator Gregory Rabassa passionately describing Lispector's blue eyes, the scholar Earl Fitz is quoted thus:

> She was an incorrigible liar [...]. She wanted to be thought of as a writer though she pretended she wasn't a professional [...]. She told different people different things about what town she lived in and when she was born. She wore a lot of masks, and when she would

> take one off you'd think she was revealing something, but all she was revealing was another mask. (quoted in Salamon 2005)

Indeed, this impression will hold true for any reader who demands that Lispector step outside of her Spinozist approach to narration: she is a series of lies lined up, one behind the other, for in organizing Lispector's life stories according to a linear unfolding of time, one forces her to perjure herself. To read Lispector according to the philosophy toward which she most clearly gravitated, however, is to understand each of these stories simply as a different facet of her person.

Spinoza allows not only for an understanding of immanence such as that which informed Lispector's writing and public self, but a relationship to her obscured Jewish heritage that illuminates Lispector's *oeuvre* and its multidirectional capacities.[2] Though Lispector never claimed any personal connection to Judaism or Jewish culture, it is worth considering the possibility that her attention to otherness, so fecund in thinking through colonial encounters in literature,[3] was formed by her own, necessarily Jewish, otherness.

Lispector's first novel, *Perto do coração selvagem* [Near to the Wild Heart] (1943), draws extensively on passages and themes from Spinoza through the main character, Joana, whose amoral and unaffected approach to the nature of the universe brings her into a state close to communion with nature. Spinoza's novel dispassion and renunciation of romantic love reveals itself in Joana's demeanour. "It was always useless to be happy or unhappy," reads the subjective narration as it ebbs between Joana's interior self and the world of her experience, "And even to have loved. No happiness or unhappiness had been so strong that it had transformed the elements of her matter" (Lispector 2012, 91–92). Lispector's engagement with the sensory apparatus challenges the authority of linguistic signification by prioritizing the value of being over interpretation. On the topic of visions, she writes:

> To have a vision, the thing didn't have to be sad or happy or manifest itself. All it had to do was exist, preferably still and silent, in order to feel the mark in it. For heaven's sake, the mark of existence … But it shouldn't be sought because everything that existed necessarily existed … You see, vision consisted of surprising the symbol of the thing in the thing itself. (Lispector 2012, 37)

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2 I take this term from Rothberg (2009), who presents a non-competitive approach to thinking diverse histories of oppression and genocide in terms of one another. In this case, Lispector's tenuous Jewishness can be considered as a line of memory that informs and makes possible the themes of colonial otherness in her writing set in Brazil.

3 Consider, for example, Lispector's short story "A menor mulher do mundo" [The Smallest Woman in the World] (1960), in which a Frenchman's encounter with a pregnant Pygmy woman presents colonial fascination as a vertiginous series of nesting desires.

The philosopher who worked so materially in the constitution of vision held a similar view. Vision was to be found not in ideas (the source of which, *eidos*, would compel one to grasp at some static and eternal form), but in immediate and joyful encounters that cannot evaluate, discriminate, or attach themselves to any object. As the passage continues, the character collapses time in her experience between an adult-Joana and child-Joana. Her memory is sensible and present, rather than a fixed image of a past self that would reinforce the historical narrative of the present self through temporal distance:

> Yet other confusions. That was how she remembered child-Joana before the sea: the peace that came from the eyes of the cow, the peace that came from the recumbent body of the sea, from the deep womb of the sea, from the cat stiff on the sidewalk. Everything is one, everything is one … she had chanted. Her confusion lay in the interconnectedness of the sea, the cat, the cow and herself. Her confusion also came from not knowing if she had chanted "everything is one" when she was still a girl, staring at the sea, or later, remembering. Her confusion didn't just lend charm, however, but brought reality itself. It struck her that if she clearly ordered and explained what she had felt, she would have destroyed the essence of "everything is one." In her confusion, she was the truth itself unwittingly, which perhaps provided more power-of-life than knowing it. The truth which, although revealed, Joana couldn't use because it wasn't a part of her stem, but her root, binding her body to everything that was no longer hers, imponderable, impalpable. (Lispector 2012, 37–38)

Vision and confusion dissolve Joana's sense of herself as a discrete entity. The character's sensory engagement with the world around her allows her to be bound to all substances, at home in their myriad contradictions. If Lispector's novel conveys a feeling of belonging here, it rewrites belonging, by way of Spinoza, into a mode of being with all parts of the world at once. The details of one's name and place of birth, even one's body as a discrete entity, cannot dictate the truth of one's self in this state of immanence. Joana's sense of home in the world thus reaches in the opposite direction of any features that would separate her from the rest of existence.

Lispector's own relationship to a home or origin is likewise difficult to decipher when read according to her biographical details. Born in a small, Western Ukrainian shtetl in Podolia, her family fled after experiencing the terror and violence of the pogroms that erupted after the dissolution of the Russian Empire, and she was brought to Brazil during her infancy. Her early years were spent in Recife, where she spoke Yiddish at home and learned Yiddish and Hebrew at a Jewish school, where she also had religious instruction. After the death of her mother, her father moved the family to Rio de Janeiro. Lispector attempted to keep the details of her origin minimal at best. Of her nationality, she wrote:

> I am Brazilian, and that is that. I was born in the Ukraine, my parents' country. I was born in a village called Chechelnik, so small and insignificant that it isn't even on the map. When

> my mother was pregnant with me, my parents were heading toward the United States or Brazil, they hadn't yet decided. They stopped in Chechelnik so I could be born and then continued on their journey – I arrived in Brazil when I was *only two months old*. (Lispector, quoted in Moser 2009, 7; emphasis in Lispector)

She liked to say that because of her young age she "literally never set foot" in the old country and that it "left no trace on [her] except through the blood heritage," and she was most bothered at the suggestion that she was not entirely Brazilian (Lispector, quoted in Moser 2009, 37, 10).

Lispector gave conflicting information regarding her birth and emigration, objecting to one biographical article published by Renard Perez in which the journalist wrote that the Lispector family decided to emigrate shortly after the Russian Revolution. Obligingly, Perez changed this detail to coincide with her own timeline, wherein she insisted that the family had left many years afterward (Moser 2009, 8). Although she claimed to have been only two months old on arrival, Moser points out that she was well over a year old at the time. Her writing seemed to likewise conjure up a world outside of Brazil. The critic Carlos Mendes de Sousa declared in 1969 that she deals with "themes that have nothing to do with her [Brazilian] homeland, in a language that recalls the English writers. There are no chandeliers in Brazil," he wrote, referring to her second novel, and "nobody knows where that besieged city is," referring to her third (quoted in Moser 2009, 9–10). The fact that chandeliers did, in fact, decorate the interiors of Brazil in the 1940s and even earlier, albeit in Rio's more aristocratic dwellings, does not detract from the fact that so many viewed Lispector and the world of her literature as outside of her own time or place. Yet her supposed foreign quality is, paradoxically, what the poet Lêdo Ivo finds in Lispector to be most Brazilian, claiming that "the foreignness of her prose is one of the most overwhelming facts of our literary history and, even, of the history of our language. This borderland prose, of immigrants and emigrants, has nothing to do with any of our illustrious predecessors. [...] You could say that she, a naturalized citizen, naturalized a language" (quoted in Moser 2009, 10). Lispector's writing begs the question posed by Sousa's and Ivo's impressions; it gives the sense that one is both within and without a system of signification at once. Truth may be sought in her world but never found in any central or static position. The pacing of her language, as the material embodiment of the philosophical states her characters describe, tantalizes the reader into a state of knowing that threatens to collapse if one were to attempt to articulate it. Thus, the reader must rely on a sense of the text that is both intimate and strange in order to continue. In these moments, Lispector's philosophical orientation toward Spinoza seems to crystallize.

Moreover, her uncanny capacity to capture a home that is at its core foreign even unto itself seems routed through, if not rooted in, her family's experience of emigration. Lispector's Jewishness exists in spaces of that which is decidedly and

tenaciously kept unsaid. Like many other works by modern writers of Jewish heritage that, at surface level, may seem to lack Jewish themes, Lispector's *oeuvre* is subtly expressive of a variant tradition of Jewish philosophy that attends to language and feeling according to radically different frameworks of reading. As with one author to whom she is often compared, Franz Kafka, the influence of Jewish mysticism in her work appears in the treatment of language. Kafka's imagination, after all, had everything to do with Jewish mystical practices, even if his most-read works do not mention any inherently Jewish practices.[4] As Gershom Scholem first claimed, practices of Kabbalah generated a Jewish cultural space for imaginative approaches to language. While the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century intellectual development of the Haskalah and the subsequent process of Jewish emancipation across Europe had been emphasized as the greatest turning point in the development of modern Jewish thought, it was Scholem who first traced the development of the faculty of imagination in Jewish literature back to Kabbalah. (Millet 2017, 81). Traditional Judaism provided legal texts and some additional, often didactic, folk tales, whereas Kabbalah transmuted the Jewish relationship to language and to God, offering a system of reading in which the mystic would find all of creation suddenly and perfectly legible. Kabbalah, in turn, was also linked to Jewish history. "The spiritual experience of the mystics was almost inextricably intertwined with the historical experience of the Jewish people," Scholem writes, noting the tendency of mystical revolutions to follow periods of upheaval. "Mysticism as a historical phenomenon," he says, "is a product of crises" (Scholem 1967, 2).

Indeed, the Lispector family had known violence and upheaval. In a rare moment in which Lispector addressed her Jewishness, she said, "I am Jewish, you know, but I don't believe this nonsense about the Jews being God's chosen people. That's ridiculous. The Germans ought to be because they did what they did. How did being chosen ever help the Jews?" (quoted in Moser 2009, 106). This line of reasoning extends to her fictional worlds; the God of Lispector's work is not an active character, but a permeating and expansive presence that is beyond moral evaluation. To believe otherwise, according to Lispector, one would have to accept that God had an active role in the greatest horrors of human violence, and that he had chosen the side of the perpetrators.

Lispector is said to have considered the book an object in which all elements of the story are written at once, existing simultaneously. This gives her novels a dreamy quality, as the organization of the writing tends to be one of intensity,

4 Suchoff (2012) provides an excellent investigation into Kafka's Jewish relationship to language and processes of reading. Kafka's word-games, particularly in his journals, where his Jewishness was not kept at such a latent level of meaning, affirm earlier readings of the Bohemian author's clandestine Kabbalism.

motion, or relationships between bodies, rather than chronology. The excerpts that she incorporates from Spinoza testify to this, for example: "Bodies are distinguished from one another in respect of motion and rest, quickness and slowness, and not in respect of substance," or "birth is movement; if we say that movement is only necessary for the thing giving birth, a thing cannot give birth to something outside its own nature and therefore always gives birth to something of its own species and so it is with movements as well" (quoted in Moser 2009, 111, 408).[5] Spinoza's disavowal of Cartesian dualism and consideration of geometry in terms of relations and degrees of motion influences Lispector's work here in terms of both an anti-linear relationship to story and an integral coexistence of spirit and matter. She forgoes the figure of a humanized or transcendent God for the immanent experience of nature, and carries this into the substance of her text.

Spinoza provided Lispector with a mode for being at home in a chaotic universe. For Stefan Zweig, however, he was a figure of redemption from chaos. Just a year or so before Lispector began to work on *Near to the Wild Heart*, the exiled Viennese author wrote *Die Welt von Gestern* [The World of Yesterday] (1942) – his only memoir, which turned out to be a sort of extended suicide note, mourning his lost home and readership, and what he referred to as the golden age of security. Zweig had emigrated from Austria with his second wife to the Brazilian city of Petropolis in 1940, after living for short periods in London and the United States and travelling through less antagonistic European cities, as his first wife maintained their home in Salzburg. As with Lispector Zweig's Jewishness did not seem of outward importance. Of his Jewish heritage, he once said in a 1931 interview, "my mother and father were Jewish only through the accident of birth," and he regarded himself, in post-emancipation, bourgeois fashion, to be a cosmopolitan European. He was put off by Jewish nationalism, writing to Martin Buber that many expressions of Jewish pride seemed to him a form of masked insecurity (quoted in Robertson 2001, 112), yet he admired Theodor Herzl the man, as evidenced in a scene in his memoir in which he wrote for Herzl's *Die Neue Freie Presse* as a budding journalist.

5 Moser collects and translates these examples from the close of *Near to the Wild Heart*, tracing them back to Spinoza. The first is a direct quote of Spinoza's second lemma in proposition 13, part 2 of the *Ethics* ("Of the Nature and Origin of the Mind"), which Lispector uses in *Near to the Wild Heart* [Perto do Coração Selvagem] (1943). The second, from *The Chandelier* [O Lustre] (1946), is selected by Moser as another prime example of Lispector's incorporation of Spinoza's work. Though it is not a direct quote and though Moser does not make explicit the connection he sees here, it echoes Spinoza's axioms on the motion of bodies throughout part 2 of the *Ethics*.

Zweig's appearance was composed through and through in the form of a European gentleman. Photographs show him in wire-rimmed glasses with a trim moustache and dark, perfectly combed-back hair throughout his life. "He was a *Grandseigneur*," recounted his publisher, "dressed with scrupulous care, inconspicuously elegant" (Gottfried Bermann Fischer, quoted in Buchinger 1998, 331; my translation). He was a man who wore pale suits to the seaside and dark tweed in the city, who fretted that he would appear "a clown" (*Stefan und Lotte Zweigs südamerikanische Briefe* 2017, 108; my translation) when arriving on the plane from Brazil to wintry New York still dressed in white linen, who wore a shirt and tie to his deathbed. He ate artichokes and risotto as a child, still rare on an Austrian table at the time, and remembered fondly his mother's aristocratic family from various cultural centres of Europe switching with ease between languages in a Paris parlour room (Zweig 2013, 30). If Lispector's foreign glamour can be read through her clothing, coiffure, and patterns of speech, Zweig's genteel cosmopolitanism emanates just as strongly from his persona as from his work. Legible, too, is how Zweig's relationship to European Jewry differed from Lispector's; his wealthy Viennese family held an ardour for and faith in *Hochkultur* that would have felt largely foreign in Lispector's Ukrainian shtetl. Language, he wrote, was his homeland in the highest sense (Weidermann 2014, 18). As Gelbin and Gilman write of Jewish life in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, "the idea of the universal is held within the essence of the Jew. Herzl and other Jewish writers thus wrote the Jew back into eighteenth-century Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, which had promoted a universality rooted in the nation by excluding the Jews" (2017, 74). Zweig's home within Europe and European culture was made possible by this rewriting, which had distanced Jews from connotations surrounding cosmopolitanism and nomadism that would in other periods be used to promote anti-Semitic stereotypes associated with capital (Gelbin and Gilman 2017, 1). His ideal Europe is a *weltbürgerlich* utopia, and so his Spinoza is made in the image of a transcendent, cosmopolitan figure.

It may seem a foolish task to seek out Spinoza in Zweig's writing, for his novellas and stories are characteristically dualistic and quite unlike Lispector's in that they follow traditional and chronological paths of narration. Even in his later work, as he tends toward subject matter that suggests a critically destabilized world and contrasts sharply with the more Romantic sadness and loss in his earlier works, Zweig enacts crisis through a framework of dualism. His final novella, *Schachnovelle* [The Royal Game] (1941), follows the isolated and depressed character of Dr B, a secret monarchist hiding from the Nazi regime whose only comfort comes from a stolen book on chess. The book details the games of past chess masters, and Dr B commits each of their moves to memory so well that he begins to play against himself, breaking his psyche into two egos – the black self and the

white self – "Ich Schwarz" and "Ich Weiß." The homophony of "Ich Weiß" as the white self and "ich weiß" as a statement of stability through knowledge – "I know" – resounds as his internal schism and self-directed antagonism lead him to suffer a nervous breakdown and he is committed to a sanatorium, saved from Nazi imprisonment by the grace of one caring physician. Escaping to Buenos Aires, Dr B finds himself aboard a steamship with the world chess champion Czentovic, and his talents lead him to play and beat the champion by using memorized games. When Czentovic challenges Dr B to a rematch, he realizes he needs to slow the doctor down. Under the psychological pressure of slowed time, Dr B begins to re-enact every game he has known in all of its fractal possibilities, driven into an insane frenzy until he slips up in one move and is restored to his own self and sanity through human error. Time's surrender to intensity in this moment echoes a Spinozist outlook on existence. Zweig's character experiences that outlook as mental torture and must be corrected by error to regain footing in the world of right and wrong and the order that structures his memory and mind. Dr B's wrong move saves him from the infinite – of knowing, as we say, too much – whereas Lispector's protagonists are at home in confusion, free of the need to impose chronology for stability.

Although Zweig returns to dualism throughout his thinking, his flirtation with Spinoza does not fully disappear. Like Lispector, he gives particular attention to movement in his philosophy on writing. In an essay entitled "Das Buch als Eingang zur Welt" [The Book as Entrance to the World] (1931), he begins: "All motion on earth is based essentially on two inventions of the human mind: movement within space on the invention of the wheel, and intellectual movement on the invention of writing." Writing, he claims, allows one to rise "above the divided will of nature." With this transcendent movement, Zweig makes an appeal to universality as afforded by the book (Zweig 1983, 7; my translations). This is not to be mistaken for a Spinozist monism, however. Zweig's universality is the universalized humanism that he promoted in his monographs on Erasmus and Castellio and that he believed, until he no longer believed it, would save Europe. As the ideology of cosmopolitanism presumes a moral ground upon which human beings are able to meet one another, and thus a system of valuation that is at its core dualistic, Zweig's relationship to universality through resolution would never meet the sensible immanence of nature expressed in Lispector's literature. Cosmopolitanism is a mode of dealing with divergence and difference, rather than simultaneity and similarity. Zweig treats the book as a transcendent entry point, whereas Lispector sees a story in which all points simultaneously coexist. Yet, if Zweig's fiction and essays resist Spinoza in structure and philosophy, he remains thematically interested in attempting to characterize the philosopher's world.

In an early poem entitled simply "Spinoza," published in 1901 in Herzl's weekly newspaper *Die Welt*,[6] Zweig imagines an individual integrally linked with the natural universe:

> Dreamy, silver night … The black distances roar,
> The sky bulges, bare and gigantic.
> Many stars glow and bright stars hurtle
> Flaring up in the dark womb
> Of the universe that smashed their force into dust –
> And every star was a brother-world,
>
> A world in the chorus of myriads,
> A bewildered sound of harmony,
> And like the wines rich in life's graces,
> And was one day like you, and you, like it,
> In the humid, anxious night of creation
> Woke up craving, from the dream of all-being.
>
> And then its path returned to the universe,
> In which it once slept, germinating within you,
> Its urge toward death one with that desire
> That calls you out today from pale dreams
> To venture out into the star-strewn night
> And witness yourself in the world's becoming.
> (Zweig 1901, 13; my translation)

Zweig imagines the universe through a genesis scene that treats Spinoza's *conatus* as shared desire between the individual and all of creation. He depicts an interpenetrative relationship to nature with none of the fear of dissolution witnessed in Dr B's mental crisis. Even so, Zweig cannot sit comfortably with an immanent, eternal presence, and calls the subject a world of temporal unfolding in the final line, illustrating the ideology of *Weltbürgertum* in the guise of mysticism. Witnessing himself as an ecstatic component among harmonious brother-worlds, the subject is far from being a pariah either in his own community, as Spinoza was, or the world at large, as was often the case for Jewish communities across Europe, and finds a home that is composed of, in, and by him. Regardless of whether or not this representation faithfully interprets Spinoza's philosophy, it demonstrates the philosopher's importance to Zweig's early sense of himself as a Jew, a European, a writer, and a human being.

6 *Die Welt* was Theodor Herzl's side-project to *Die Neue Freie Presse* and more overtly Zionist in theme. It was printed in Berlin, Cologne, and Vienna, and ran for eighteen years, from 1897 until 1914.

Considering the general status of Jews in seventeenth-century Europe, the herem that denied him a place in the Jewish community in Amsterdam, and the resistance to the publication of his material, Baruch Spinoza knew alienation on several levels. Yet from within this lived experience he wrote of existence in a way that offered not only philosophical refuge for future Jewish writers, but a point of departure for secular Jewish inquiry amid twentieth-century crises. His divergent resonance with Lispector and Zweig demonstrates the spectrum of thought and feeling that his work could offer to secular Jews of and beyond the historical moments of both authors, and the pathways that his contributions to the – even if tenuously – Jewish literary imagination opened for creation even in acts of disavowal.

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Stefania Rutigliano

Die Sprache der Überzeugung als Kritik an der westlichen Kultur in Carlo Michelstaedters Werk

Abstract: Das Interesse an der Sprache durchzieht das Denken des Görzer Autors Carlo Michelstaedter (1887–1910), wie nicht nur sein Hauptwerk *Überzeugung und Rhetorik* im Sinne zweier unterschiedlicher Sprachen, sondern auch der Gegensatz von Judentum und Christentum, seine Reflexionen zum Gebrauch der politischen Sprache oder sein weniger bekannter *Discorso al Popolo* zeigen. Der Rekurs auf eine bildliche Sprache und seine Begabung als Zeichner und Maler veranschaulichen die offene und dynamische Art, mit der Michelstaedter Sprachen wie Italienisch, Altgriechisch, Deutsch und sogar das Furlanische, Codes wie Mathematik mit ihren Gleichungen, geometrischen Figuren und arithmetischen Formeln und erzählerische Formen wie kurze, von der midraschischen Tradition inspirierte Geschichten erlebt und miteinander verwebt. Indem ich die Mehrsprachigkeit in seinem Werk hervorhebe, ziele ich auf eine Lesart von Carlo Michelstaedters *Überzeugung und Rhetorik* ab, in deren Mittelpunkt solche kulturellen und sozialen Aspekte stehen, die den Gebrauch der Sprache begründen und beeinflussen und ihre Tendenz zur Unzulänglichkeit zeigen. Den Fokus auf diese kulturellen Aspekte der Sprache zu lenken, erscheint umso interessanter, als dies die Möglichkeit bietet, die Veränderungen in der Beziehung zwischen Überzeugung und Rhetorik zu interpretieren. Einen weiteren fundamentalen Wendepunkt in der westlichen Geistesgeschichte stellt Michelstaedters Verbindung zwischen Sprache und individueller Identität, also dem Wissen, das der Überzeugte über sich und die Welt hat, dar.

Keywords: Michelstaedter, Rhetorik, Sprachkrise, Judentum, westliche Kulturgeschichte

Im Rahmen seiner Diplomarbeit über Überzeugung und Rhetorik bei Platon und Aristoteles bietet Carlo Michelstaedter nicht nur eine philologische Analyse, die als *Appendici critiche* (Kritische Anhänge) veröffentlicht wurde, sondern auch eine subjektive und breitere Deutung des Themas. Wenn seine Überlegung über die Rhetorik als Zeichen einer Schwäche der Sprache innerhalb einer allgemeinen mitteleuropäischen Anerkennung ihrer Krise gesehen werden kann, ist es bei ihm bemerkenswert, dass genau das Verhältnis zwischen Überzeugung und Rhe-

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https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110645033-025

torik zum Schwerpunkt der Kritik der westlichen Kulturgeschichte wird.[1] Einerseits wird die Schlüsselrolle der Sprache betont, andererseits ihre Trennung von ihrer Schöpfermacht angedeutet, um die es auch schon in mythischen und jüdischen Quellen geht. Die Tatsache, dass er Literatur und philosophische Texte der griechischen Antike stets im Original zitiert, überrascht angesichts des Themas seiner Diplomarbeit nicht. Dass er andererseits auch mit jüdisch-christlichen Quellen und mit Autoren der Moderne arbeitet, kennzeichnet seine interkulturelle Sicht im Namen eines universalen Menschlichen, mit Montaignes Worten der *conditio humana*. In dieser Hinsicht ist es nicht unwichtig, dass die Überzeugung eher in Bezug auf einen Menschen, der überzeugt ist, behandelt wird. Überzeugung gibt es nicht als abstraktes rhetorisches Ergebnis, sondern zuerst als überzeugten Menschen.

Der aus einer jüdischen Familie stammende Autor (vgl. Michelstaedter Winteler 1973 und Campailla 1988) schrieb in einem Brief an seinen Freund Gaetano Chiavacci (vgl. Michelstaedter 1983, 268, Brief vom 26.11.1907), dass er gern mehr über die jüdische Mystik und die Arbeit seines Urgroßvaters Rabbi Reggio wissen wolle. Ob er dies auch tat und in der jüdischen Mystik das Konzept einer Sprache fand, die eine Alternative zur abstrakten modernen Sprache bietet, ist nicht bekannt, wie dies zum Beispiel im alten *Sefer Jetzira*, dem Buch der Schöpfung, einer kosmologischen Abhandlung über die Entstehung der Welt durch die 10 *Sephirot* und die 22 Buchstaben des hebräischen Alphabets, der Fall ist. Gershom Scholems Werk *Die Jüdische Mystik in ihren Hauptströmungen*, das die Öffentlichkeit mit solchen Themen bekannt machen sollte, wurde erst nach Michelstaedters Tod veröffentlicht. Seine Überlegungen zum überzeugten Wort stimmen trotz seines geringen kabbalistischen Wissens mit dem Begriff *Davhar* überein. Im Gegensatz zum intellektuellen Begriff des griechischen *Logos* gilt das hebräische *Davhar* in der jüdischen Mystik als Tat und Ding[2]. In der Gegenüberstellung von *Logos* und *Davhar* kann man teilweise die Beziehung zwischen Rhetorik und Überzeugung sehen. Die Idee des schöpferischen Wortes der jüdischen Tradition kann er aber auch aus der Bibel (Gen 1,27 und 2,7) gekannt haben. Die Sprache als Eigentümlichkeit und Ver-

1 Michelstaedter benutzt das Wort *rettorica* (Überlegung über die Anwendung der Rhetorik); Paolo Valesio hat auf den Unterschied zwischen *retorica* (1. und 2. Buch von Aristoteles' *Rhetorik*) und *rettorica* (3. Buch) hingewiesen – so wie auf Englisch *rhetoric* und *rhetorics* oder *rhetorica utens* und *rhetorica docens* bei K. Burke. Vgl. Raimondi 2002, 84.

2 „[T]he word as a moral act [...]. In contrast to this dynamic word, the *logos* is an intellectual concept [...]. The concept of *davhar* is: speak, act, be. The concept of logos is: speak, reckon, think". (Bloom 1980, 42–43).

antwortung des Menschen,[3] wie in der Erzählung über die Schöpfung, wo der Mensch den Dingen einen Namen gibt (Gen 2,19), kommt Michelstaedters Konzept des Überzeugten und seiner kritischen Darstellung der konventionellen Sprache recht nahe.

Unter dem Eindruck der sich bereits im *Chandos-Brief* ankündigenden Sprachkrise sucht Michelstaedter nach Gründen und Lösungen und wendet sich daher den Ursprüngen der europäischen Kultur zu. Auf Christus als Überzeugten und vor allem die Vorsokratiker gründet er seine Kritik an jener Kultur der Rhetorik, die sich aus dem Logos entwickelte. Beide werden im Vorwort in der Aufzählung der Überzeugten erwähnt, auch wenn Michelstaedter klar ist, dass sein Tun nichts verändern wird.[4]

Der Ton dieser ersten Sätze ist weise und tragisch, ähnlich wie im Buch Prediger, dessen Autor unter den Überzeugten erscheint. Michelstaedter zählt diejenigen Überzeugten auf, die alle unerhört geblieben sind. Genannt werden Parmenides, Heraklit, Empedokles, Sokrates, der Prediger, Christus, Aischylos, Sophokles, Simonides, Petrarca, Leopardi, Ibsen und Beethoven – und im Gegensatz dazu vor allem Aristoteles. In diesem Zusammenhang erwähnt er auch die allgemeine Neigung des Menschen, Systeme zu erschaffen.[5]

Diese Aufzählung von unerhörten Überzeugten führt durch die Geistesgeschichte der Menschheit und zeigt eine Art wiederholte Heterogonie der Zwecke, wie Wilhelm Wundt – eigentlich schon Vico in seinem Buch *Scienza Nuova* – jenes Phänomen von unabsichtlichen Folgen absichtlicher Taten nennt. Die tradierte griechische Rhetorik mit der Überzeugung als ihrem Zweck unterscheidet sich grundlegend vom Begriff der Überzeugung bei den Vorsokratikern. Bei diesen spürt Michelstaedter eine Weisheit, die seiner Meinung nach wiederentdeckt werden sollte. Er beruft sich auf die jüdischen und griechischen, also die mystischen und mythischen Wurzeln der europäischen Kultur, wenn er die aristotelische Beziehung zwischen Rhetorik und Überzeugung kritisiert. Die zeitliche Entfernung wird überwunden: Die aufgezählten Überzeugten stellen die in einem gemeinsamen Gespräch zusammengebrachten Stimmen einer einzigen Tradition dar. Bei

3 In seinem Essay *Über Sprache überhaupt und über die Sprache des Menschen* (1916) deutet Walter Benjamin die Erzählung vom Baum der Erkenntnis als den Ursprung der Urteilsfähigkeit, die die Sprache ihrer Kraft beraubt, Dinge zu benennen. (Vgl. Benjamin 1995, 65–66).

4 „Ich weiß es: ich spreche, weil ich spreche, aber ich werde niemanden überzeugen". (Michelstaedter 1999, 9).

5 In der *Konstitution der Rhetorik* heißt es: „Die Wüste wird Kloster, das Gastmahl Akademie, das Atelier des Malers – Kunstschule; denn die Mühe mit den Ritualen heißt Heiligkeit, die Handlung der Begriffe Weisheit, die Nachahmungstechnik Kunst, *jede Virtuosität ‚virtus'*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 88).

einer solchen Behandlung der Beziehung zwischen Rhetorik und Überzeugung als Kern der hermeneutischen und politischen Entwicklung der westlichen Kultur nähert sich Michelstaedter einem semiotischen Verständnis von Kultur an, wie dies Clifford Geertz in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (vgl. Geertz 1973; vgl. dazu auch Ueding 2008, 23–43) nennt.[6]

Da die Rhetorik den Autor zu sprechen zwingt, sind Sprache und Rhetorik, wie Nietzsche meinte, dasselbe. Im kurzen ersten Kapitel mit dem Titel *Die Überzeugung* wird aber anhand einer Lehrfabel, die von einem Gewicht handelt, das hängt und somit abhängt, allegorisch ein nicht überzeugtes Leben beschrieben. Die Aussage „*Ich weiß, dass ich will, und es gibt nichts, was ich will*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 12), die mithilfe der Lehrfabel veranschaulicht wird, setzt der Beherrschung den Willen entgegen. Anders aber als das Gewicht, das nie überzeugt sein kann, und trotz aller beängstigenden Ähnlichkeiten mit ihm, kann sich der Mensch befreien und sich von der Rhetorik ab- und der Überzeugung zuwenden: „Überzeugt ist, wer *in sich sein Leben hat*: die nackte Seele auf den Inseln der Seligen", die in *Gorgias* erwähnt wird (vgl. Platon 2004, 523a–524a).

Hauptthemen von Platons Dialog *Gorgias* sind die Bestimmung der Rhetorik hinsichtlich der Wahrheit und die Schaffung eines Wissens, das zur Wahrheit führt. Rhetorik als Schmeichelei und die schlechte Rhetorik sind in dem Dialog eben als Gegensatz zur Wahrheit zu verstehen. Nach Platon ist es aber nicht genug, die Wahrheit zu kennen; sie sollte auch mitgeteilt werden, und dafür ist die Rhetorik unverzichtbar. Eine solche Rhetorik wird dann im Dialog *Phaidros* als eine definiert, die selbst Götter überzeugen kann.

Mit Zitaten aus Prediger (I, 8) und Lukas (6, 9) besteht Michelstaedter auch auf der Kommunikation als unverzichtbarem Teil der Überzeugung. Der Überzeugte muss ein Beispiel für die anderen sein als einer der „*mitten im Leben den individuellen Weg erarbeiten*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 51) muss. Das Teilen des eigenen Widerstandes gegenüber dem Bedürfnis, die illusorische Individualität geltend zu machen, und dasjenige des Mutes, die eigene Gewalt zu verneinen und den Schmerz seines eigenen Ungenügens zu erleben, werden im dritten Kapitel als Mitteilen des „*individuellen Wert*[es]", der Geltung der Person, „die den Grund in sich hat", ausgedrückt: „[...] *so wirst du und so wird zugleich die Welt überzeugt sein*. Dies meinte das Orakel von Delphi, als es sagte: Γνῶθι σεαυτόν" (Michelsta-

6 Die rhetorischen *Topoi* als Ergebnis eines Entwicklungsprozesses durch die Feststellung und die Verwandlung allgemeiner Ansichten haben eine hermeneutische und politische Perspektive, die einerseits bei der Interpretation der Realität mit ihrer kulturellen Produktion hilfreich ist, andererseits unseren Gedankengang überzeugender macht, weil sie seine Argumentation untermauert.

edter 1999, 51). Michelstaedters Schwerpunkte sind eindeutig Überzeugung als Selbsterkenntnis und Rhetorik als Ethik und Psychologie.

Wegen des vorrangigen Wertes der Wahrheit stellt sich als allererstes das Problem der Täuschung. Der Titel des zweiten Abschnittes lautet „Die Illusion der Überzeugung", vor der auch das Epigraph von Parmenides warnt. Die Zeit als Kontinuum verhindert die Führung eines überzeugten Lebens. Indem er sich auf Heraklits *πάντα ῥεῖ* beruft, kommt Michelstaedter zu der Vorstellung von einem Lebens, das „an *einem* Punkt beharren könnte" (Michelstaedter 1999, 16). Einige Zeilen weiter heißt es, mit den Worten aus Petrarcas *Triumphus Aeternitatis*, „eternità raccolta e 'ntera" (Michelstaedter 1999, 17). Anhand von Beispielen von Autoren aus unterschiedlichen Epochen, Sprachen und Kulturen werden die wenigen Hinweise auf die Überzeugung vorgebracht, die sonst für den Leser meistens als rhetorisches Abschweifen zu verstehen ist.

Das auf den folgenden Seiten behandelte Thema bezieht sich ebenfalls auf die erwähnte Lehrfabel, das heißt auf das rhetorische Leben, diesmal mit Beispielen aus der anorganischen Welt. Der junge Autor bringt Chemie und menschliche Gefühle zusammen: Liebe, Langeweile, Lust und Schmerz. Durch Bedürfnisse bedingt, führen solche Gefühle zu einer „*unangemessenen Überzeugung*", die als ein auswegloser Kreis dargestellt wird, in der ersten einer Reihe geometrischer Zeichnungen, fast einer Bildersprache (vgl. Rutigliano 2014), die Michelstaedter, der ein begabter Zeichner war, zur Verstärkung seiner Worte verwendet.

Die eigenen Bedürfnisse beengen den Menschen so, dass „[d]ie Wirklichkeit [...] für ihn die Dinge, die seine Zukunft erwarten" (Michelstaedter 1999, 24), sind. „Die illusorische *Überzeugung* [...] besteht in nichts anderem als darin, *sich selbst in der Zukunft zu wollen*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 25). Ein derart nichtüberzeugtes Leben, das durch die Suche nach der vergänglichen Lust vergeht, wird durch einen platonischen Gott der *φιλοψυχία* (Liebe zum Leben) erklärt, einen, der den Menschen schmeichelt und mit ihnen sein Spiel treibt,[7] so dass sie immerfort Dinge zu erlangen suchen, ohne dadurch „sich selbst hervor[zu]bringen" und zum „aktuellen Besitz" ihrer selbst, zum „[...] individuellen Wert [...], der sich, anders als die Dinge, die gehen und kommen, nicht bewegt, sondern in sich *überzeugt* ist" (Michlestaedter 1999, 40), zu gelangen. Gewissensbisse, Melancholie und Langeweile, Zorn, Schmerz, Angst, „übermäßige" Freude – alles gilt als Zeichen der Ohnmacht. Die Beziehungen zwischen den illusorischen Individualitäten zeigen zugleich „die Ohnmacht der geringeren Macht" (Michelstaedter 1999, 33). Das ist eine erste Andeutung jener *κοινωνία κακῶν*, der „Gesellschaft der Bösen", die später im zweiten Teil des Buches (vgl. Michelstaedter 1999, 93) als das Reich der Rhetorik beschrieben wird.

7 „Dieser gütige und umsichtige Gott ist der Gott der φιλοψυχία" (Michelstaedter 1999, 21).

Explizit wird die Rolle der Sprache für die Bildung der illusorischen Individualität thematisiert: „Er sagt nicht ‚das ist für mich', sondern ‚das ist'; er sagt nicht ‚das mag ich', sondern ‚es ist gut'[...]" (Michelstaedter 1999, 23). In der Ersetzung der Aktualität durch das Absolute steckt der Fehler, die Illusion der Überzeugung. Ähnlich wird am Anfang des der Rhetorik gewidmeten Teils mit dem Unterschied zwischen direkter und zusammengesetzter Ausdrucksweise argumentiert: „[D]ank seiner Illusion sagt er, daß ‚*ist*', was ‚*für ihn ist*'" (Michelstaedter 1999, 61). Die Behauptung der absoluten Person, die man nicht hat, „*ist die unangemessene Behauptung der Individualität: die Rhetorik*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 62). Die Rhetorik ist deshalb eine illusorische Überzeugung, so etwas wie der Begriff des Fehlers der Erschleichung (oder Subreption), die bei Kant in der *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* auch als Verwechslung von subjektiven mit objektiven Empfindungen und Urteilen beschrieben wird.

Durch die Tatsache, dass die Überzeugung in Gestalt des Überzeugten behandelt wird und dass Gefühle so eine wichtige Rolle spielen, vor allem der Schmerz und die Angst vor dem Tod,[8] wird deutlich, dass Michelstaedter das aristotelische Thema der Gefühle aufgreift.

Im zweiten Buch seiner *Rhetorik* behandelt der Philosoph aus Stageira die Gefühle und legt dem Orator verschiedene Strategien nahe, wie er den emotionalen Zustand des Hörers ausnutzen kann. Die Rhetorik wendet sich an das konkrete Subjekt, das sich von seinen Gewohnheiten, Ansichten und Gemütszuständen nicht befreien kann, genau wie das Gewicht der anfänglichen Lehrfabel in Michelstaedters *Überzeugung und Rhetorik*. Es ist das, was Aristoteles als *Ethos* und *Pathos* definiert und dem *Logos* untergeordnet hat.

Michelstaedter erarbeitet über die anthropologische Seite der aristotelischen *Rhetorik*, jene erste systematische Hermeneutik des alltäglichen Miteinanderseins – wie Heidegger das zweite Buch der *Rhetorik* später nennen sollte –, eine Anthropologie, die sich auf Gefühle und Stimmungen gründet. Der junge Autor aus Görz zeigt aber, wie täuschend die Gefühle und alles, was auf ihnen aufbaut, sind, da sie letztlich nur von der Furcht vor dem Tod herrühren. Der *Weg zur Überzeugung* – so lautet das dritte Kapitel – fängt denn auch mit einer *meditatio mortis* an. Darin wird gezeigt, dass alle Dinge wertlos sind und dass Bedürfnisse unbegründet sind, weil Lebensnotwendigkeiten in Wahrheit keine Notwendigkeiten in sich tragen.[9] Der Plan, nach dem man „*ausharren*" muss, sich gegen seine eigene Illusion „*stemmen*", den Schmerz ertragen und „*die Person die-*

8 Im Text wird der Begriff anhand des griechischen Zitats von Heraklit veranschaulicht: „Der Mensch zündet sich in der Nacht ein Licht an" (Michelstaedter 1999, 25).

9 „[D]enn es ist nicht notwendig, dass das Leben fortgesetzt werde, an dessen Allbedürftigkeit sich zeigt, dass es kein *Leben* ist" (Michelstaedter 1999, 38).

ses Schmerzes" (Michelstaedter 1999, 39–40) annehmen, strebt an, sich selbst als Überzeugten, der seinen individuellen Wert hat, hervorzubringen.

„*Jeder ist der erste und der letzte*" – so verändert Michelstaedter die *Apocalypse*, in der Christus sagt: Ich bin der Erste und der Letzte. Hier nimmt seine Polemik gegen das Christentum insofern klare Konturen an, als Christus nur sich selbst gerettet hat und die Christen seinem Beispiel, dem Beispiel eines Überzeugten, hätten folgen sollen, statt ihn nur nachzuahmen. „Das Leben besteht eben darin, alles selbst hervorzubringen, darin, sich an keinen Weg anzupassen; die Sprache ist nicht da, sondern du mußt sie schaffen [...], du mußt alles schaffen: um dein Leben als deines zu haben" (Michelstaedter 1999, 66–67).

Sofort erkennbar ist die Verwerfung des Nachahmungsprinzips, eines der Grundsätze der aristotelischen Rhetorik, dessen Wirkung so stark war, dass es die Tradition zu einem *Thesaurus* machte. Indem Michelstaedter das Nachahmungsprinzip verwirft, lehnt er einen breiten Entwicklungsprozess der westlichen Tradition ab. Das ist nicht die einzige Art und Weise, wie diese auf Ablehnung stößt.

Auf dem *Weg zur Überzeugung* stößt man auf die Unzulänglichkeit der Mathematik, ironisch betont durch die Aufrechnung von Rechten und Pflichten: „Alle haben Recht – niemand ist gerecht" (Michelstaedter 1999, 45). Michelstaedter führt das Buch Prediger an[10] und trennt die Rechte[11] von der Gerechtigkeit, um dieselbe, die gerechte Person, als Hyperbel darzustellen.[12]

Implizit zeigt er dann, dass das sokratische Ideal, nach dem Tugend und Urteil sowie Recht und Justiz übereinstimmen, ein Ideal, das sich von Platon über Descartes und Kant bis zur modernen Wissenschaft hindurchzieht, eigentlich nur theoretisch und nicht in der Praxis wirkte. Anders als Spinoza, der an die Vernunft als Mittel zur Auslöschung der Leidenschaften glaubte, schreibt Michelstaedter der Vernunft nur eine untergeordnete Rolle zu. (Vgl. Perelmann 1979, 155)[13]

Um das sokratische Ideal in seiner Wirkung wiederzubeleben, wird die Pflicht des Menschen als unendliche Tätigkeit – „*alles geben und nichts verlangen*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 47) – ausgelegt. Die Hyperbel wird nicht nur als Metapher benutzt,

10 „Denn es ist kein Mensch so gerecht auf Erden, daß er das Gute tue und kein Unrecht begehe (Prediger)" (Michelstaeter 1999, 45).

11 „[J]ede Ursache hat zu Recht ihre Wirkung" (Michelstaedter 1999, 45).

12 „[H]yperbolisch ist der Weg der Überzeugung, der dorthin führt. Denn wie die Hyperbel sich der Asymptote unendlich annähert, so nähert sich der Mensch, der in seinem Leben sein Leben will, unendlich der geraden Linie der Gerechtigkeit an" (Michelstaedter 1999, 46).

13 Eine deutsche Übersetzung des Kapitels, auf das ich mich beziehe, wurde als „Betrachtungen über die praktische Vernunft" in der *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung*, 20.2 (1966), 210–220, veröffentlicht.

sie wird auch als Diagramm dargestellt.[14] Die Verwendung einer solchen interdisziplinären Sprache kann als Beweis für und vielleicht als ironisches Mittel gegen die Schwäche der Sprache selbst gesehen werden.

Die erwähnte unendliche Tätigkeit – das Geben, ohne etwas zu verlangen – ist aber eine unmögliche Aufgabe: Dafür behauptet Michelstaedter die Aktualität des überzeugten Lebens. Sein Vorbild scheint die mythische *Peitho* zu sein, die ohne Gewalt wirkt. In der mythischen Überzeugung gibt es jene Verbindung zwischen *Eros* und *Logos*, die in der aristotelischen Rhetorik fehlt. Die Rhetorik lässt stattdessen die Überzeugung zum Mittel der Gewalt des *Logos* werden. Sie wird insofern von der rationalen Evidenz erzwungen. (Vgl. Carchia 1990, 10–11)[15] Noch ein weiteres Kennzeichen für die Ähnlichkeit zwischen archaischer *Peitho* und der Überzeugung im Sinne Michelstaedters ist, dass beide für zweckfreie Gaben gehalten werden.

Michelstaedter schwebt gerechte Überzeugung als zwischenmenschlicher Austausch und gutes Tun vor: Der Überzeugte muss sich selbst kennen (noch einmal wird das Orakel von Delphi erwähnt), keine Angst vor dem Tod haben, Schmerz ertragen können, aber er muss unbedingt – sonst wäre er kein Überzeugter, keine gerechte Person – auch den anderen etwas geben: „2. Der kann nicht *tun*, der nicht *ist*; der kann nicht *geben*, der nicht *hat*; der kann nicht *Gutes tun*, der *um das Gute nicht weiß*“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 48), und weiter: „3. *Geben ist das Unmögliche tun: geben ist haben*“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 49).

Es geht um die Erkenntnis, die nach Michelstaedter nicht mehr anzufechten ist, seitdem Aristoteles die Wahrheit als Gegenstand der Überzeugung geopfert hat. „Denn *sich an ein Wort gewöhnen ist wie ein Laster annehmen*“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 64). Sich mit den konventionellen Zeichen zufriedenzugeben, die für jeden auf unterschiedliche Weise unfassbare Dunkelheit verbergen, wie die *καλλωπίσματα ’όρφνης* in *Gorgias*, heißt ein System von Namen zu schaffen, das den unantastbaren Besitz der absoluten Erkenntnis konstituiert. Polemisch dagegen bekämpft Michelstaedter den westlichen Rationalismus, den aristotelischen *Logos* und das *cogito ergo sum* von Descartes, eine Behauptung, die in ihr Gegenteil, *cogito ergo non sum*, umgekehrt wird. Schon die am Anfang erwähnten Überzeugten hatten darauf hingewiesen, dass es einer der idealistischen Fehler jeder aufgeklärten Zeit ist, zu behaupten, es genüge, die Wahrheit zu sagen, um sie auf

14 Michelstaedter hatte sich an der Fakultät für Mathematik in Wien immatrikuliert, bevor er sich dann für ein Studium der Literaturwissenschaft in Florenz entschied.

15 Gegen die ernüchterte Rhetorik, die als proto-rationale Rede keine *Peitho* mehr ist, möchte Michelstaedter das Gespräch zwischen Seelen wie in Platons *Phaidros* wiederherstellen. Carchia erklärt, dass die Rhetorik, die noch nicht zu einem demagogischen Werkzeug gemacht worden ist, das Reich der Überzeugung sei (vgl. Carchia 1990, 12).

die Menschen wirken zu lassen. Die Menschen benehmen sich anders, als es die Vernunft ihnen vorschreibt. Auf wenigen Seiten werden Descartes, das Christentum und die „Wahrheitssucher" kritisiert; letztere, weil sie sich in der Ausarbeitung des Wissens ein absolutes Wissen vormachen und deshalb kein Bewusstsein mehr haben, sondern ein Gedächtnis (vgl. Michelstaedter 1999, 70).

Der Höhepunkt ist die Ablehnung von Aristoteles in der Lehrfabel *Ein historisches Beispiel*, ein ziemlich klarer Hinweis auf die ersten Seiten: Hier geht es darum, sich von der Schwerkraft zu befreien. Hauptfiguren sind Sokrates, Platon und Aristoteles. Während Ersterer, der sich weigert, den *Logos* der Selbsterhaltung zu unterwerfen, ein Überzeugter ist, sind die beiden anderen Betrüger.

Platon erfindet ein *μηχάνημα*, um sich bis zur Sonne zu erheben, und beginnt, über die Leichtigkeit zu sprechen, sie zu beschreiben, ohne sie zu besitzen. Aristoteles geht als Schüler weiter und verrät dabei seinen Meister. Die Wichtigkeit dieses Ereignisses wird im zweiten der fünf kritischen Anhänge von *Überzeugung und Rhetorik* durch einen weiteren Kommentar hervorgehoben.

In der Moral des historischen Beispiels wird geäußert, dass Aristoteles' System bis heute weiterlebt, wenn auch in neuem Gewand, „bei denjenigen, die *auf dem Feld der Tatsachen die Stimme der Dinge wiederholen* [...] *und so im Namen des absoluten Wissens* jene Stimme ausarbeiten und sich bemühen, *Theorien über die Dinge aufzustellen.* –" (Michelstaedter 1999, 78). Michelstaedter deutet hier an, was man heute eine Verwandlung des dominierenden Vorbildes einer Kultur nennt.

Im Laufe des folgenden Abschnitts *Die Konstitution der Rhetorik* findet die erwähnte Geschichte eine breitere Erklärung. Zunächst wird die jahrhundertealte Trennung zwischen Philosophie (Logik) und Rhetorik in Bezug auf die Rolle der modernen Wissenschaft vertieft. Philosophie und Metaphysik auf der einen Seite, Rhetorik und Positivismus auf der anderen: Michelstaedter bestreitet den Unterschied zwischen Wirklichkeit und Wahrheit. In einem imaginären Gespräch mit einem Wissenschaftler lehnt er die Ansicht ab, dass jeder Mensch, jede Kultur nur mit einem Teil der Wirklichkeit beziehungsweise der Wahrheit zu tun habe und dass das Wissen in Bruchstücken überliefert werde.

Hier wird die Frage des Pluralismus und der Teilwahrheiten aufgeworfen. Die Behauptung, dass das Schicksal der Rationalität in der modernen vielseitigen Welt, in der niemand die ganze Wahrheit besitzen darf, das rhetorische Argument sei, wird von Michelstaedter als Fehler bezeichnet.

„*Man muß sich die Erfahrung zunutze machen*" (Michelstaedter 1999, 80), denkt der Wissenschaftler, der Überzeugte aber ist anderer Meinung. Eine solche wissenschaftliche Erfahrung als „die gesunde und positive Erfahrung der Sinne" (Michelstaedter 1999, 80–81) wird hier wegen ihres Vertrauens in die Evidenz und in ihre Anwendung und ihrer entsprechenden Verachtung der Meinung zusam-

men mit der philosophischen Tradition des Westens abgelehnt. Es geht um die Wissenschaft, aber auch um die Sprache: *Enárgheia* oder Evidenz war die erste Aufgabe des Orators. Wenn man die Evidenz ablehnt, wird die Meinung wiederhergestellt (vgl. Perelman 1979, 67 –68): Wenn man keiner absoluten Triftigkeit der Evidenz zustimmt, setzt sich der Relativismus durch, weil sich Wahrheit und Meinung nicht mehr aufgrund ihres Wesens unterscheiden, sondern nur durch ihren Rang, und alle Meinungen werden mehr oder weniger plausibel. Michelstaedter stellt sich gegen das Erbe von Descartes, der seine Erkenntnistheorie auf die Evidenz gründet, um ein unzweifelhaftes Wissen zu erlangen. (Vgl. Perelman 1979, 154)

Die Erfahrung der Wirklichkeit zusammen mit der angeblichen Objektivität wird von Michelstaedter in Zweifel gezogen. Er schließt, dass die Objektivität eigentlich eine Subjektivität ist. Zum gleichen Ergebnis in Bezug auf die Wissenschaft des späten 19. Jahrhunderts war Nietzsche gekommen. Weil sie keine absolute Wahrheit erlangen kann, zeigt die Niederlage der Wissenschaft ihre Ähnlichkeit zur Rhetorik: „[M]it all dem hat die Wissenschaft ihre Wurzeln in den tiefsten Grund der menschlichen Schwäche gesenkt und *der Rhetorik des Wissens eine feste Konstitution für alle kommenden Jahrhunderte gegeben*“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 88–89).

Die aristotelische Ersetzung der Wahrheit durch das Wahrscheinliche als Gegenstand der Überzeugung und demnach die Anwendung der Sprache als Mittel, das die Wahrheit oder auch ihr Gegenteil ausdrücken und trotzdem überzeugen kann, mündet schließlich in der wissenschaftlichen Rhetorik.[16] Die Polemik verschärft sich in Bezug auf „*bestimmte Worte*“, die *termini tecnici*, weil sie zu einer gewissen Gleichförmigkeit in der Sprache führen. Diese tradierte Sprache, die die Menschen weitergeben, ohne sie im Grunde zu verstehen, ist das gleiche wie eine erträumte internationale Sprache: „Die internationale Sprache *wird die Sprache der termini tecnici sein*: der καλλωπίσματα όρφνης“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 93).

Der letzte Teil von Michelstaedters Diplomarbeit behandelt *Die Rhetorik im Leben*. Dem Tempel der Zivilisation wird ein Stoß versetzt: *Der Einzelne in der Gesellschaft*, „[d]ieser Mann seiner Zeit“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 97), ein Produkt der Hegelschen *Philosophie der Geschichte*, wird mit scharfer Ironie als „die andere Seite der Hyperbel“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 94) dargestellt. Im Namen der „Sicherheit“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 101) erlitt die Gesellschaft „die Reduktion der Person“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 108) und die Rhetorik setzte sich durch. Die mathematischen

16 „Und die Behauptung, diese Arbeit, die sich nur *auf die Mangelhaftigkeit der Dinge bezieht* [...] genüge der *Forderung der Überzeugung* – mit Hilfe der Ausdruckweisen der Worte, die nur auf dem gelebten Weg der Überzeugung einen Sinn haben – das macht die wissenschaftliche Rhetorik aus.“ (Michelstaedter 1999, 91).

Funktionen als Untertitel der vier Abschnitte unterstreichen die Verbindung zwischen der Sprache der Rhetorik und derjenigen der Wissenschaft.

Gleichzeitig begleiten sie Michelstaedters Plan von einem kulturellen Gespräch im Allgemeinen, das möglich ist, weil sich die Gesellschaft auf die Rhetorik gründet. Nach Aristoteles betrifft die Rhetorik eben die Sprache als Grundlage des Sozialverhaltens. Dagegen bedeutet ein „Wirbel von Namen, Daten, Wörtern, Zahlen, allen *Topoi* der Rhetorik" (Michelstaedter 1999, 116) nichts. Wörter als „vereinbarte Zeichen" teilen nicht mit, drücken nicht aus, sondern beschreiben mit ihrer Gestalt den anderen so, dass es für den alltäglichen Gebrauch genügt. Was die Menschen schon gesehen haben und jedes Mal wiedererkennen, sind die Konventionen, über die in den gleichen Jahren Aby Warburg forschte. Auf der *Endoxa* gegründet, kristallisiert die Sprache, bis sie zuletzt, so Michelstaedter, beim Schweigen anlangt:

> Die Sprache wird an die Grenze der absoluten Überzeugungskraft gelangen, die der Prophet mit dem Wunder erreicht: Sie wird beim Schweigen anlangen, wenn jede Handlung ihre absolute Wirksamkeit haben wird. [...] Καλλωπίσματα 'όρφνης! – Bevor es das Reich des Schweigens erreicht, wird jedes Wort ein καλλώπισμα 'όρφνης sein: ein absoluter Schein, eine unmittelbare Wirksamkeit eines Wortes, das nicht mehr enthalten wird als der kleinste dunkle Lebenstrieb. Alle Worte werden *termini tecnici* sein, wenn die Dunkelheit für alle in derselben Weise verschleiert sein wird, weil die Menschen alle in derselben Weise abgerichtet sind. (Michelstaedter 1999, 124)

Michelstaedter erklärt und vertieft seine Prognose mit einem Zitat aus *Elektra*: „... παντα ... σοι ... κείνης διδακτά, *κοὐδὲν* εκ σαυτής λέγεις" (Michelstaedter 1999, 125).[17]

Zwischen den Zeilen kann man auch hier das verlorene Vorbild der *Peitho* lesen: Die Spaltung des *Logos* von sich selbst und somit die zweckdienliche Veräußerlichung des Wortes verursachen den Verfall der *Peitho* und die Behauptung der proto-rationalen Rhetorik mit ihrer Sammlung von *Topoi* anstelle der Poesie. (Vgl. Carchia 1990, 12)

Die Rhetorik wurde als psychagogische Strategie, als verlogene Anwendung des Wortes, als Mittel zur Ausnutzung der Schwäche des Hörers schon im 17. und vor allem im 18. Jahrhundert (Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft*) zurückgewiesen. Michelstaedter ist ein wichtiger Denker innerhalb der mitteleuropäischen Überlegungen zur Krise der Sprache. Einzigartig ist, wie er argumentiert und die Ergebnisse der Rhetorik im Laufe der Geschichte einer scharfen Kritik unterzieht. Noch vor den Denkern, die im 20. Jahrhundert zu einer Belebung führen werden (Gadamer, Perelman und Wittgenstein), versucht er, Rhetorik und Überzeugung in ihrer unauflös-

17 Die aus Sophokles' *Elektra* zitierten Verse 343–344 lauten auf Deutsch: „[A]lles hat sie dir beigebracht, und nichts sagst du aus dir selbst". (Michelstaedter 1999, 151).

lichen Verbindung aufzuzeigen. Die Überzeugung gibt es für ihn schon vor der Rhetorik, ein Überzeugter teilt seine Überzeugung mit: In seinen *Scritti vari* (*Gesammelten Schriften*), einem Schatz von Aufzeichnungen, Überlegungen, Rezensionen und Erzählungen, die mehr oder weniger Themen aus der *Überzeugung und Rhetorik* betreffen, findet sich eine kurze fiktive politische Rede an das Volk. Michelstaedter wendet sich mit dem Wort Bruder an diejenigen Menschen, die ein vorüberfliegendes Flugzeug beklatscht hatten, und fordert die Menschen der Zukunft zu einem Erwachen auf, dessen Vorzeichen er in sich selbst schon fühlt. Das Ziel ist es, die elende Heuchelei der bürgerlichen Macht aufzudecken, deren Kraft aus der aktuellen menschlichen Schwäche resultiert und von der Wissenschaft geschützt wird, die sich als Fortschritt geriert. Michelstaedter strebt nach einem Reich, das auf Arbeit und Gerechtigkeit gegründet ist. Dies ist ein weiteres Zeichen dafür, wie stark für ihn die Sprache als Offenbarung wirken kann, wie alles zusammenhängt: Sprache, Selbst, Gesellschaft, Kultur, und wie vorsichtig man weiterleben muss, um nicht Fehlern, Täuschungen und falschem Wissen aufzusitzen. Die Geschichte der westlichen Kultur, die er in seiner Diplomarbeit schildert, schreibt der Rhetorik eine vorherrschende, wenn auch irreführende Rolle zu und der Sprache eine wiedererfundene poetische Bedeutung in Bezug auf die Erschaffung des Menschen und seinen Ausdruck.

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Eva Miriam Simon

Komparatistik als Provokation: August Wilhelm Schlegels *La Comparaison entre la Phèdre de Racine et celle d'Euripide* (*Vergleichung der Phädra des Racine mit der des Euripides*)

Abstract: A.W. Schlegels komparatistische Streitschrift ist in mehrfacher Hinsicht eine Besonderheit: 1806 in Coppet auf Französisch verfasst, veröffentlicht 1807 in Paris – und 1808 in Wien, in der Übersetzung von Josef Heinrich Collin. Schlegel vergleicht das Drama des Euripides mit demjenigen Racines, um aus literaturwissenschaftlichen und politischen Gründen die Überlegenheit des griechischen Theaters über das französische zu beweisen. An einen Literaturkritiker stellt Schlegel äußerst hohe Ansprüche: Belesenheit, kosmopolitische Einstellung, höchste sprachliche Qualität und Einfühlungsvermögen; der Zweck der Kritik solle einzig und allein Hilfe zum Verständnis der Dichtung sein. In der Streitschrift kommt Schlegels unbestrittene Stärke zum Ausdruck: seine Interpretation des Dramas von Euripides gehört zum Besten, was über dieses Stück je gesagt wurde, und seine Übersetzung einiger Stellen dieses Werkes zeigen Schlegels glänzende sprachliche Fähigkeiten. Andererseits verstößt er gegen die von ihm selbst aufgestellten Prinzipien; die Streitschrift dient ganz und gar nicht dem Verständnis der Dichtung: Sie ist genau das, was er an der normativen Poetik der Franzosen tadelt. Die erwünschte Wirkung des in dieser Schrift verspritzten Giftes war eine ungeheure Popularität besonders in Frankreich; die unerwünschte Nebenwirkung war seine Ausweisung aus Coppet im Jahre 1811 und die Verhinderung seiner Aufnahme in die Académie Française im Jahre 1824. Schlegels Abhandlung weist bereits auf wesentliche Kapitel der Wiener Vorlesungen voraus, ein gesellschaftliches Großereignis von unvorstellbarem Ausmaß. Aus diesen Vorlesungen entstand seine gigantische Geschichte der dramatischen Kunst und Literatur von globaler Wirkung.

Keywords: Phädra-Mythos, Euripides, griechische Tragödie, Racine, französische Klassik, Racine-Rezeption in Frankreich und Deutschland, A. W. Schlegel, Polemik, Poetik, Besonderheit der Abhandlung, globale Wirkung.

Im Jahre 1806 verfasste August Wilhelm Schlegel auf Französisch die Abhandlung *La Comparaison entre la Phèdre de Racine et celle d'Euripide*. Er vergleicht darin zwei Dramen aus unterschiedlichen Epochen mit demselben Thema aus dem anti-

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ken Mythos: Phädra[1], die Enkelin des Sonnengottes Helios und Gemahlin des Königs von Athen, Theseus, entbrennt in wahnsinniger Liebe zu ihrem Stiefsohn Hippolyt, wird aber von diesem zurückgewiesen. Daraufhin bezichtigt sie ihn der Vergewaltigung und begeht Selbstmord. Ihr Gemahl schenkt ihren Anschuldigungen Glauben, verbannt seinen Sohn und bittet den Meergott Poseidon, den vermeintlichen Frevler zu vernichten. Poseidon entsendet einen Stier aus dem Meer, der die Pferde des in die Verbannung ziehenden Hippolyt rasend macht, so dass dieser zu Tode geschleift wird. Zu spät erfährt Theseus von der Unschuld seines Sohnes.

Die erste überlieferte literarische Bearbeitung dieses Mythos ist die im Jahre 428 v. Chr. aufgeführte Tragödie *Hippolytos* des Euripides. Der Dichter hatte im Jahr davor eine Tragödie gleichen Themas verfasst, allerdings beim Publikum Anstoß erregt durch eine schamlose Phädra, die sich ihrem Stiefsohn selbst anträgt. Diese Fassung ist nur in Auszügen erhalten in dem ein halbes Jahrtausend später entstandenen *Phädra*-Drama des Lucius Annaeus Seneca (ca. 55 n. Chr). Von Euripides ist nur die Zweitfassung überliefert, welche bei ihrer Aufführung den ersten Platz erreichte.[2] Im Prolog erzählt die Liebesgöttin Aphrodite, sie fühle sich von Hippolyt, dem Auserwählten der Keuschheits- und Jagdgöttin Artemis, verachtet. Deswegen habe sie seine Vernichtung beschlossen, indem sie die charakterlich edle Phädra mit Liebesraserei zu ihm erfüllt habe. Phädra wird physisch und psychisch krank auf die Bühne gebracht; das Publikum erlebt die letzten Stationen ihres vergeblichen Kampfes gegen ihre Leidenschaft. Um nicht an ihrem Gemahl und an ihren Kindern zu freveln, hat sie ihren Selbstmord beschlossen; ihre Amme aber, die sie retten will, gesteht gegen Phädras Willen dem Hippolyt die Liebe seiner Stiefmutter, und zwar hinter der Bühne. Hier findet also Phädras Geständnis an ihren Stiefsohn, das in der Erstfassung Anstoß erregt hatte, nicht statt. Wütend stürzt Hippolyt auf die Bühne und schmäht die Unkeuschheit aller Frauen; daraufhin schreibt sie ihre verleumderische Anklage auf ein Täfelchen und erhängt sich. An ihrer Leiche findet Theseus, der von einem Götterfest zurückkehrt, dieses Täfelchen. Rasend vor Zorn verflucht und verbannt er seinen Sohn. Schließlich wird dessen grässlicher Unfall von einem Boten berichtet; tödlich verwundet wird Hippolyt auf die Bühne gebracht. Die Göttin Artemis tritt auf, rehabilitiert ihn bei seinem Vater und verspricht ihm göttliche Ehren nach seinem Tod. Mit der ergreifenden Versöhnung zwischen dem Vater und seinem sterbenden Sohn endet dieses Drama.

1 Die Namen der Figuren dieses Mythos werden in dieser Abhandlung in ihrer deutschen Schreibweise verwendet, also Phädra, Hippolyt, Theseus.

2 Griechische Tragödien wurden im Rahmen eines gigantischen Wettbewerbes zu Ehren des Gottes Dionysos aufgeführt.

Etwa zwei Jahrtausende später, im Jahre 1677, verfasste Jean Racine seine Tragödie *Phèdre* vor einem völlig anderen kulturellen Hintergrund. Sie gilt als das Hauptwerk der französischen Klassik. In seinem Vorwort (Racine 1995 [1677], 9) beruft sich Racine auf Euripides; vor allem übernimmt er dessen Darstellung von Phädras seelischen Qualen, die er selbst als Höhepunkt seines eigenen Tragödienschaffens ansieht. Ansonsten setzt Racine völlig andere Akzente. Die Göttinnen, die das Drama bei Euripides rahmen, fehlen ebenso wie der zur griechischen Tragödie gehörende Chor. Theseus, bei Euripides eine Ehrfurcht gebietende Respektsperson, ist bei Racine sowohl Held als auch Frauenheld, dessen Affären immer wieder im gesamten Drama erwähnt werden. Hippolyt ist nicht der keusche Auserwählte der Göttin Artemis wie im euripideischen Drama, sondern von petrarkistisch-reiner, aber unerlaubter Liebe zu Aricia erfüllt, der Feindin seines Vaters, die in Euripides' Drama nicht vorkommt. Phädra ist sowohl die kranke Frau mit den hohen moralischen Ansprüchen des Euripides- Dramas als auch die gefährliche *femme fatale* des Seneca-Dramas, die sich ihrem Stiefsohn auf der Bühne selbst anträgt – für die Zuschauer zur Zeit der französischen Klassik besonders schockierend! Die Verleumdung des Hippolyt bei Theseus erfolgt nicht durch Phädra selbst, sondern durch ihre Amme. Zwei weitere Neuerungen geben diesem Drama ein völlig anderes Gewicht im Vergleich zu Euripides' Werk, nämlich einerseits Phädras rasende Eifersucht, als sie von Hippolyts Liebe zu Aricia erfährt, andererseits ihre Läuterung am Ende des Dramas: Sie selbst gesteht ihrem Gemahl vor ihrem Selbstmord durch Gift die Wahrheit und rehabilitiert ihren Stiefsohn.

Racines Drama wurde in Frankreich seit dem Jahr seiner Erstaufführung immer wieder mit dem des Euripides verglichen, wobei fast ausnahmslos das griechische über das französische Drama gestellt wurde.[3] Diese Überlegenheit erklärte man mit dem kulturellen Hintergrund: Das heroische griechische Publikum des Zeitalters der attischen Demokratie wurde dem verweichlichten französischen Pu-

3 Bereits im Jahre 1677 gab ein anonymer Kritiker in seiner Abhandlung *Dissertation sur les tragédies de Phèdre et Hippolyte* Euripides den Vorzug vor Racine. (Vgl. Simon 2014, 114) Voltaire hingegen war der Auffassung, den griechischen Dramen fehle wegen der noch unaufgeklärten Zeit, in der sie verfasst wurden, die Vollkommenheit. (Vgl. Simon 2014, 185) Gegen solche Angriffe verteidigte Louis Racine, der Sohn des Dichters, die griechischen Tragiker: In seiner *Comparaison de l'Hippolyte d'Euripide avec la Tragédie de Racine sur le meme sujet* (1728) betonte er gerade die Zeitlosigkeit des Euripides; er sah in beiden Dramen gleichwertige Meisterwerke. Die Gleichwertigkeit der französischen und der antiken Dramen stellte Pierre Brumoy in seinem gigantischen Werk *Le Théâtre des Grecs* (1730) dar. In der Absicht, Begeisterung für griechische Dramen zu wecken, übersetzte und kommentierte er diese und verglich sie mit den entsprechenden Versionen Racines oder Corneilles. Damit prägte Brumoy die Einstellung zur griechischen Tragödie in ganz Europa: Sie galt seitdem als der französischen überlegen. Besonders scharf wurde Racine kritisiert von Pierre Batteux in seiner Abhandlung *Observations sur L'Hippolyte d'Euripide et la*

blikum des Zeitalters Louis XIV gegenübergestellt. Diesen gesellschaftlichen Voraussetzungen entspreche der Inhalt der Tragödie: Die griechische handle von Themen wie etwa dem Umsturz von Staaten oder von großen Gefühlen; galante Liebe hingegen hätten die stolzen Griechen für einer Tragödie unwürdig gehalten – im Gegensatz zu den verdorbenen Franzosen, bei denen sie den Großteil des Inhalts ausmache. Dadurch werde die Tragödie herabgewürdigt. Racines Werk wurde also vom moralischen Standpunkt aus verurteilt; außerdem sprach man ihm Authentizität und tragische Wahrheit ab: Racines bewusste Veränderungen von Euripides' Tragödie wurden als missglückte Nachahmung abqualifiziert, die Modernisierung der mythischen Figuren als Verharmlosung und als Anbiederung an den Zeitgeist getadelt.

Diese Topoi der französischen Racine-Kritik wurden im Deutschland des 18. Jahrhunderts von Lessing und von den Dichtern des Sturm und Drang übernommen. Die deutsche Kultur war zu dieser Zeit völlig an Frankreich orientiert; besonders das Theater war Gegenstand heißer Diskussionen unter Dramatikern und Theaterkritikern, „deren Heftigkeit und Gründlichkeit allein schon den Erfolg der französischen Bühnenkunst in Deutschland erkennen lassen." (Bloch 1968, 70) Geradezu paradox wirkt die Einstellung zur klassischen französischen Tragödie bei Lessing und Schiller: einerseits völlige Ablehnung, andererseits Übereinstimmung mit Racine in wesentlichen Aspekten – sowohl in der Auffassung von dramatischer Kunst als auch in der dichterischen Praxis. In Schillers Dramen finden sich alle bedeutenden Charakteristika von Racines Werk. Von daher ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass Schillers letztes Werk, das er im Jahre 1805 vollendete – schwer krank und im Bewusstsein seines nahen Todes –, eine Übersetzung von Racines *Phèdre* war. Wohl auf Grund seiner künstlerischen Wesensverwandtschaft mit Racine wurde sie eine der besten Übersetzungen im deutschen Sprachraum. (Vgl. Simon 2014, Kap. 7.2, 213–229)

Etwa ein Jahr nach dieser Übersetzung, im Jahre 1806, verfasste August Wilhelm Schlegel auf Französisch die Abhandlung *La Comparaison entre la Phèdre de Racine et celle d'Euripide;* sie wurde 1807 in Paris veröffentlicht und 1808 in Wien von dem berühmten Dramatiker Heinrich Josef Collin ins Deutsche übersetzt unter dem Titel *Vergleichung der Phädra des Racine mit der des Euripides.* Schlegel vergleicht darin Charaktere und Handlungsführung der beiden Dramen, um

Phèdre de Racine aus dem Jahre 1776, auf die sich später Schlegel in seiner Phädra-Schrift berufen wird. Auch Denis Diderot und Jean-Jacques Rousseau äußerten sich immer wieder abfällig über Racine; diesen verächtlichen Ton verstärkte noch Rousseaus begeisterter Schüler Louis-Sébastien Mercier in seiner Abhandlung *Du théâtre ou Nouvel Essai sur l'art dramatique* (1773), welche Goethe übersetzen und kommentieren ließ. Mercier fand seine eigenen Ideen mit großer Genugtuung später in Schlegels Schrift wieder. (Vgl. Simon 2014, 193–201)

nicht nur die Überlegenheit des euripideischen Werkes über das Racines, sondern auch des griechischen Theaters über das französische und sogar die Überlegenheit des Zeitalters des Euripides über dasjenige des Racine aufzuzeigen:

> Da wir nun einerseits wissen, daß Euripides der Lieblingsdichter seiner Zeitgenossen war, andererseits zuzugeben genöthiget sind, daß Racine der geschickteste und in der hergebrachten Übung der Französischen Bühne gewandteste Autor sey, der in seinem gebildeten Geiste die hervorstechendsten, feinsten Züge des Jahrhunderts Ludwigs des XIV vereinigte, so wird unsere Vergleichung des Originals mit der Nachahmung nothwendig ein indirectes Urtheil über den vergleichungsweisen Werth der Zeitalter, worin Euripides und Racine lebten, enthalten. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 119–120)

Schlegel wiederholt also lediglich, komprimiert auf wenigen Seiten, die in Frankreich und Deutschland seit siebzig Jahren gängigen Klischees. Allerdings waren die politischen Zustände andere geworden: Für Napoleon war die Zeit Ludwigs XIV. die Blüte von Frankreichs Geschichte und Racine deren Inbegriff, so dass ein Angriff auf diesen Dichter als Angriff nicht nur auf die französische Literatur, sondern auf die Nation angesehen wurde – noch dazu von einem Deutschen! Tatsächlich ist es Schlegels Absicht, sich mit dieser Abhandlung „alle Parisischen schönen Geister auf den Leib zu hetzen“ sowie den Patriotismus der Deutschen zu wecken und „jeden Funken von Nationalgefühl, der irgendwo schlummern mag, anzufachen.“ (Brief an Gräfin Luise von Voß, 20. Juni 1807; vgl. Schlegel 1930, 200) Also Komparatistik als Provokation!

Dennoch hat Schlegels Ablehnung von Racine nicht nur politische Gründe, sondern beruht auf seiner platonisch-idealistischen Auffassung vom Wesen der Tragödie; sie ist Grundlage für die Wertung der beiden verglichenen Dramen.[4] Dadurch, dass Schlegel seine Auffassung von Tragödie in der Phädra-Schrift knapp, aber umfassend und mit dem Anspruch auf Allgemeingültigkeit erläutert, erhält sie den Rang einer Poetik – der letzte Satz seiner Schrift lautet ja, sie solle „zu fruchtbaren Ideen für die dramatische Kunst führen“. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 214) Tragödie erhebe „mehr als jede Dichtungsart auf Idealität der Charaktere Anspruch“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 185), denn ihr Wesen sei „entweder das durch große Vorbilder erregte Gefühl der Menschenwürde oder die Spur einer übernatürlichen Ordnung der Dinge“. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 184) Die griechische Tragödie in Schlegels Deutung

4 Während Brumoy, Batteux und Lessing die Überlegenheit der griechischen Tragödie über die französische mit der *Poetik* des Aristoteles begründeten, ist Schlegel der Ansicht, dass dieser den wahren Geist der Tragödie „ganz und gar nicht faßte“. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 118) Von den antiken Philosophen habe einzig Platon „die Idee des Schönen nicht durch Zergliederung, wie es nimmer möglich ist, sondern durch anschauende Begeisterung erfaßt“. (Schlegel 1967 [1811], 15) Mit dieser Auffassung stellt Schlegel die seit mehr als einem halben Jahrhundert verbreiteten Topoi auf eine völlig neue theoretische Basis.

entspricht seinem ethischen Ideal: Der Mensch sei ohne Schutz einer Gottheit oder der göttlichen Vorsehung völlig auf sich allein gestellt. Gerade dadurch werde seine Würde „gleichsam der übernatürlichen Ordnung der Dinge zum Trotz aufrecht erhalten“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 191), und zwar dank seiner „moralische[n] Freyheit“, mit der er sich bei all den äußeren Widrigkeiten ein „inneres Heiligthum in der Seele“ bewahrt. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 191) Der französischen Tragödie fehle hingegen dieses philosophische Fundament. Bei der Nachahmung der griechischen Tragödie würden sich die französischen Dichter lediglich an die äußere Form halten und danach streben, starre Regeln zu erfüllen, also „mit Beobachtung der Zeit, des Ortes und der andern herkömmlichen theatralischen Gesetze das Ganze in den gewohnten Rahmen der fünf Acte zu pressen.“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 196)

Damit es zum dramatischen Konflikt komme, müsse es auch verbrecherische Charaktere geben. Diese dürfen jedoch nicht „durch Schwachheit und immerwährendes Wanken“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 141) noch mehr moralisch absinken, sondern müssen vielmehr „von starker Natur seyn“, weil „die Wesenheit der Ehre in einem immer makelfreyen Willen besteht.“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 141–142) Die Phädra des Euripides habe „einen hinreichend energischen Charakter“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 142) und sei „keinen Augenblick über das, was sie zu thun habe, unschlüssig“. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 127) Damit wird sie in jeder Hinsicht Schlegels Forderung nach Stärke und Entschlossenheit für einen verbrecherischen Charakter gerecht – im Gegensatz zu Racines Phädra, deren Handeln von Schwäche und Unentschlossenheit geprägt sei, da sie ihren im ersten Akt geplanten Selbstmord erst am Ende der Tragödie ausführe: „Der Tod der Phädra zögert, und hat weder das Verdienst des Muthes, noch einige Würde; er wird zu einem peinlichen Schauspiele [...].“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 140) Dies ist unvereinbar mit Schlegels ethischem Ideal.

Neben diesem ethischen Ideal, das „einem Kant Ehre gemacht hätte“ (Schmidt-Dengler 2006, 371), gibt es für Schlegel noch das ästhetische. Dieses ist nach Winckelmann gebildet. Der Hippolyt des Euripides ist geradezu die Verkörperung dieses Ideals, denn er erinnert an die vollendeten bildlichen Darstellungen des Altertums:

> Winckelmann sagt, daß unser Geist bey dem Anblicke dieser erhabenen Wesen selbst einen übernatürlichen Schwung nehme, unsere Brust sich erweitere, und ein Theil ihrer so starken und so harmonischen Existenz auf uns überzugehen scheine. Etwas von dem empfinde ich bei Betrachtung des Hippolyt, wie ihn Euripides malte. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 153)

Bei Racine hingegen sei Hippolyt ein „unbedeutender Mensch, ohne emporstrebende eigenthümliche Kraft.“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 150) Besonders seine Liebe zu Aricia, die ja auch in der französischen Racine-Kritik am meisten getadelt wurde, sei „ein Zug, der seinen Charakter verfälscht und ihn zu der großen Zahl der seufzenden und galanten Helden der Französischen Tragödie gesellet.“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 139)

Schließlich vertritt Schlegel die neoplatonische Ansicht, dass die Dichter der Antike „oft die christlichen Gesinnungen erriethen“. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 210) In der Sterbeszene des Hippolyt bei Euripides sieht Schlegel geradezu „Züge eines Erlösungsdramas“. (Schmidt-Dengler 2006, 372) Er übersetzt sie aus dem Griechischen und rühmt sie in hymnischen Tönen:

> Der sterbende Hippolyt ist von allen möglichen Tröstungen umringt. Sein Vater, voll Reue und Verzweifelung, zeigt ihm eine schrankenlose Zärtlichkeit; eine Göttinn tröstet, beklagt ihn und verspricht ihm die unsterblichen Ehren des Helden. Wahrlich ein so lebendiges Bild der ewigen Glückseligkeit im Tausche mit einer vorübergehenden Existenz als die Religion der Alten nur liefern konnte! Was setzt Racine an die Stelle dieser Schönheiten? Nichts, durchaus nichts. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 210–211)

Dieser Wertung entspricht Schlegels Gesamturteil: begeisterte Zustimmung für das Drama des Euripides, völlige Ablehnung von dem Racines:

> Durch die vorher gegangene Prüfung sahen wir, daß der neuere Dichter die vorzüglichsten Charaktere zu ihrem Nachtheile veränderte, sie nicht nur in ihrem moralischen Werthe herab setzte, sondern auch ihre Kraft und Größe, die sich mit dem Laster noch immer vertragen, schwächte, daß er sie ferner jener idealen Schönheit beraubte, welche den Reiz der alten Meisterstücke ausmacht, und uns gleichsam in die Mitte eines edleren und fast göttlichen Geschlechtes führt. (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 177)

Schlegels Interpretation von Euripides’ Drama in dieser Abhandlung ist unübertroffen: „niemand hat besser als er die Schönheit des Charakters des Hippolyt im griechischen Stück zum Ausdruck gebracht.“ (Mesnard 1865, 282 [meine Übersetzung])

Als Literaturkritiker leistete Schlegel Bahnbrechendes, vor allem durch seine Rezensionstätigkeit für Literaturzeitschriften etwa ein Jahrzehnt vor seiner Phädra-Schrift.[5] Sogar sein respektloser Schüler Heinrich Heine erkennt Schlegels unbestrittene Meisterschaft auf dem Gebiet der „reproduzierenden Kritik“ an, „wo die Schönheiten eines Kunstwerks veranschaulicht werden, wo es auf ein feines Herausfühlen der Eigentümlichkeiten ankam, wo diese zum Verständnis gebracht werden mußten“. (Heine 2002 [1836], 24–25)

An einen Literaturkritiker stellt Schlegel äußerst hohe Ansprüche. Er solle gewissermaßen Mittler zwischen dem Kunstwerk und dem Publikum sein, denn der

5 Schlegel war geradezu ein Universalgenie. Er beherrschte fast alle lebenden europäischen Sprachen: Er übertrug Dante und Calderón; seine Shakespeare-Übertragung ist eine der größten Leistungen auf dem Gebiet der Übersetzungskunst überhaupt. Als glänzender Altphilologe war er des Lateinischen und Griechischen mächtig; mit seinen Sanskritstudien begründete er die altindische Philologie und übertrug das Ramayana ins Lateinische; auch beschäftigte er sich mit altfranzösischer Lyrik. Außerdem war Schlegel ein großartiger Metriker, der mehrmals von Goethe konsultiert wurde. (Vgl. Simon 2014, 258–261)

Zweck einer Kritik sei einzig und allein, dem Publikum die Dichtung nahezubringen. Daher müsse eine kritische Arbeit eine sprachlich vollendete Form haben. Gerade Schlegels glänzende Fähigkeit, Ideen anderer aufzugreifen und so auszudrücken, dass sie den Leser fesseln, war ja auch ein Grund dafür, dass die Phädra-Schrift derartiges Aufsehen erregt hat. Von einem Literaturkritiker fordert Schlegel außerdem sowohl umfassendes Wissen, um den kulturellen und historischen Hintergrund der Werke zu kennen, als auch großes Einfühlungsvermögen, um in das Wesen eines Kunstwerks einzudringen. Auf den Gesamteindruck eines Kunstwerks komme es an, daher müsse man das Einzelne nur im Zusammenhang mit dem Ganzen sehen; vehement lehnt Schlegel die, wie er sie nennt, „atomistische Kritik" ab, die sich lediglich Einzelheiten herausgreift und somit eine Dichtung „wie ein Mosaik, wie eine mühsame Zusammenfügung todter Partikelchen betrachtet." (Schlegel 1884, 25) Da schließlich das Vollkommene gerade im Bereich der Kunst nicht auf eine Nation oder auf einen Zeitraum beschränkt sei, solle der Literaturkritiker „keiner Nation besonders angehören, oder doch einer weltbürgerlichen, und selbst ein Weltbürger sein." (Schlegel 1846, 304)

Allerdings zeigt bereits die chauvinistische Absicht, die Schlegel mit der Phädra-Schrift verfolgt, dass es sich dabei um das Gegenteil von einfühlsamer Kritik eines Kosmopoliten handelt, der dem Publikum das Drama nahebringen möchte. Schlegel erweist sich vielmehr als ein Kritiker, der, wie der französische Racine-Herausgeber Paul Mesnard feststellt, „fast immer in seinen Urteilen über die tragische Kunst einen durchdringenden Scharfsinn beweist, aber dessen überlegener Geist, wenn es sich um unsere Dichter handelte, von einem allzu patriotischen Misogallismus verblendet war." (Mesnard 1865, 282 [meine Übersetzung]) Auffallend ist seine respektlose Art dem Drama Racines gegenüber, besonders der ironische Tonfall wie etwa seine rhetorischen Fragen: „Wusste er denn nicht" (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 148) oder „hat denn Racine die allgemeine Regel der Rechte und der Moral vergessen?" (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 143) Dem französischen Dichter wird wahre Tragik abgesprochen, Schlegel sieht in ihm lediglich den Dichter oberflächlicher Liebe: „Racine's Muse war die Galanterie; die Mehrzahl seiner Stücke schrieb er nur, um liebenswürdige Frauen und den Eindruck darzustellen, den sie auf Männerherzen machen." (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 148)

Häufig missachtet Schlegel die Funktion, die gewisse Elemente im Drama haben: Die mehrfache Gesinnungsänderung von Phädras Amme etwa empfindet er als unlogisch, obwohl sie doch jeweils folgerichtig auf die unerwarteten Wendungen der Handlung reagiert. Stellenweise ergeht sich Schlegel trotz seiner Ablehnung von atomistischer Kritik geradezu in Wortklaubereien:

> [Ü]ber folgende Verse, die als Verse von einer außerordentlichen Schönheit gerühmt werden, will ich eine Bemerkung machen: ‚Nicht zwey Mal schauet man die Todesufer: / Da The-

> seus schon die Unterwelt gesehn, / Hoffst Rückkehr du von einem Gott vergebens; / Der Acheron hält karg die Beute fest.‘ Alle diese Pracht ist an eine Tautologie verschwendet; denn diese Verse sagen nichts als: ‚Wenn Theseus todt ist, so lebt er nicht mehr.‘ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 134)

Besonders widersprüchlich ist Schlegels Beurteilung von Racines Umgang mit dem Mythos: Vehement fordert er die Umgestaltung des Mythos bei Stellen, die er als anstößig empfindet, wie etwa die Aufzählung von Theseus' Liebesabenteuern, weil „selbst bey den Griechen, wo die Mythologie zur Religion gehörte, den dramatischen Dichtern nie das Recht bestritten wurde, sie zu verändern [...].“(Schlegel 1814 [1808], 171) Eben dieses Recht spricht Schlegel dem Racine an anderer Stelle allerdings ab, wenn er ihn dafür tadelt, den Charakter des wahren Hippolyt verfälscht zu haben. (Vgl. Schlegel 1814 [1808], 139 und 150)

Mit seiner Schrift verstößt Schlegel also gegen seine eigenen hohen Anforderungen an einen Kritiker; sie ist „wirklich ein Musterbeispiel von Kritik wie sie nicht sein soll, hämisch, anmaßend und oberflächlich.“ (Körner 1929, 15) Andererseits hätte ein „rein polemischer Angriff auf Racine [...] keine bemerkenswerte literarische Reaktion hervorrufen können.“ (Nagavajara 1966, 8) Es ist wohl die Mischung aus einfühlsamer Interpretation von Euripides' Drama einerseits und Herabwürdigung von Racines Tragödie andererseits, sowie aus Provokation und Poetik, welche die Faszination und die enorme Wirkung dieser Schrift ausmacht.

Zwar gab es für Schlegel auch unerwünschte Nebenwirkungen des in der Schrift verspritzten Giftes: Fast zwanzig Jahre nach ihrem Erscheinen, 1824, verhinderte sie seine Aufnahme in die *Académie française* – eine Ehre, die ihm wegen seiner Verdienste um die Sanskritstudien hätte zuteilwerden sollen. (Vgl. Schlegel 1846, XXVI) Dennoch waren die heftigen Reaktionen in Frankreich unmittelbar nach Erscheinen der Schrift durchaus auch positiv. Weltgeltung erlangte sie durch Schlegels 37 *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*. Sie wurden in Wien 1808, also etwa zwei Jahre nach dem Abfassen der Phädra-Schrift, vor zahlendem Publikum der höchsten Gesellschaftsschicht gehalten; unter den Zuhörern war sogar Napoleons Vertreter in Wien, Andréossy! Diese Vorlesungen behandeln die Theorie von Kritik, Kunst und Drama sowie hauptsächlich die Geschichte des Dramas. Sowohl ihr Inhalt als auch ihr Anspruch, eine Poetik zu sein, sind in der Phädra-Schrift bereits ansatzweise enthalten – ebenso wie ihre Mischung aus Chauvinismus und Kosmopolitismus. Drei Jahre später, im Jahre 1811, erschien die Buchausgabe dieser Vorlesungen und wurde ein einzigartiger Publikumserfolg in ganz Europa und in den USA. 1828 kann Schlegel mit berechtigtem Stolz feststellen: „Durch den bloßen Wechsel und, wie ich behaupten möchte, den Fortschritt der Zeiten, bin ich, ohne meinen Standpunkt zu verändern, aus einem als revolutionär verschrieenen ein völlig konstitutioneller Kritiker geworden.“ (Schlegel 1846 [1828], XXV) Tatsächlich ist der Inhalt seiner Vorlesungen weltweit Gemeingut geworden.

Sein zwanzig Jahre zuvor geäußerter Wunsch im letzten Satz seiner Phädra-Schrift, sie möge „zu fruchtbaren Ideen für die dramatische Kunst führen“ (Schlegel 1814 [1808], 214), hat sich, gewissermaßen auf dem Umweg über die Wiener Vorlesungen, erfüllt und seine kühnsten Erwartungen übertroffen.

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Gerhard F. Strasser

Language Barriers: Early Jesuit Efforts at Creating Common and/or Universal Languages

Abstract: In sixteenth-century South America, Jesuit missionaries were faced with communication problems in the "reductions" where they resettled the Tupí tribes. They created a language that drew on Tupinambá dialects while adopting a framework from Portuguese. In 1595, José de Anchieta published the first handbook of what became known as the *Língua Geral Brasilica*. Sixty years later, another Jesuit, Pedro Bermudo, overcame a different linguistic barrier: a so-called deaf-mute educated with other such children, he published his *Arithmeticus Nomenclator* in Rome in 1654. He proposed a mathematical-combinatorial system expressing each word in its limited vocabulary through numerical combinations. Kaspar Schott, a Jesuit working in Rome, brought this material to the attention of his Jesuit mentor, Athanasius Kircher. Using Bermudo's and Schott's own materials, Kircher published a *Polygraphia* in 1663, a more elaborate attempt at creating a combinatorial universal language still based on Latin. Building on all these linguistic proposals, J. J. Becher, a Catholic convert, in 1661 put out a *Character* with a greatly expanded mathematical-combinatorial language. Yet Becher questioned the universality of this numerical system: he translated the numbers into a graphic system influenced by pseudo-hieroglyphs that had to be learned by everyone alike, thus creating the first truly worldwide universal-language scheme. Even so, it was criticized by contemporaries like Dalgarno, Wilkins, or Leibniz, who favoured a universal language based on a philosophical system that also proved too complicated to succeed.

Keywords: Brazil, Esperanto, Jesuits, Johann Christoph Sturm, Johann Joachim Becher, John Wilkins, José de Anchieta, Kaspar Schott, *Língua Geral Brasilica*, Matteo Ricci, Pablo Bonet, Pedro Bermudo, Portugal, Tupí Indians, universal language

1 Overview

An analysis of early Jesuit efforts at overcoming the linguistic problems encountered in the missionary activities of this young Catholic order leads to a wide array of related developments that encompass a surprising range of fields. From the outset, there is an attempt by missionaries to establish a lingua franca between the various peoples in Central and South America and their own Portu-

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guese priests and countrymen. These efforts, which were soon documented in print, became known in seventeenth-century Spain and led to the development of methods aimed at creating another form of common language, namely systems that were to enable deaf-mutes – as deaf people were called at the time – to communicate with persons around them from whom they had hitherto been shut off.[1]

While these new ways of communication developed by Jesuit fathers were aimed at establishing a common linguistic ground among clearly defined groups, information on the training of deaf-mutes reached Jesuits in Rome who reprocessed this material: they expanded the intended range of users, which had hitherto been limited to persons with a medical condition, and created a system of communication that professed to establish universal written exchanges regardless of the individual linguistic background of its users. A Catholic convert privy to the new invention refined this numerically based system in what he considered its ultimate, logical expansion: as a commercial promoter with an eye to the opening-up of trade with the Far East, he devised a graphic means of replacing the Arabic numbers with a system of dots and bars that would have to be assimilated by everyone alike, by Europeans as well as by people in China or Japan, thereby creating the first truly universal system of worldwide written communication. Thus, an effort to establish a common language within a limited area influenced the newly devised instruction of deaf-mutes, which in turn led to the creation of systems of universal written communication that ultimately were refined to encompass the entire known globe.

2 Jesuit efforts at creating a common language in the Americas

Five hundred years ago, when the first Portuguese arrived in Central and South America, they immediately encountered a linguistic problem: the indigenous peoples in the areas they conquered spoke some seven hundred different languages. Among them was Old Tupi or Classical Tupi, a language – now virtually extinct – belonging to the Tupi-Guarani linguistic family. It was spoken by the native Tupí people who settled mostly along the coast of Brazil and were among the first the Europeans encountered when they landed after 1500. The missionaries accompanying these early explorers resettled the native population in what became

1 The term “deaf-mute” is a historical designation for people who were deaf and, as a consequence, did not have the ability to speak either; it will be retained throughout this article.

known as "reductions." They soon realized that none of the European languages in which they themselves were competent – and certainly not Latin, the lingua franca in their homelands – could be adapted to communication with the local tribes.

Although only founded in 1540, the Jesuit order, in particular, responded to this linguistic challenge. Jesuit priests began to devise a mixture of the idiom most widely understood among the indigenous tribes, namely Old Tupi, along with some Portuguese and, later on, even African words, to create a universally adoptable language. They systematized common standards of what they called the *língua geral* or the "general language," which became the accepted means of communication in the ever-expanding Portuguese colonial realm. The priest who carried out this linguistic groundwork was José de Anchieta (1534–1597), himself part of the third group of Jesuits who were sent to the Portuguese colony of Brazil in the 1550s. In 1554, thirteen of them made the arduous journey inland and founded São Paulo on the Tietê river. Their mission settlement soon developed into a small population centre, and it was there that Anchieta and his Jesuit colleagues began their efforts to instruct the native people in the rudiments of Christianity. They initially taught Latin to the Indians, but came to realize that such efforts resulted in failure. Anchieta then began to learn their language, Old Tupi, and with the help of Manuel de Vega started compiling a dictionary and a grammar that drew on Tupinambá dialects.[2] Anchieta's seminal work, *Arte de grammática da língoa mais usada na costa do Brasil* [The Art of a Grammar of the Coastal Language of Brazil], was written down in 1555, only one year after his arrival in São Paulo. It was published in Coimbra in 1595; his grammar and dictionary "still rank among the best ever produced of a Brazilian language, nearly 500 years later" (Sakel and Everett 2012, 153; see also Rother 2005). (Fig. 1)

On fifty-nine pages, Anchieta analysed Old Tupi according to the standards of Latin and/or Portuguese grammar; it should not surprise us that Tupi verbs, for instance, could express present and past subjunctives and formed a gerund or even a supine, an extremely rare form even in Latin. This standardized Tupi language – the *Língua Geral Brasilica*, as it became known – for centuries remained the primary means of communication in vast areas of South America and was even used for literary purposes.

2 On the cooperation of de Vega and Anchieta, see Denisov (1973, 19–21) and "Anchieta, José de" (2001). Manuel de Vega seems to have authored a *Catecismo, Diccionario i Gramatica de la Lengua de los Maramomisios, Indios del Brasil*, but there is no record of such a publication. See Ludewig, Turner, and Trübner (1858, 228).

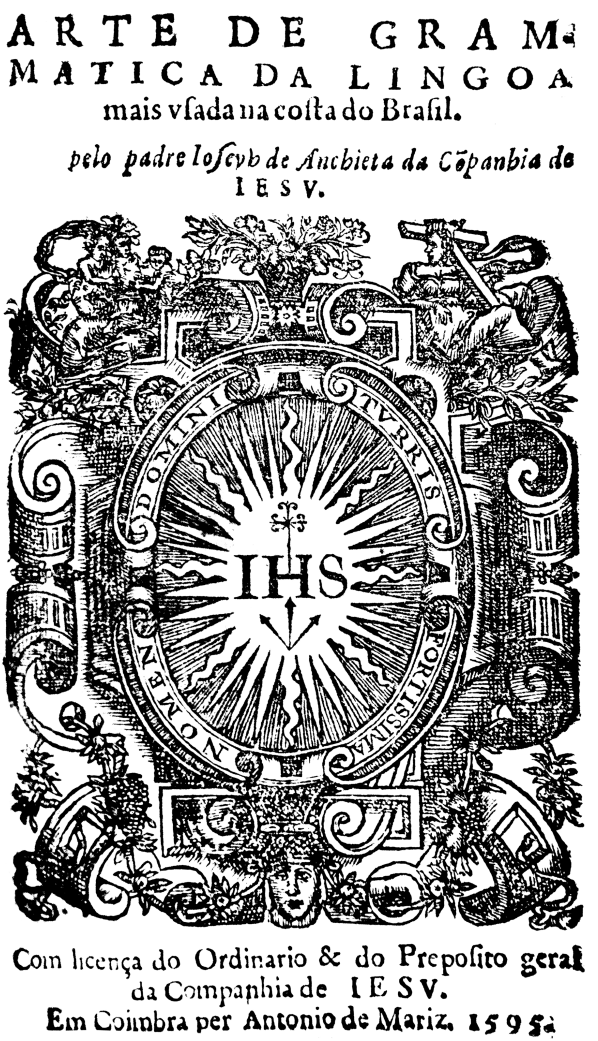


Fig. 1: Title page of José de Anchieta's 1595 *Arte de grammática da lingoa [...] do Brasil.*

Two distinct versions developed in different regions and were spoken by the Tupí Indians, Portuguese colonizers, and, later on, black slaves and European immigrants alike: the *língua geral paulista* was used in the region of São Paulo, while the *língua geral amazônica* was centred on the Amazon basin. They suffered different fates: due to the imposition of the Portuguese language in Brazil in 1758 by the Marquis de Pombal, the all-powerful prime minister, the expulsion of the Jesuits from the country in 1759, and increased immigration from Portugal, the *lín-*

gua geral paulista became extinct in the nineteenth century. Its northern counterpart, the *língua geral amazônica*, has survived in small pockets of the Amazon region – as the Nhe(e)ngatú language (the "good language"), it is the native tongue of the area's rural population along the Rio Negro of northern Brazil as well as in neighbouring Colombia and Venezuela. In the past decade there has been a revival of Nhengatú, which has even become an official language alongside Portuguese in the municipality where most speakers are concentrated.[3] Their number pales, however, in comparison with Paraguayan Guarani, with which it is closely related. Far from being extinct, Guarani is the most widely spoken idiom in Paraguay and one of the country's official languages.

3 From the *língua geral* via manuals for the instruction of the deaf to the first system of universal written communication

These pioneering efforts at creating a common means of communication among various linguistic groups such as Amerindians and Portuguese colonists by Jesuit missionaries were certainly known by the end of the sixteenth century, when Anchieta's treatise appeared in Coimbra. It is no surprise that another Jesuit, the Spaniard Pedro Bermudo (1610–1684), was well aware of it when he received instruction as a deaf-mute by one of the first teachers in this field. Such training was frequently based on manuals for the instruction of deaf-mutes. The earliest publication of this kind, which contained several pages of illustrations of sign language, was a 1593 religious handbook for the sick. (Fig. 2)

In 1630, one of the important teachers of the deaf, Pablo Bonet (1579–1633), published a manual titled *Reducción de las letras […]* [Simplification of Letters, and the Art of Teaching Mute Persons How to Speak],[4] (Fig. 3) as there was an ever-increasing demand for such instruction among members of the Spanish nobility due to their problematic intermarriages: children from such close marriages were frequently born deaf. It is astounding that with the help of this kind of atten-

3 The municipality is São Gabriel da Cachoeira in the north-eastern corner of Brazil.

4 Bonet (1620, especially the *Abecedario demonstrativo*, 130–131). A similar illustration of hand and finger positions had appeared in an earlier book by Melchior de Yebra (1526–1586; publication posthumously in 1593). Although de Yebra had used these signs – which might well have been commonly known – primarily for liturgical purposes, as his description and illustration might suggest (174r [*recte* 147r]–179v), it was possible to adapt this sign alphabet for the teaching of the deaf. See Strasser (2018, 48–55).

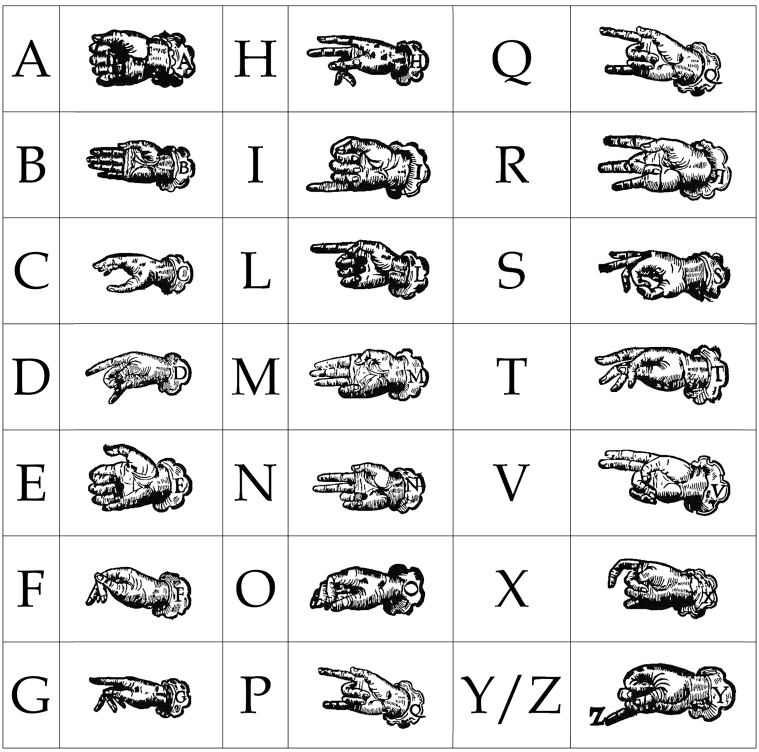


Fig. 2: First illustration of a finger alphabet in Melchior Sánchez de Yebra's posthumous 1593 *Libro llamado Refugium infirmorum.*

tion, deaf-mutes became so adept that they not only led productive lives but even entered the priesthood – where public speaking was of prime importance, after all. Pedro Bermudo was accepted into the Jesuit order and rose through the ranks to become the so-called General of the Spanish order in Rome – and that as a deaf-mute, as contemporaries documented.

There is no doubt that part of the instruction for the deaf, namely the rudimentary sign language already in use, along with knowledge of the *língua geral*, contributed to Bermudo's development of an early means of non-verbal communication (Strasser 2011, 556–561; Blanke 2006). Bermudo was certainly also aware of the first publications on the Chinese language and the intriguing writing system of this multi-ethnic empire. The best-informed source on the Chinese characters, or logograms – to use the modern linguistic term – was a report by the Jesuit Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who during his two decades on Chinese soil mastered the language and rose to the rank of mandarin at the imperial court in Beijing. Before his death, he managed



Fig. 3: *Abecedario demonstrativo* from Juan Pablo Bonet's 1620 *Reducción de las letras [...].*

to send a manuscript to Rome – published in 1615 and translated into five languages in the next few years (Ricci 1615) – in which he chronicled the success of the Jesuit mission and analysed in detail a system that facilitated written communication amongst the speakers of numerous Chinese dialects, the Koreans, and the Japanese. All of this – along with the discussions of a philosophical universal language by scholars such as Francis Bacon, René Descartes, and others – was available to Pedro Bermudo when he devised his own system. Bermudo was aware of the limitations of Latin halfway into the seventeenth century when this long-established means of uni-

versal communication became increasingly suspect in Protestant countries as the "Popish tongue."[5]

Bermudo created his universal language based on a mathematical-combinatorial system. The title of the broadsheet that appeared in Rome in 1653 outlines his approach: *Arithmeticus Nomenclator […]*, or "Arithmetical Nomenclator Inviting all Nations of the World to a Unified Language and Speech, by a Spanish Author Who – Lo and Behold – Is Truly Said to Be Mute." The ephemeral broadsheet is lost; its title and Bermudo's material have only come down to us through the report of another Jesuit, Kaspar Schott (1608–1666), who submitted it to his mentor, the influential Jesuit polyhistor Athanasius Kircher (1602–1680). Schott ultimately described Bermudo's material along with a later universal-language proposal by Kircher and a much more extensive and truly "universal" one by another mid-seventeenth century scholar, Johann Joachim Becher (1635–1682), a Catholic convert and the only non-Jesuit in this group; all three systems, Schott writes, deserve to be analysed (Schott 1664, 478–505).

Bermudo's single-sheet publication, whose title already highlights two of the areas the author drew on, namely mathematics and cryptography (the "nomenclator"), and alludes to instruction of the deaf, divides the conceptual world into forty-four classes that he felt would encompass the phenomena essential for universal communication (see Strasser 1988c, 135–139, 144–165). These classes range from *I. Elementa*, *II. Coelum & Coelestia*, and *III. Intellectualia* all the way to *XXXVIII. Verba contrahendi*, *XLI. Adverbia*, *XLII. Praepositiones*, *XLIII. Personae*, and *XLIV. Viatoria*. The relative importance of each class is indicated by the number of items (ranging from fourteen to fifty-seven) within each class, which are indicated by Arabic numerals and listed in the manner of *I.1. Ignis*, *I.2. Flamma*, or *XLIV.1. Via*. Contrary to vertically arranged alphabetical nomenclators, Bermudo's items are listed consecutively in each class, which makes working with them more difficult. Since the Spaniard is not interested in secret communication, he proposes a system of dots and accents to indicate tense, case, and number (a method that would never be used in cryptography as it would facilitate deciphering). There is precedent for such a system in an Italian publication that Bermudo might have seen.[6] Schott dem-

5 This increased reluctance to use "Roman Latin" in Protestant areas, which in countries such as England or the Low Countries may well have led to early linguistic and philosophical deliberations about means of communication to replace Latin, should at least be mentioned here. See Strasser (1988c, 133–134).

6 Silvestri, *Opvs novvm […]* (1526). Silvestri's long title suggests that his invention could also be used by the military, researchers, and merchants – a group that later Lodwick and after him Becher would clearly have in mind, see p. 414 and n. 9 in this article, also Strasser (1988c, 64–68) and Strasser (1988b, 84–89).

onstrates Bermudo's grammatical and morphological system with the beginning of the Apostolic creed; his vocabulary – limited to 1,200 words – forced him to adjust the standard wording, *Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem, factorem coeli et terrae [...]*, to read: "XXXIX.$_4$ *(Credo)* XLII.$_8$ *(in)* III.$_1$ ... *(Deum Patrem)* XXXIII.$_{47}$ *(omni-)* XL.$_{23}$ ... *(potentem)*, XXXVI.$_{17}$ ... *(creatorem)* II.$_{10}$ ... *(coeli)* XLI.$_{15}$ *(et)* I.$_{21}$ ... *(telluris)* [...]." To be used in written communication across various languages, Bermudo's mathematical-combinatorial numbers can be transferred from a given reference language (Latin) to any other, provided that parallel dictionaries have been prepared. This, of course, is the principle of Bermudo's and all the subsequent combinatorial systems of this kind.

Schott's analysis of Bermudo's system profits from knowledge of two later universal-language proposals with which Schott compares Bermudo's. In particular, Schott disputes the potential worldwide use of the system as he questions the universality of Roman and Arabic numbers, which – he alleges – would not be understood everywhere on this planet. Since they can actually just be considered "universal characters" to be used in the transmission of a written message from one language to another and do not have to be analysed or understood, Schott's objection does not really stand up. He suggests an alternative, a "neutral" graphic method of expressing such numerical relations, and was influenced by Becher's *Character, pro Notitia Linguarum Universali* of 1661, which suggested for such neutral communication a graphic system influenced by pseudo-hieroglyphs that everyone would have to learn.

4 Johann Joachim Becher's pseudo-hieroglyphic system of universal communication

Becher's system, published in late 1661, possibly profited from Bermudo's proposal and certainly was influenced by an earlier, manuscript version of Kircher's 1663 *Polygraphia nova et vniversalis* that he had seen at the court of his employer, the Archbishop of Mainz.[7] In the introduction to his *Character*, Becher stresses

7 The full title of Kircher's work (1663) stresses the combinatorial aspect of the system: *Polygraphia nova et vniversalis ex combinatoria arte detecta*. The earlier manuscript that Becher had seen at the Archbishop's referred in its title to the reduction of all languages to a single one, namely to Latin as reference language: *Nouum Inuentum Linguarum omnium ad vnam reductarum*. It anticipated the somewhat similar system proposed in the 1663 *Polygraphia* and used symbols instead of Roman and Arabic numbers for the universal characters. See Strasser (1988c, 144–154, 182–191) and Strasser (1988a, 70–73).

the importance of written communication (he does not doubt that Adam knew how to write), is awed by the Chinese writing system, and draws parallels with cryptography – "when one considers different languages and ways of writing, then graphic communication is a form of secret written intercourse," he states, alluding to the potential of his open system to support secret exchanges (Becher 1663, A6v–A7v).[8] In the body of his work, Becher followed Kircher's bipartite arrangement: he prepared a Latin word list or *Lexicon* of more than 12,000 entries (including first names and geographical locations); he was aware of the different alphabetical arrangement in the dictionaries that were to be drawn up for the remaining six languages ("or even more, and – if you so desire – for all of them," he added). None of these parallel dictionaries were ever prepared, however;[9] as so often, Becher rushed his book into print since he wanted to claim the priority of his invention over Kircher's 1663 *Polygraphia*.

Much of Becher's material, therefore, is not fundamentally new; but his insistence on eliminating Roman numerals from his system and working exclusively with Arabic numbers facilitated its use. His *Character* deserves to be seriously investigated for one innovative reason alone: as Schott's comparative evaluation had already shown, Becher was the first scholar who considered the numbering system used in the previous combinatorial proposals – including Kircher's *Polygraphia nova* of 1663 that Schott also incorporated into his comparison – overtly "Eurocentric," to use this contemporary term. In this respect, Becher's system did not fare any better. Since his earlier publications had covered the field of economics, in particular seventeenth-century cameralistics, though, and as a commercial advisor to several German courts and the Hapsburg Emperor, Becher felt that the emerging international trade with Japan and China would be hampered if the Western system were forced upon these nations. It is ironic that Kircher's various publications in the field of hieroglyphics would suggest to his rival the translation of his numerical combinations into a pseudo-hieroglyphic system that is heralded in the engraving of an obelisk on the title page of the *Character*. (Fig. 4)

A look at the dedication to the Archbishop shows that the author had to resort to subgroupings in order to express grammatical and morphological content beyond the place-number of each word (Strasser 1993, 218–231). (Fig. 5)

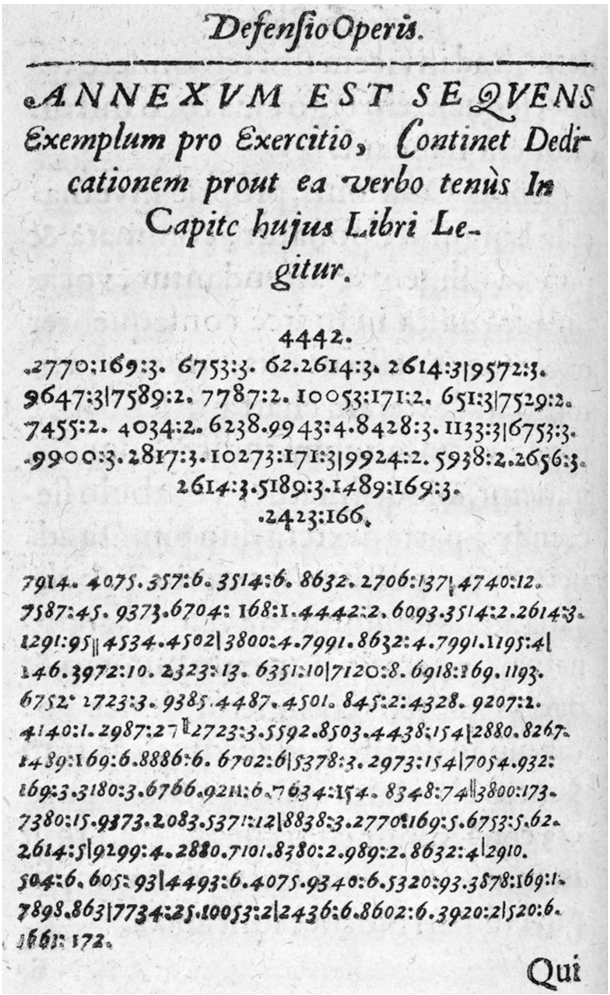
8 Translations in this article are my own.

9 In a 1678 catalogue of his publications, Becher lists a *Character Idiomate Germanico* (allegedly Frankfurt 1660) that cannot be found now, even though Schott quotes from it in his comparison of the three systems (Schott 1664, 504, 508–510).



Fig. 4: Title page of Johann Joachim Becher's 1661 *Character, pro Notitia Linguarum Universali*. Courtesy of Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 371.4 (Quod.) 3.

"2770:169:3 / 6753:3 / 62 / 2614:30" is the numerical sequence for *Eminentissimo Principi Electori ac Domino* [Most Eminent Prince Elector and Master], whereby 2770 is the sequential number or "root" for *eminens* in the *Lexicon*, 169 indicates the superlative, and the additional qualifier 3 denotes the dative case – in other words, *eminentissimo*. These combinations as expressed in Arabic numbers are then transposed into what Becher considered hieroglyphic-like symbols surrounded by an Egyptian-looking cartouche. (Fig. 6)



Defensio Operis.

ANNEXVM EST SEQVENS Exemplum pro Exercitio, Continet Dedicationem prout ea verbo tenùs In Capite hujus Libri Legitur.

4442.
·2770:169:3. 6753:3. 62.2614:3. 2614:3|9572:3.
9647:3|7589:2. 7787:2. 10053:171:2. 651:3|7529:2.
7455:2. 4034:2. 6238.9943:4.8428:3. 1133:3|6753:3.
·9900:3. 2817:3. 10273:171:3|9924:2. 5938:2.2656:3.
2614:3.5189:3.1489:169:3.
·2423:166.

7914. 4075. 357:6. 3514:6. 8632. 2706:137|4740:12.
7587:45. 9373.6704: 168:1.4442:2. 6093.3514:2.26143.
1291:95‖4534.4502|3800:4.7991.8632:4.7991.1195:4|
146.3972:10. 2323:13. 6351:10|7120:8. 6918:169. 1193.
6752· 2723:3. 9385.4487.4501. 845:2:4328. 9207:2.
4140:1. 2987:27‖2723:3.5592.8503.4438:154|2880.8267.
1489:169:6.8886:6. 6702:6|5378:3. 2973:154|7054.932:
169:3.3180:3.6766.9211:6.7634:154. 8348:74‖3800:173.
7380:15.9373.2083.5371:12|8838:3.2770:169:5.6753:5.62.
2614:5|9299:4.2880.7101.8380:2.989:2.8632:4|2910.
504:6. 605: 93|4493:6.4075.9340:6.5320:93.3878:169:1.
7898.863|7734:25.10053:2|2436:6.8602:6.3920:2|520:6.
1661: 172.

Qui

Fig. 5: J. J. Becher, *Character [...]*: "Dedication" (= dictionary #4442) to the Archbishop in Becher's mathematical-combinatorial numbers. Courtesy of Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 371.4 (Quod.) 3, N5v°.

The horizontal and vertical bars and the dots allow Becher to transfer his mathematical-combinatorial universal characters into a value-neutral system[10] that –

10 Once more there may have been a precedent: the English merchant Francis Lodwick (1619–1694) may have been the first to propose such an opening of the combinatorial character to full universal validity. See Salmon (1972, 1–156).

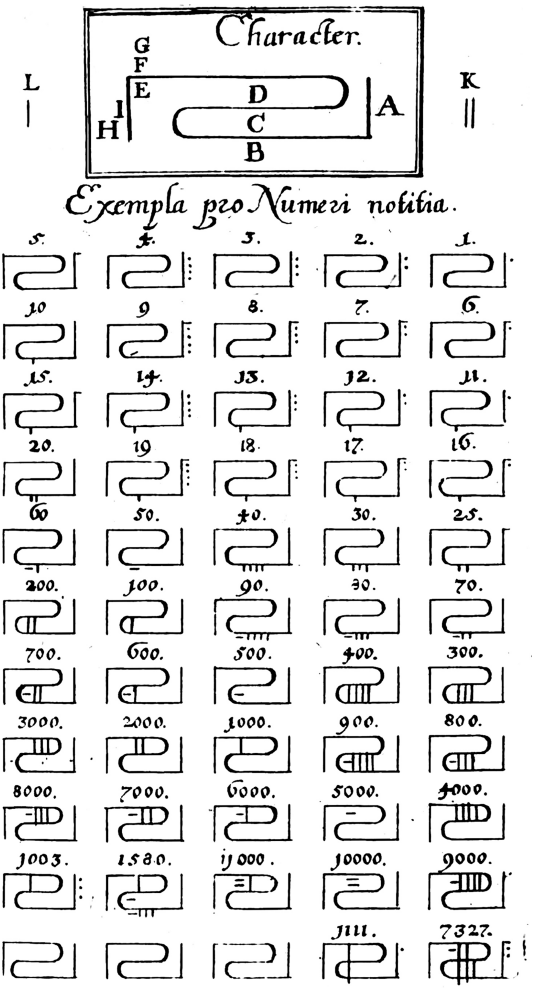


Fig. 6: J. J. Becher, *Character [...]*: sample page with transformation of Arabic numerals into hieroglyphic-like graphics. Courtesy of Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, 371.4 (Quod.) 3, B7r°.

seen from today's vantage point – is actually binomial. His pseudo-hieroglyphic representation is one of the oldest attempts at a pasigraphic system, in other words, an attempt at creating a purely graphic (written) universal language. None of Becher's contemporaries had taken this extra step, although Bermudo and certainly Kircher had detailed knowledge of the worldwide Jesuit missions and their linguistic problems at a time when Latin could no longer be used as a

true universal means of communication[11] – but their efforts were directed toward proselytizing and not primarily enhancing world trade. For this reason, they assumed that conventional Roman and Arabic numerals could be introduced worldwide, if necessary, thus obviating any need for a graphic system like Becher's. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that Becher's system was discussed in England, where efforts to create a universal language were under way. And, when, in 1676, Johann Christoph Sturm produced the hitherto missing parallel word lists in Greek, German, French, and Italian, and the necessary indexes, his publication[12] was immediately heralded in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. Yet, despite this ultimate enhancement, Becher's graphic system of worldwide communication did not transcend its mathematical-combinatorial underpinning, which put it – and all similar endeavours – in direct contrast with the competing universal-language systems that were based on philosophical notions.

5 Athanasius Kircher's "polygraphic" system of universal communication

To close, let us have a look at Athanasius Kircher's seminal "polygraphic" system as demonstrated in his 1663 *Polygraphia nova*. The book reused elements of the earlier manuscript that Kircher had sent to several German courts and was a belated response to Emperor Ferdinand III's (1608–1657) request to rework a system originally proposed in a 1518 *Polygraphia* by Abbot Johannes Trithemius (Strasser 2011, 565–569). This earlier method – and Kircher's as well – indeed implied "multiple writing," as the title could be translated: in simple terms, each word in any of the dictionaries of the various languages Kircher prepared stood for one single letter of a given message – hence multiple writing. As in the previous systems discussed, communication was reduced to the transformation of a word or text into a mathematical-combinatorial system of numbers, which in Kircher's case (contrary to Becher's) relied on a mix of Roman and Arabic numerals. This required two separate lists, which are basically encoding and decoding lists – and I use

11 It is ironic that Schott's comparative evaluation of Bermudo's, Becher's, and Kircher's systems results in his apodictic statement that it should be easy for anyone to learn the Arabic numbers. In his specific analysis of Becher's method, he then claims that he cannot reproduce the hieroglyphic figures, but in return decides to improve on the system by devising a much more ingenious dot-and-dash method that none other than Umberto Eco considered highly refined (1995, 210–211).

12 Sturm only identified Becher as the creator of this system in the second (h) part of the *Collegium*. See Strasser (1988c, 191–195).

these cryptographic terms here given that Kircher's book extended its original intent as a means of universal, open communication to include various cryptographic, closed applications in later sections.

Thus, Kircher's *Dictionarium I, Pentaglossum* provided lists for about 1,200 words in five languages. Using Latin as the reference language – just like all previous authors, Kircher retained the priority of this former lingua franca – meant that only the Latin list was alphabetized, while the corresponding words in the four other languages did not follow this sequential order:

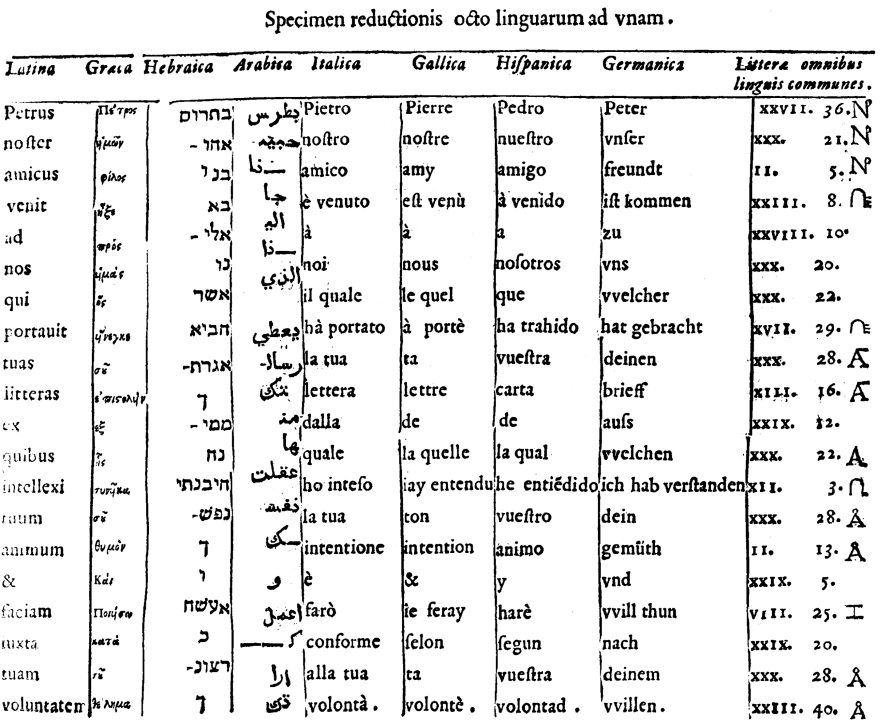
Latina.	**Italica.**	**Gallica.**	**Hispanica.**	**Germanica.**
A A	A	A	A	A
Abalienare I.1	*astenere*. I.4	abstenir. I.4	*abstenir*. I.4	abhalten. I.3
abdere. I.2	*abbracciare*. II.10	abayer. XII.35	*abbracar*. II.10	abschneiden. I.5

Kircher's decoding list – needed to locate the numerical combinations of a message – had to be arranged according to the 1,200 numbers of his dictionary. Thus *Dictionarium II* (which "serves to read and interpret the letters," as the subtitle states) is arranged in thirty-two groups of thirty-three to forty words per group; once again only the left-hand, Latin, column is alphabetized:

Latina	**Italica**	**Gallica**	**Hispanica**	**Germanica**
II.	II.	II.	II.	II.
Aliquid noui. 1	*nuova*. 1	nouuelles. 1	*nueuas*. 1	vevve [*sic* (= neue)] zeitung

Beginning with the twenty-fourth group, this bipartite code lists names of cities, months, proper names, adverbs, prepositions, or pronouns. These double numbers are followed by additional graphic symbols that indicate tense, number, mode, and similar information that provides the grammatical frame of a message. The author encourages the use of synonyms in view of the limited vocabulary, and suggests a plain, non-elaborate style. As in the earlier manuscript, he then prints a sample sentence to illustrate the "reduction of eight languages to a single one": *Petrus noster amicus venit ad nos [...]* [Peter, our friend, came to (see) us (...)] appears in seven additional columns, in the very last of which we find the transformation of each word into Kircher's universal characters, replete with additional symbols when needed. (Fig. 7)

Kircher's preamble to this part of his *Polygraphia* fulfills exactly the request of the late Emperor: "The first application of this development will enable everyone – even if he only mastered his native tongue – to nonetheless engage in a mutual exchange of letters with the peoples of the entire world" (Kircher 1663, 16). Despite the wide distribution of the book – the Jesuit network made sure it



Specimen reductionis octo linguarum ad vnam.

Latina	*Græca*	*Hebraica*	*Arabica*	*Italica*	*Gallica*	*Hiſpanica*	*Germanica*	*Literæ omnibus linguis communes.*
Petrus	Πέτρος	בחרום	بطرس	Pietro	Pierre	Pedro	Peter	xxvii. 36.
noſter	ἡμῶν	אחו -	حمتيه	noſtro	noſtre	nueſtro	vnſer	xxx. 21.
amicus	φίλος	בנ ו	ـــنا	amico	amy	amigo	freundt	ii. 5.
venit	ἥξει	בא	جا	è venuto	eſt venù	à venido	iſt kommen	xxiii. 8.
ad	πρὸς	אלי -	الي	à	à	a	zu	xxviii. 10.
nos	ἡμᾶς	נו	ـــنا	noi	nous	noſotros	vns	xxx. 20.
qui	ὃς	אשר	الذي	il quale	le quel	que	vvelcher	xxx. 22.
portauit	ἤνεγκε	הביא	جعطي	hà portato	à portè	ha trahido	hat gebracht	xvii. 29.
tuas	σοῦ	אגרת-	رسالا-	la tua	ta	vueſtra	deinen	xxx. 28.
litteras	ἐπιστολήν	ד	تنكن	lettera	lettre	carta	brieff	xiii. 16.
ex	ἐξ	ממי -	مه	dalla	de	de	auſs	xxix. 12.
quibus	ἅις	נח	ها	quale	la quelle	la qual	vvelchen	xxx. 22.
intellexi	συνῆκα	חיבנתי	عقلت	ho inteſo	iay entendu	he entiẽdido	ich hab verſtanden	xii. 3.
tuum	σοῦ	נפש-	نفسه	la tua	ton	vueſtro	dein	xxx. 28.
animum	θυμὸν	ד	ـــك	intentione	intention	animo	gemüth	ii. 13.
&	Καὶ	ו	و	è	&	y	vnd	xxix. 5.
faciam	Ποιήσω	אעשח	اعمل	farò	ie feray	harè	vvill thun	viii. 25.
iuxta	κατὰ	כ	ـــك	conforme	ſelon	ſegun	nach	xxix. 20.
tuam	σὴν	רצונ-	ارا	alla tua	ta	vueſtra	deinem	xxx. 28.
voluntatem	θέλημα	ד	تك	volontà.	volontè.	volontad.	vvillen.	xxiii. 40.

Fig. 7: A. Kircher, *Polygraphia nova [...]*: sample sentence in eight languages, with the transformation of each word into Kircher's "universal characters" in the last column. Courtesy of Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Fb 4° 52, 12.

would reach the farthest corners of the earth, and Kircher himself sent it to the Emperor in Vienna and to Catholic and Protestant rulers alike – his suggestion that the nobility, in particular, engage in this kind of worldwide written communication fell on deaf ears.

6 Demise of seventeenth-century numerical systems, rise of philosophically based universal-language systems

As we have touched on, the time was not ripe for manageable though limited systems such as Kircher's or even Becher's. By mid-century, universal-language systems based on philosophical notions seemed to gain the upper hand. Contemporary schol-

ars such as George Dalgarno and John Wilkins in England, or Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in Germany, proposed the idea that the entirety of human knowledge could be classified along philosophical – and not mathematical-combinatorial – lines, which could serve as a basis for a conceptual universal character and a new language. In 1668, Wilkins published his seminal work, *An Essay Towards a Real Character, And a Philosphical Language*, which for a while was seriously discussed by the Royal Society, of which Wilkins was a member – but his death-wish, a revised edition, did not come about. His system – in many ways contrary to Kircher's – was far too complicated for scholars, merchants, and long-distance traders alike, for whom it was intended. And Leibniz's lifelong, sporadic efforts to devise such a philosophical language met with a similar fate.

Thus end the efforts by seventeenth-century Catholic and, in particular, Jesuit scholars to stem the tide against the increased disuse of Latin as a means of universal scholarly communication. It is ironic that modern linguists have come to the conclusion that Becher's or Kircher's systems – possibly reworked and refined – could indeed have met the needs for worldwide written interchange in the seventeenth century. Instead, both the combinatorial and philosophical systems fell into oblivion, and with the rise of national languages as a vehicle for diplomatic and scholarly communication we have to wait until the 1880s when Esperanto, the one modern universal language to have survived, was proposed by Dr Ludwig Zamenhof. Alas, Esperanto, too, cannot aspire to reach the worldwide success of English, the one and only modern universal means of communication, from China, Japan, and Russia to Europe and beyond.

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6 Functions of Language

Karim Abuawad

Playing with Metaphors: National Identity in *Midnight's Children*

Abstract: Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is a narrative known for its irreverent treatment of national identity, its story resting as it does on the comic superimposition of Saleem Sinai's story onto the (hi)story of his nation. By playing with metaphors and simulacra, Rushdie's text explodes this superimposition, thus transforming the sacred status of the nation state into utter profanity. *Midnight's Children* deploys the resources of fiction to stretch the principle of superimposition/correspondence to its limits in order to underscore its tendency to fall apart. Representation in the novel becomes a form of aesthetic resistance made possible through remetaphorization, a notion akin to reterritorialization. This resistance strains the classical national narrative, which relies on the mirroring effect of the metaphor, and shows the metaphor disintegrating under the weight of the simulacrum. *Midnight's Children* plots Saleem's story as he discovers that his drive for reaching the very centre of meaning is not his only mistake. His ultimate mistake lies in the metaphorical postulation of the centre itself – a centre which turns out to be empty, hollow, and purely hypothetical.

Keywords: magical realism, *Midnight's Children*, narrative and identity, nationalism, Salman Rushdie, simulacrum

> Magical realism reorients not only our habits of time and space, but our sense of identity as well. (Faris 1995, 174)

> The effects of power are both immensely durable and fragile [...] the subject, far from being powerless to intervene in the operations of discursive power, has the ability to shape and reorganize the discursive formation itself. (Mondal 2003, 10)

> It is the map that precedes the territory. (Baudrillard 1983, 6)

At the outset of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Saleem Sinai declares that he "had been mysteriously hand-cuffed to history, [his] destinies indissolubly chained to those of [his] country" (Rushdie 1997, 9). Appearing in the novel's first paragraph, this amusing turn of phrase sets the stage for a narrative known for its irreverent and pessimistic treatment of national identity – a treatment whose central premise is summed up in the image of an individual being handcuffed to the polymorphous nation. Even though Saleem is handcuffed to the Indian nation, *Midnight's Children* is in many ways a narrative containing universal insights

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with respect to national identity as such. While India is indeed the novel's ultimate reference point, one of the achievements of *Midnight's Children* lies in offering insights which hold true for the development of national identity elsewhere in the postcolonial world.

One of these insights is related to the way the protagonist's autobiography is constructed. Saleem's "autobiography" – an autobiography which functions as the metaphorical equivalent of India's national biography – indicates that the bond nationalism establishes between nation and individual does not create just another identity interwoven with other, complementary identities, be they religious, ethnic, or linguistic. Instead, it primarily creates the promise of endowing the private lives of individuals with a greater sense of meaning, one that could only be provided by a project as sacred as the nation. In his now-classic study of nationalism, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson highlights the incorporative nature of the nation's narrative, a mechanism which endows events with a great sense of meaning simply by superimposing them onto the nation's narrative – the same mechanism Saleem uses when he superimposes events from his private life onto the nation's narrative. Anderson points out that "the nation's biography snatches, against the going mortality rate, exemplary suicides, poignant martyrdoms, assassinations, executions, wars, and holocausts. But, to serve the narrative purpose, these violent deaths must be remembered/forgotten as 'our own'" (1983, 206). Anderson draws attention to the selective process through which national history is usually constructed as a story of events impregnated with meaning. These occurrences become remarkable not necessarily on their own "merit" but as a result of their superimposition onto the nation's narrative. They then become *our own* because they are placed on the nation's narrative arc.

This mechanism for creating meaning is only possible by way of a thoroughly modern conception of time. Drawing on Walter Benjamin's "Theses on the Philosophy of History," Anderson describes the modern conception of time which "replaced" the medieval one as predicated on "an idea of 'homogeneous, empty time,' in which simultaneity is, as it were, transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfilment, but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar" (Anderson 1983, 24). This simultaneity, or the concept of "meanwhile," is fundamental to nationalism's way of constructing (hi)stories as well as to the form of storytelling found in *Midnight's Children*. Both of these forms represent events as coinciding with each other and rely on producing meaning as a result of that correspondence. In other words, the often comic superimposition on which Saleem relies is fundamental to both national history and the novel itself.

By playing with metaphors and simulacra, Rushdie explodes this superimposition, thus transforming the sacred status of the nation – with all the meaning it

injects into events as a result of correspondence between the story of the individual and that of the nation – into utter profanity. *Midnight's Children*, in short, deploys the resources of fictional narrative to stretch the principle of correspondence to its limits in order to show its tendency to fall apart. In doing so, it sketches a sardonic, pessimistic, and even tragic vision of national identity.

This vision, in fact, contains an old element – perhaps as old as the nation itself. This old element relates to the seminal metaphor at the heart of Rushdie's novel – a metaphor which informs both the essence and visceral force of national identity. The metaphor of the nation as individual posits the nation as a human subject: the nation was *born* out of its people's distinctive culture, language, or civic laws; it *came of age* during one era or another; it *holds* certain religious or secular values, visions, and even a worldview. Ernest Renan invokes this key principle several times in his essay "What is a Nation?" "The nation," he says, "like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavours, sacrifice, and devotion," and its existence resembles an individual's existence in that both are a sign of the "perpetual affirmation of life" (Renan 1990, 19). From a metaphorical standpoint, the nation and individual are brought together by an act of narration which narrates "the long past" of both nation and individual.

The phonological similarity of the terms "nation" and "narration" – on which Homi Bhabha capitalizes in his collection of essays *Nation and Narration* – points us to an intimate, visceral connection between the two terms and what they signify. Just as is the case in a *Bildungsroman* about an individual, narration, from this symbolic perspective, is at once a precondition of the nation as well as the mechanism by which the nation is born and through which it thrives. The "nation" – from the Latin *natio*, literally meaning "that which has been born" – is brought to life through the travails of narrative. With that in mind, telling the story of the nation involves the creation of a narrative akin to a *Bildungsroman* – one which combines body and spirit so that both can live up to their "magical" potential. *Midnight's Children* facetiously adopts the potent, metaphoric *Bildungsroman* conventions only so that its profane and farcical origins may be uncovered. The tragedy, in other words, turns into a farce, namely as a result of the way in which the protagonist, Saleem, adopts that metaphor – *un*metaphorically.

Metaphor, as David Punter puts it, is akin to an "ectoplasm: as the fruit of an attempt to give material form to, to incarnate, that which otherwise remains latent, ghostly" (2007, 68). With Rushdie's novel in mind, Punter suggests that metaphor is "the bodying-forth of sets of correspondences" of which we have all been "aware in a *liminal* way, hovering somewhere around the threshold of articulation" (2007, 68; emphasis in original). In *Midnight's Children*, the crossing of that threshold represents a narrative movement which goes further than giving the ghost a material form: the narrative begins by deploying the metaphor's body –

extracted from the depositories of national culture – and ends by obliterating that body into pieces out of which neither the ghost nor the body can be resurrected. By the narrative's end, the full and comic embodiment of the central metaphor connecting individual and nation renders the metaphor's usually potent and affective ethos absurd rather than brimming with meaning.

"Above all things," Saleem says, "I fear absurdity" (Rushdie 1997, 9). What he seeks above all is "to end up meaning – yes, meaning – something" (9). Saleem convinces himself early on that his private life carries a great deal of meaning, that he is at the centre of national history, if not the cosmos. This meaning is created by his assertion of a visceral bond between a select number of individuals and their nascent nation. Saleem describes the moment of his birth as follows:

> during the first hour of August 15th, 1947 – between midnight and one a.m. – no less than one thousand and one children were born within the frontiers of the infant sovereign state of India. [...] What made the event noteworthy [...] was the nature of these children, every one of whom was, through some freak of biology, or perhaps owing to some preternatural power of the moment, or just conceivably by sheer coincidence [...], endowed with features, talents or faculties which can only be described as miraculous. (Rushdie 1997, 195)

For the exceedingly narcissistic Saleem, the visceral bond between individual and nation is what makes the event meaningful, not India's political independence or its victory over its colonial plunderers. By imagining the nation as merely the organizing principle of more significant private life, Saleem comically undermines the premise that the nation represents the ultimate good and thus requires sacrifices from the individual.

Narrating this miracle within an otherwise "sober account" (Rushdie 1997, 195) as Saleem promises to do, illustrates the peculiar consequences of Saleem's extreme urge to write a private narrative endowed with great meaning – his extreme but ultimately absurd urge to sew individual and nation together ever so neatly. In the process, though, his narrative ends up calling the bluff of the nationalist discourse he adopts. Although Saleem finds nothing more terrifying than absurdity, his predetermined fate leads him to what he fears the most – *being* absurd. What starts as a movement between the poles of meaning and absurdity ends up becoming a process that deconstructs the dichotomy itself. In this way, the narrative does not simply delineate the "rise and fall" of meaning but brings to the fore the traces of absurdity that always stain the very structure of meaning.

1 Magical realism: History, fiction, myth

In her study, *Ordinary Enchantments*, Wendy Faris argues that the style of magical realism has the distinctive capacity to bring together history and myth,[1] a process culminating in "idiosyncratic recreations of historical events" (2004, 15). The content of such a past is not derived only from material history but also from the rich chest of mythology. The combination of history and myth that magical realism brings to bear "implies that historical events and myths are both essential aspects of our collective memory" (Faris 2004, 16).

While the formation of "collective memory," which draws on both history and myth, is essential to the resilience of national identity, the ultimate orientation of that identity is the formation of knowledge of and about the private self. Saleem is more concerned with knowing and enacting his unique capacities than he is with the nation as such. Paul Ricœur makes this point with respect to individual identity whose orientation is arriving at self-knowledge. Ricœur holds that arriving at self-knowledge results from a chain of assertion which evolves in the following manner: "self-knowledge is an interpretation; self-interpretation, in its turn, finds in narrative, among other signs and symbols, a privileged mediation; this mediation draws on history as much as it does on fiction" (1991, 188). Magical realism does not simply efface or blur the distinction between history and fiction. In *Midnight's Children*, the two are meshed together organically, not by effacing the distinction between the two categories but by manipulating the rules of the world in which history and mythology function simultaneously, so as to allow Saleem to discover himself, to know his capabilities, utilize them, and, finally, discover the weaknesses of his nationalistic discourse. Therefore, instead of changing the categories of history and myth, the novel changes the properties of their context in order to underscore the centrality of self-knowledge within this process. An entire new world – complete with its own unique physical laws – must be invented for nationalism's two contradictory facets to cease being incongruous. This in itself suggests that these contradictions can never be resolved in the world as we experience it.

The new world that *Midnight's Children* speaks into existence is in line with two key characteristics of magical realism: it leads the reader to "experience

1 In an introduction to his novel, Rushdie writes that "in the West people tended to read *Midnight's Children* as a fantasy, while in India people thought of it as pretty realistic, almost a history book" (2006, xv). In "'Errata,' or Unreliable Narration in *Midnight's Children*," an essay included in *Imaginary Homelands*, he says he hopes "that Saleem Sinai is an unreliable narrator, and that *Midnight's Children* is far from being an authoritative guide to the history of post-independence India" (Rushdie 1991, 22–23).

some unsettling doubts in the effort to reconcile two contradictory understandings of events" and "disturbs received ideas about time, space, and identity" (Faris 2004, 7). These unsettling doubts appear as a result of the contradiction inherent in two starkly different portrayals of events. On the one hand, we witness miracles that could not be explained through reference to the properties of the phenomenal world. On the other hand, by transcending the properties of the phenomenal world, these miracles are portrayed by "a sober account" (as Saleem ironically states; Rushdie 1997, 195), namely by a portrayal that speaks the language of the phenomenal world. This in turn "disturbs received ideas about time, space, and identity" by creating a new world that does not suffer the limitations of the phenomenal world. As a result, the magical-realist world becomes more than a fanciful construction or an impossibility that should not be taken seriously. The experience of being presented within a magical-realist world allows for the suspension of disbelief, making the shift in the categories of time, space, and identity a "real" possibility rather than a mere dream.

There are, of course, consequences to conjuring into existence a world in which nationalism's discursive contradictions are hypothetically resolved. The magical-realist elements in Rushdie's novel undermine the discourse of nationalism by putting it at odds with itself and with the world it allegedly seeks to bring about – ironically by making that world a possibility. If nationalism makes good use of a serviceable past – made up of myth, ancient history, fiction, or a mixture of all three – to buttress a sense of collective memory while projecting a future-oriented outlook based on the precepts of modernity, then the apt response ought not to be to draw attention to the jarring inconsistency in its discourse but to deploy the tools of narrative to create the very world that could support such a discourse. To do so is to adopt nationalism's logic and in turn underscore its magical nature and, more importantly, the impossibility of its foundational premises.

By advancing an "idiosyncratic recreation of historical events," *Midnight's Children* paradoxically flips the equation Faris proposes when she argues that "history [remains] the weight that tethers the balloon of magic [...] as if to warn against too great a lightness of mythic or magical being" (2004, 16). Although Faris makes an excellent point in suggesting that history checks the uninhibited nature of magic, fantasy, or myth, what it is even more remarkable about *Midnight's Children* is that magic might also tether what we might call the "balloon of history." By doing so, the novel produces an image of that history that is not strictly materialist. Magic, thus, checks the excesses of historical representations, excesses that might counter-intuitively exceed those of magic itself. This is especially true in the case of a novel such as Rushdie's, one of whose principal objectives is to create a fictional world in which the portrayal of nationalism with

its multiple faces, the historical and the mythological, is done in order to expose just how "otherworldly" the discourse of nationalism could be.

2 *Re*presentation: The simulacrum of national identity

Midnight's Children recreates historical events idiosyncratically in the sense of recreating their representation as such; in other words, it further undermines Saleem's nationalistic discourse by creating a representation of his representation. This recreation, however, is far from being a loss in line with Jean Baudrillard's fourth phase of the image as he characterizes it in *Simulations* – a phase that is part of a larger scheme whose end point is pure simulation (1983, 6). Rather, it is a vital gain because the representation of the representation in *Midnight's Children* becomes a form of aesthetic resistance made possible through a remetaphorization that is akin to the notion of reterritorialization: "the notion of resistance through remetaphorisation, through what the French thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari called a 'reterritorialisation' of conquered realms [...], becomes a substrate of literary resistance itself" (Punter 2007, 54). The resistance entailed in the redeploying of metaphor and its representation, therefore, reveals an aesthetic procedure whose effect is comparable to that of the Deleuzian simulacrum, an "act by which the very idea of a model or privileged position is challenged and overturned" (Punter 2007, 60). *Midnight's Children*, therefore, goes further than recreating a parodic imitation of the classical national identity narrative. Its recreation is constituted first and foremost by its *difference* from the classical narrative, not by its similitude to it, a quality essential to parody.

The strain this aesthetic resistance places on Saleem's classical national identity narrative intensifies as the narrative progresses. It later becomes apparent that Saleem's project of meaning production (a project made possible by the mirroring effect of the metaphor, a *similitude*) is destined to disintegrate under the weight of the simulacrum (a simulacrum made possible by a magical world that has no original model, a *difference*) which takes shape slowly but surely. Saleem hints at the unstoppable disintegration as early as the novel's third chapter, which he begins as follows:

> Please believe that I am falling apart. I am not speaking metaphorically; nor is this the opening gambit of some melodramatic, riddling, grubby appeal for pity. I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug. [...] I am literally disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of acceleration. (Rushdie 1997, 37)

This description could certainly be explained by Saleem's penchant for hyperbole. When he approaches the halfway point of his narrative, however, Saleem is neither hinting, nor is he being hyperbolic. He unmistakably faces the conundrum at the heart of his attempt to reconcile the representational discourse at the surface with the anti-representational simulacrum lurking beneath it. His tone here is different – distinctively solemn rather than facetious. "Am I so far gone," Saleem says,

> in my desperate need for meaning, that I'm prepared to distort everything – to re-write the whole history of my times purely in order to place myself in a central role? Today, in my confusion, I can't judge. I'll have to leave it to others. For me, there can be no going back; I must finish what I started, even if, inevitably, what I finish turns out to be not what I began. (Rushdie 1997, 166)

Saleem refuses to be the judge of what transpires at this point, at least not rhetorically. Instead of being the judge of the imminent collapse, Saleem allows for the inevitable judgement to transpire through the narrative's aesthetic procedure. The narrative's fundamental turning point, then, could be described as follows: while one initially finds within the narrative's discourse (created by Saleem) a doomed endeavour to deploy the representational logic of nationalism by embracing the metaphor of national identity unmetaphorically, one finds within its structure the overturning of that endeavour. It is for this reason that reading *Midnight's Children* in terms of the concept of a simulacrum allows for a fuller critique of the mechanisms of Saleem's national identity.

From a political standpoint, critiquing national identity through the simulacrum leads to the following conclusion: given that national identity will remain influential in mediating relationships between subjects and communities for the foreseeable future, the redefinition of this identity's core in terms of difference rather than in terms of similarity constitutes a genuine and viable breakthrough.[2] As the world remains far-removed from being truly without nations – a world Renan mistakenly saw over a century ago as a clear possibility, if not an inevitable development – the simulacrum holds the possibility of a liberating difference that could mitigate the violence of similitude, especially when it is imagined at the level of the nation. This possibility goes beyond the false choice between a more entrenched nationalism and an illusion of tolerance. These two alternatives, though seemingly oppositional, take instinctive similitude as their ultimate reference point.

Similitude becomes instinctive precisely as a result of representation's tendency to conceal and to naturalize the prefix "re-." Jorge Luis Borges's "On Exacti-

2 Difference in this context is not the equivalent of diversity, which is based on the notion of *tolerating* that which differs from the model.

tude in Science" – the story which Baudrillard uses as an entry point for his discussion on simulacra and simulation – is a case in point. The story describes an empire in which

> the Art of Cartography attained such perfection that the map of a single province occupied the entirety of a city, and the map of the empire, the entirety of a province. In time, those unconscionable maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guild struck a map of the empire whose size was that of the empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following generations, who were not so fond of the study of cartography, as their forbears had been, saw that the vast map was useless, and not without pitilessness was it, that they delivered it up to the inclemencies of sun and winters. In the deserts of the west, still today, there are tattered ruins of that map, inhabited by animals and beggars; in all the land there is no other relic of the disciplines of geography. (Borges 1999, 325)

In their quest for perfection and scientific exactitude, the cartographers fully materialize the (hypothetical) representational nature of maps. In other words, their hubris leads them to forget about the prefix "re-" in "representation."

This "literal map" ceases to be a map altogether because it no longer has the basic justification for its existence as an object whose relationship to the territory is first and foremost metaphorical. While it is true that this extremist adoption of the metaphor kills the metaphor itself, what is of more significance is that the hypothetical bond which the metaphor maintains between map and territory dies with it as well. The cartographers' exactitude is comparable to Saleem's inclination to exploit his own hypothetical bond, which, while giving him the illusion of meaning, ends up obliterating any chance of it as, like the map, it ceases to have a *raison d'être*. This tendency of his, Saleem concedes, is part of a scientific worldview: "setting my face against all indications to the contrary, I shall now amplify, in the manner and with proper solemnity of a man of science, my place at the centre of things" (Rushdie 1997, 237–238). In addition to stressing the decisive role of the fantastical in this operation, Borges's story confirms that while this operation's first step is undertaken for the purpose of achieving accuracy and is thus in line with the endeavour to apply the maximum conformity to the logic of mimetic representation, its inevitable consequence is the radical undermining of that very logic – precisely what happens in *Midnight's Children*.

In Baudrillard's description of this operation as reflected in the cartographer's fundamentalist scientific project, the initial representational motivation is characterized by its specular and discursive nature, whereas the consequence (simulation) is characterized by its nuclear and genetic nature: "This representational imaginary, which simultaneously culminates in and is engulfed by the cartographer's mad project of the ideal coextensivity between the map and the territory, disappears in the simulation whose operation is nuclear and genetic, no longer at all specular or discursive" (Baudrillard 1983, 2). These characteristics –

specular-discursive and nuclear-genetic – throw into sharp relief not only the operation of metaphor in *Midnight's Children* but also that of hyperbole, which functions as its enabler. As Christopher Warnes points out, "hyperbole, the splitting, fusing and blurring of the literal and metaphorical, and an emphasis on the constitutive and performative over the merely descriptive capacities of language, are all central to Rushdie's modes of narration and strategies of representation" (2009, 101). As is the case with the cartographers, Saleem's operation of ideal coextensivity is fuelled by a penchant for hyperbole, which in turn tries to save itself from the assault of reason by being couched in the fantastical, where such rules are suspended.

Exploiting the metaphor the way he does allows Saleem to discover that his drive for meaning, for reaching the very centre, is not the only mistake leading to the ultimate downfall of his private self as well as to the disintegration of the discourse of nationalism which sustains that self. The ultimate mistake he makes lies in the metaphorical postulation of the centre itself – a centre which turns out to be empty, hollow, and purely hypothetical. "I am coming to the conclusion that privacy," Saleem laments toward the end of his narrative, "the small individual lives of men, are preferable to all this inflated macrocosmic activity. But too late" (Rushdie 1997, 435).

3 Conclusion

Midnight's Children plots the evolution of Saleem's understanding of his national identity using the resources of narrative, the ground of all identities. In *Reading for the Plot*, Peter Brooks points out via Rousseau that this linkage between narrative and identity is nothing short of the fundamental catalyst of modern narrative:

> The question of identity, claims Rousseau – and this is what makes him at least symbolically the *incipient* of modern narrative – can be thought only in narrative terms, in the effort to tell a whole life, to plot its meaning by going back over it to record its perpetual flight forward, its slippage from the fixity of definition. To understand me, Rousseau says [...], the reader must follow me at every moment of my existence. (Brooks 1984, 33; emphasis in original)

Moving through *Midnight's Children*, the reader recognizes that it is a narrative which grants Saleem the opportunity to vacillate between identity and difference in the same way he vacillates between his tragic desire for meaning and his ultimate end – being absurd. This desire is the same desire that moves "the reader through narrative [...]. If the motor of narrative is desire, totalizing, building ever-larger units of meaning, the ultimate determinants of meaning lie *at the end*,

and narrative desire is ultimately, inexorably, desire *for* the end" (Brooks 1984, 52; emphasis in original).

Midnight's Children ties all these strands together by interrogating the individual's rudimentary desire for meaning, by pushing the limits of what national identity allows, both of which serve as the motor of narrative. In doing so, *Midnight's Children* does not criticize the cultural depositories of nationalism in a bid to promote an illusory vision of a tolerant postnational world, one in which we may all feel free to ignore the fundamental iniquities and discontent that form the underbelly of such an imagined community. Instead, it postulates an identity that draws on premodern elements as well as on forms of association that become possible only with the onset of modernity in order to reveal that a truly new project to supplant the tenacious logic of national identity must begin by liberating the subject from the visceral logic that Saleem exemplifies. Such a project must begin where *Midnight's Children* ends. It must create a new narrative animated by the difference of the simulacrum rather than by the similitude of metaphor.

Midnight's Children illustrates this point by deploying narrative mechanisms without ever positing the subject as impotent, as one who stands powerless on the receiving end of invincible discourses, as one who abdicates all responsibility for the role the subject plays in the game of identity formation.

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Poetic Figurations, World Configurations

Abstract: Adopting a comparative approach to the transcendental outputs of poetic language (the forms of language as an exploration of representation), this article examines how the dominant figurations of the poetic image synthesize the characteristic metaphysical-temporal configurations of the real. The examination of three poems by authors who are classics in their traditions (Horace's Ode 4.2, Tu Fu's "Thinking of Li Po on a Spring Day," and Ezra Pound's Canto II) opens the way to a reflection on how their primary poetic figurations (analogical metaphor in classical poetics, correlative parallelism in Chinese poetics, and the fragmentation-juxtaposition of montage in contemporary poetics) project characteristic metaphysical-temporal configurations (comparison and substitutive referral from the sense-image to the idea in classical ontology, the Tao or process of correlative unfolding in the Chinese tradition, and that conception of interruption amidst simultaneity which increasingly defines contemporary representation). The basic solidarities discernible between "forms of the poem" and "conceptions of the world" thus enable us to outline a more general proposition about the ways in which the dominant habits of poetic imagery project the ideal conceptions whereby a culture responds to the inevitable question of what constitutes the basis of the real.

Keywords: comparative metaphysics, comparative poetics, Ezra Pound, Horace, metaphor, montage, ontology, parallelism, Tao, Tu Fu

> There is no classification of the universe that is not arbitrary and conjectural. The reason is very simple: we do not know what the universe is [...]. The impossibility of penetrating the divine scheme of the universe cannot dissuade us, though, from offering up human schemes, even if we are aware they are provisional. (Borges 1974, 708; my translation)

> Whenever a mind of true greatness and genius occupies itself with language, this phenomenon becomes manifest in reality [...]. The real importance of studying languages lies in the role of language in forming representations. Everything is there, for it is the sum of these representations that makes the human being. (Humboldt 1990, 85; my translation)

By adopting a comparative approach to the transcendental outputs of language (i.e. a critical perspective that scrutinizes the formal conditions of possibility of representation), one can reveal the extent to which the dominant habits of poetic figuration synthesize characteristic metaphysical configurations. More precisely, one can understand how dominant poetic tropologies (such as metaphor in classical poetics, parallelism in Chinese poetics, and montage in contemporary poetics), while imposing a recognizable type of linkage on the level of language (analogy,

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correlation, and juxtaposition), project characteristic metaphysical topologies (comparison and substitutive referral from the sense-image to the idea in classical ontology, the Tao or process of correlative unfolding in the Chinese tradition, and that conception of interruption amidst simultaneity which increasingly defines contemporary representation).

It is this continuity between poetic forms and metaphysical conceptions that the following conveys in a reading of three poems by authors who are classics of their respective traditions: Horace's Ode 4.2, Tu Fu's "Thinking of Li Po on a Spring Day," and Ezra Pound's Canto II. On the face of it, these three poems might all appear to speak about the same issue in staging the poet's complex relationships and feelings towards a strong literary forebear: Pindar, Li Po, and Browning & Co. respectively. However, when attention is given to the dominant behaviour of their poetic images (analogical metaphor, dynamic parallelism, and interruptive montage), one realizes how these works project alternative worlds, promoting the type of characteristic metaphysical order whereby their cultures have answered the inevitable question of the structure of the real (ontological dualism, correlative Taoism, and interruptive immanence).

1 Horace's metaphors for Pindar: From idealizing analogies to ontological dualism

> Reality is a cliché from which we escape by metaphor. It is only *au pays de la métaphore qu'on est poète*. (Stevens 1989, 179)

> He would have us believe that a metaphor is a communication from heaven. — A metaphor is *what happens* when one *looks at something in a certain way*. (Valéry 1957, 1447; my translation, emphasis in original)

> Metaphysics *itself* has not only constructed and treated *the* concept of metaphor [...]. It would itself be situated tropically with respect to Being or the thought of Being [...]. Metaphysics *as* tropics. (Derrida 1989, 112; my translation, emphasis in original)

In the first half of Ode 4.2, a circumscribed episode of the poem dedicated to the memory of the Greek poet Pindar (517–438 BC), the Latin poet Horace (65–8 BC) writes:

> Whoever tries, oh Julus!, to rival Pindar
> mounts up on waxen wings with Daedalean
> art and will give his name
> to a glassy sea.

Like a river rushing down from the mountain
that rain has swollen above its usual banks,
so Pindar seethes and falls, immense,
with deep speech,

worthy of Apollo's laurel crown,
whether he coins new phrases in daring
dithyrambs and is carried along in rhythms
free of rules,

or whether he sings of gods and kings of divine
blood at whose hands the Centaurs justly died,
and the flame of the fearful
Chimaera died,

or speaks of those the Elean
palm returns home godlike, boxer or horseman,
and bestows a tribute more powerful
than a hundred effigies,

or laments the youth snatched from his tearful
wife and exalts his powers and courage and golden
demeanour to the stars, envying
black Orcus.

A strong breeze, Anthony, lifts the Dircean
swan whenever he rises to the high
regions of cloud; but my methods are those
of a Matinian bee

working hard to gather the pleasant thyme
all about the many groves and the banks
of Tibur's streams, and I shape
my small songs.[1]

(Horacio 1990, 324–326; my translation)

1 "Pindarum quisquis studet aemulari, / Iulle, ceratis ope Daedalea / nititur pennis vitreo daturus / nomina ponto. // Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres / quem super notas aluere ripas, / fervet inmensusque ruit profundo / Pindarus ore, // laurea donandus Apollinari, / seu per audacis nova dithyrambos / verba devolvit numerisque fertur / lege solutis, // seu deos regesque canit, deorum / sanguinem, per quos cecidere iusta / morte Centauri, cecidit tremendae / flamma Chimaerae, // sive quos Elea domum reducit / palma caelestis pugilemve equomve / dicit et centum potiore signis / munere donat, // flebili sponsae iuvenemve raptum / plorat et viris animumque moresque / Aureos educit in astra nigroque / invidet Orco. // Multa Dircaeum levat aura cycnum, / tendit, Antoni, quo-

In what can be taken as a hyperbolic tribute to the lyrical virtues of Pindar, the profusion of metaphors and similes makes Horace's poem a substitutive fiction in the restricted, strong sense of the word. For nothing of what its images literally say – that Pindar is a swan flying through the sky, or a deep and fast-flowing river descending from the mountain, or that Horace himself is a bee gathering thyme, or that ignorant and overconfident poets are Icaruses falling into the sea – could have any basis in everyday perception or intuitive experience. Readers used to this type of metaphorical figuration know, without even consciously considering the matter, that to understand the meaning and representation of this poetic language, they need to activate an analogical habit entailing repeated shifts from comparison between the sensible images to their resolution into ideal meanings, of which the most obvious here are the unattainable superiority and the irrepressible dynamism of Pindar's verse.

On the face of it, attention to Horace's metaphorical imaginary and behaviour can enable us to determine the intentions and possible ulterior motives at work in his homage to Pindar, the characteristic tension between admiration of and rivalry with the memorable Greek past. Thus, if one asks what else is common to the profusion of metaphors and similes deployed by Horace, one notices how both the expert labour of the industrious bee that Horace claims to be and Icarus' failed attempt to rise up to the heavens, referring to the rival poets who are unaware of their limits, entail an allusion to working and understanding the properties of wax. The analogical meaning is fairly obvious: Horace is claiming that he, as a skilled and industrious bee who confines himself to a certain height in his work with wax, has the expertise to shape his material in his small poems, unlike those other inexpert poets who aspire to reach the clouds without knowing the properties of their material, so that the higher they try to rise, the more disastrously they will fall, just as the late-lamented Icarus did because he was unaware of the properties of wax. If one further asks what exactly is figured by "wax," the response should be quite clear by now as well: it is the work of metaphor itself, a skill in which Horace shows that he is in fact not all that inferior to Pindar, a lauded predecessor who is also a rival to be surpassed.

Once one recognizes the basic intentions and possible ulterior motives of Horace's tribute to Pindar, one can go on to recognize everything that this metaphorical figuration configures over and above authorial intentionality, the way that everything, from the very imaginary staged to the habit of figuration entailed by metaphorical analogism, organizes the representation of the real as a vertical,

tiens in altos / nubium tractus: ego apis Matinae / more modoque // grata carpentis thyma per laborem /plurimum circa nemus uvidique / Tiburis ripas operosa parvos / carmina fingo."

idealizing topology, projecting and promoting the dualism between the sensible and the intelligible that characterizes classical ontology.

Already when one attends to the imaginary of Horace's ode – that is, to the empirical content of the metaphors and similes he stages – one can see how a vertical topology and a vertical order of value that place the high over the low are presupposed and affirmed. This is conveyed by all the analogies with the natural world, where what is praised and prized is "lifted" to a celestial height, whereas what is sincerely or supposedly held to be low is placed at an earthly height. Thus, Pindar is figured as a swan "flying higher" than any other poet, and also as a river that descends from the highest peaks. Unskilled poets, in turn, are figured as beings falling to the earth's surface. Horace, in his false modesty, is presented working safely and skilfully at a certain intermediate height. To be sure, these imaginaries that Horace employs more or less automatically are recognized conventions of an established and widespread metaphorical system, which, based as it is on a projection of the orientations of intuitive space to determine ideal aspects (where the high and the low, the above and the below, play a central role), can be used to conceptualize and envisage a number of non-immediate, more abstract aspects of existence (as is done here with poetic value). But what is interesting to note is the way that, just as there is a prevalent "idea" of the "above" being better and having a "higher" status than what is "below," so a vertical and hierarchical topology is organized and asserted, going from the sky to the earth, from the higher ideal to the lower material. While the empirical content of the series of analogical figurations staged by Horace is traditional up to a point, and certainly conventional (in the sense that it could have been different), it is not arbitrary, in the sense that it determines the way in which the real is represented: starting with this vertical topology of the real, with this idealizing representation in which the model is shown on the celestial heights, while the copies that seek to resemble it have more or less fallen to an earthly height depending on whether they are more or less successful.

It is this topology of the real, in which the basic ontological structuring that hierarchizes the transcendent ideal over the immanent material can be recognized, that, far more powerfully than the empirical content of the poem's imagery, drives the habit of formal synthesis of metaphor, the type of linkage in the representation which it projects, this being precisely that of an analogy between sensible images that project an ideal meaning, the idea. From a transcendental perspective – one that examines the formal conditions of possibility for representation – what is immediately apparent is a strong solidarity between metaphorical tropology and ontological topology. One can see how the structure and teleology asserted by metaphorical-analogical figuration – a poetic habit dominant at least since Homer and Pindar in archaic Greece that requires an inconso-

nant comparison between sensible images to be carried to a resolution in an ideal sense – is replicated in the ontological configuration of the real – a metaphysical conception dominant at least since Plato in classical Greece, where comparison between entities leads on to the Idea, the dispersion of sensible images on to what is understood to be their ideal model. The structure of signification and representation in language imposed by the metaphorical habit, which separates and hierarchizes the literal and the figural, is replicated in the ontological structuring of the real as a hierarchical dualism between the transcendent idea and the immanent sensible copy. Semantic inconsonance in metaphorical substitution, which produces the idea, becomes metaphysical inconsonance that breaks with immanence, projecting an ideal sphere.

Faced with this strong solidarity between dualist-analogical structuring of the poetic figure and of the metaphysical configuration, a naive realist will say that it is precisely because the real is conceived as (or simply *is*) an ontological conjunction of the sensible and the intelligible that the poetic figure imitates it, moulding itself to a world that is presented to it as a given. The problem, though, is that there have historically been other conceptions of the real that have been as vital to other cultures as ontology has been to the West, conceptions that display a no less discernible solidarity and dependency on the habits of poetic imagery dominant in their respective traditions.

2 Tu Fu's parallelisms about Li Po: From vibratory correlations to the process of Tao

> Nature, in the process of giving forms, always configures the limbs in pairs. In the workings of the spiritual principle, nothing is left in isolation […].
> The ribs of the body must be paired.
> A phrase, once formed, must have its counterpart. (Liu Xie 1995, 239; my translation)

> Parallelism is a necessity in any literary work. For nothing exists in isolation in the cosmos, all things arrive at existence in pairs. So with the high and the low, the noble and the base, the present and the absent, the alike and the unalike, what arrives and what departs, the empty and the full – in all cases we speak of parallelism by correlation. (anonymous "Treatise on Parallelism," in Martin [1989, 119]; my translation)

Among the series of poems Tu Fu (712–770) composed honouring his own literary predecessor Li Po (701–762), one finds at least half a dozen *lu-shih* or regulated octets. The most celebrated of these is:

A Spring Day: Thinking about Li Po

The poetry of Li Po has no equal.
Free imagination, out of the ordinary.
Clear, fresh, like Yu Kaifu;
Strong, fluid, like Bao Zhao.
To the north of the Wei, the spring tree.
To the east of the River, the twilit cloud.
When, before a pot of wine,
shall we speak of literature again?[2]
(Tu Fu 2001, 266; my translation)

If the figures staged by Tu Fu are once again at the explicit service of homage to the strong predecessor, in this case Li Po, they configure an experience and representation very different to that found in Horace's ode to Pindar. Certainly, a reading that confines itself to fixating on the author's intentions and possible ulterior motives would once again reveal a complex tension between admiration and rivalry, or, more precisely, between friendship and reproach. But the characteristic formal behaviour of their dynamic parallelisms, the complex interplay of vibratory correspondences that the images activate at different levels of the poem, promote a conception of the real wholly different to the analogism between the sensible and the intelligible projected by the metaphorical on to the ontological, that is, the conception of an immanent process of active correlations.

On the face of it, one can note how, in contrast to Horace's poem, there is nothing in Tu Fu's octet to force readers into a substitution for the immediate reality it presents. Not that this poem cannot be interpreted with reference to another level of meaning, activating the series of allusions entailed by its natural images and characters, and continuing, more importantly, with its play of parallelisms and other patterns of dynamic correlation. But readers of the poem are not obliged to treat the literal scene it presents as a literary illusion that could not have a basis in sensible experience. The dynamic figuration does not offer an image to be replaced by an idea, but says one thing and another simultaneously, using an active and endless correlation to figure between images that do not cancel each other out.

It is this dynamic effect arising from a process of correlations that already explains the tension between praise and reproach staged in the poem, which was written in the context of the aftermath of An Lushan's failed revolution, in which Tu Fu and Li Po were trapped on opposite sides (Li Po would end up falling out of

2 春日忆李白 // 白也诗无敌 / 飘然思不群 / 清新庾开府 / 俊逸鲍参军 / 渭北春天 / 江东日暮云 / 何时一樽酒 / 重与细论文.

imperial favour and being exiled, so that there came to be not only a geographical but also a political separation between two poets who, as was customary, had aspired to an official career). Thus, in its central parallel distichs, for instance, one finds an alternation, far from easy to resolve, between homage to the literary predecessor (activated by the correlation Tu Fu establishes with Li Po, paralleling the correlation he establishes between two major Chinese poets who were known well for their political and administrative impact, namely the official Yu Kaifu and the general Bao Zhao), and nostalgia at the dramatic separation of poets who are friends (sanctioned by the greater geographical and political parallelism between the North and the South, and by the natural and poetic parallelism staged by the correlation between the freshness and clearness of a tree in springtime versus the threatening fluidity of a twilit cloud). It is this same unresolvable tension that is intensified when we attend to the broadest of the correspondences staged by Tu Fu's octet as a whole, namely his alternation between an imagistic mode of presentation from an objective viewpoint, and a propositional mode of presentation from a subjective viewpoint. This can be seen already in the poem's title, "A Spring Day: *Thinking about Li Po*" (my emphasis): a contrast between an objectively presented natural image and a propositionally presented subjective response, which summarizes the tension between the celebration of productive fecundity and introspective lament developed by the poem as a whole. For it is this correspondence that can be observed between the objective mode of presentation of the two central parallel distichs with their compact imagistic language, and the subjective mode of presentation in the first and last distichs with their direct propositional language, a most general correlation between modes of perception and presentation which makes the poem vibrate as a whole.

In this sense, when our attention turns to the heuristic output generated by the imaginary and the dominant habit of figuration through dynamic parallelisms, what we find is not the projection of a vertical, hierarchical topology that refers the sensible to the ideal, but the projection of a horizontal topology as a "process of correspondences," this being precisely the characteristic and traditional metaphysical conception of the Tao.

Turning attention to the empirical content of the images, as those most obviously conjoined in the central parallelisms – Tu Fu and Li Po, Yu Kaifu and Bao Zhao, north and south, the spring tree and the twilit cloud – one finds that these linked elements are not hierarchized metaphysically, still less ontologically as a dualism between the immanent sensible and the transcendental ideal, but are correlated within the same order of the real to which the human being belongs as part of nature. To be sure, these correlative images that Tu Fu employs more or less automatically or creatively are part of a category system and habit of conceptualization widely deployed in the Chinese tradition, where, for the purpose of

representing the non-immediate, more abstract aspects of existence, the predominant way of generating concepts is not by analogy between sensible elements, but by correlation between elements regarded as natural. Looking beyond concrete examples, however, it is crucial that, just as the dominant habit of poetic figuration leads to conceptualization by correlation between dependent elements on the same level, often through dynamic parallelism, one obtains the organization and projection of a horizontal topology of the real in which entities are correlated in reciprocal dependencies. As before with Horace, while it can also be recognized here that the material content of the series of dynamic images staged by Tu Fu is traditional up to a point and certainly conventional (in the sense that it could have been different), it is not arbitrary, for it determines how the phenomena are represented, starting with this projection of a horizontal topology where entities stand in a process of reciprocal relations.

Thus, it is this topology of the real, in which the traditional Chinese metaphysical conception of Tao as a process of correlations has been recognized, that, far more powerfully than the empirical content of the poem's imagery, drives the habit of formal synthesis of dynamic parallelism as such, the type of linkage in representation which its process of correlations imposes on the most widely differing levels. The structure and movement set up by the dynamic parallelisms of classical Chinese poetry, the meaning process of language that correlates and sets up vibrations between parts deemed to be interdependent, are reproduced in the metaphysical configuration of the Tao, where the real is conceived as a process of rhythmical unfolding into correlative pairs.

It is because of this habit of representation characteristic of dynamic parallelism that the language of a classical Chinese poet like Tu Fu projects a very different world to that projected by the language of a classical Latin poet like Horace. While the analogical metaphor of the Western classic constitutes a habit of representation that establishes a comparison between images which resolves into the idea, deploying a dualistic topology that refers the sensible to the intelligible, the dynamic parallelisms of classical Chinese poetry constitute a habit of representation that establishes a correspondence between parts which confer reciprocal meaning upon each other, projecting a topology as a process of correlations (the Tao). In the first case, the poetical substitution of the literal by the figural dovetails with the metaphysical difference between the sensible and the intelligible, all made possible by the analogy established between the two orders of language and being. In the latter, the vibratory correspondences within the poem dovetail with the cosmic correlations as part of a process of permanent unfolding, all made possible by a category system that conceives of the topology of the real as organization into dynamic pairs.

This does not, however, mean that these habits of representation of the real constitute a formal *factum*, a perpetual figural doom preventing any other configuration of the world from being inhabited. The historical and literary fact is that these two forms of poetic imagery examined, analogical metaphor and dynamic parallelism, have crossed over already on more than one occasion, sometimes with surprising results, to the point of revolutionizing the inherited representation of the real.

3 Pound's montage of Browning & Co.: From interruptive juxtapositions to transcendence in immanence

> In this new conception [...] almost all the threads of the fabric forming the material of modern art come together: [...] above all, technical montage and the mixing of spatial and temporal forms [...], whose basic element is simultaneity [...]. Time is losing both its uninterrupted continuity and its irreversible direction. It may be brought to a halt. (Hauser 1978, 679; my translation)

> Method of the project: literary montage. I needn't say anything. Merely show. Formula: construction by assembly of facts. Construction that completely does away with theory. (Benjamin 2009, 91; my translation)

In the programmatic *Draft of XVI Cantos* (1925), the first instalment of a "poem containing history" in which Ezra Pound (1885–1972) relates to several literary predecessors by way of translation and juxtaposition, Canto II opens:

> Hang it all, Robert Browning,
> there can be but the one "Sordello."
> But Sordello, and my Sordello?
> Lo Sordels si fo di Mantovana.
> So-Shu churned in the sea.
> Seal sports in the spray-whited circles of cliff-wash,
> Sleek head, daughter of Lyr,
> eyes of Picasso
> Under black fur-hood, lithe daughter of Ocean;
> And the wave runs in the beach-groove:
> "Eleanor, ἐλέναυς and ἐλέπτολις!"
> And poor old Homer blind, blind, as a bat,
> Ear, ear for the sea-surge, murmur of old men's voices.
> (Pound 1998, 6)

Having read the first twelve lines of what is in fact a long poem, one can already realize that, while Canto II also opens as a sometimes complex tribute to literary predecessors, its poetic images behave very differently to those of Horace's metaphors or Tu Fu's parallelisms. While Pound's explicit ambition for this poem was to generate an impression of transition by metamorphoses, where more or less perceptible mutations arise among fragments and scenes with a family likeness, the montage of significant details that he offers generates more or less interruptive, kaleidoscopic, and ephemeral meaning events that overflow subjective anticipation in a way that the previous poetic tradition had not accustomed readers to. Thus, even when it comes to first and foremost clarifying the poet's intentions and possible ulterior motives, a work like Pound's Canto II requires one to supplement the consideration of what the poet wishes to say with consideration of what he means to do with language, even if the two can never be wholly separated. For it is above all by his determination to signify by making that Pound positions himself critically towards the poetry of his predecessors and the past as such.

On the face of it, one can start by noting how, in a strong authorial decision, Pound uses juxtaposition and fading to refer to numerous literary and artistic predecessors of different times and origins, from more subjective or more objective perspectives. Either juxtaposing without transitions (making meaning erupt as a shock effect from contrast) or cross-fading (projecting representation by means of subtle patterns of repetition and transformation), he shapes a series of references and allusions to key authors in the history of Western and Eastern poetry and of contemporary art, from which he was trying to forge a new kind of poetry. Pound starts, with a strong subjective perspective, by identifying his immediate literary predecessor, Robert Browning; if his rhythmic experiments and diction, the flexibility he brought to the dramatic monologue – particularly his mastery in rapid and unexpected allusions, in presentations *in medias res* and violent changes of subject – had opened up new possibilities for poetry in Victorian times, Pound also stresses the limitations of his predecessor's device, its subjectivism, which would explain his failed attempt to create a convincing portrayal of the troubadour Sordello. A new answer irrupts thus in a violent shift, objectively and imagistically presenting the decisive influences that enable Pound to correct such early poetic limitations and forge a mature poetic device: first of all, the techniques of fragmentation and juxtaposition characteristic of the dynamic image of classical Chinese poetry, and most particularly of the work of Li Po (alluded to in the reference to So-Shu), the translation of whose poetry in *Cathay* was the cornerstone of the poetic revolution wrought by Pound himself; and then contemporary art, where the "eyes of Picasso" draws attention to the protean capacity of the artist then pioneering the development of perspectivism and visual montage in the successive revolutions of analytical and synthetic Cubism. In the third vignette of this opening passage of Canto II,

in its turn, through a new change of perspective and texture, Pound signals what he considered the two vital wellsprings of lyric poetry in the West, whose musical technique he wanted to be reactivated in contemporary terms, those of archaic Greece and of the medieval Provençal troubadours, as already asserted in the play of words metamorphosing into each other: "Eleanor, ἐλέναυς and ἑλέπτολις" (giving rise by anamorphosis to the images of Eleanor of Aquitaine, daughter of the first known troubadour, Duke William, and Helen from classical mythology, as portrayed by Homer, from whom Pound had learned to create the ecstatic syncopated rhythms conveying the movement of the sea: "Éar, Éar for séa-súrge, múrmur of óld men's vóices").

Having recognized some of the basic references included by Pound, one can also recognize that, staged as they are as a montage of different perspectives and textures, as free-standing fragments capable of entering into multiple relationships, they generate meaning effects that are interruptive and not easily controllable by subjective intentionality, projecting a kind of kaleidoscopic representation. This habit of figuration, consisting of the isolation of meaningful fragments – which Pound would early on call the "Method of Luminous Detail" – and their juxtaposition on the basis of family likenesses and other criteria that do not abolish the particularity of the details entering into relation – which Pound, in direct dependence on Chinese poetics and grammatology, would call the "Ideogrammic Method" – projects an order that is neither a repetition of a fixed past nor a teleological referral of events to an ideal end, but a spatio-temporal simultaneity with epiphanic meaning events that answers to the newly felt incommensurability of reality itself.

In other words, if the unmanageable events of World War I had sanctioned the decisive crisis of teleologism – a conception built on metaphorical modes of projection, referring sensible dispersion to the unity of a final meaning – the new way of linking elements of the past and the present through the fragmentation and juxtaposition of montage came to answer two urgent demands made on historical representation, namely for more polyvalence and less intentionality, configuring a *sui generis* conception of transcendence in immanence that increasingly defines the contemporary world. From a perspective that examines the formal conditions of possibility for representation, it is above all on this level that the strong solidarity between poetic figuration and metaphysical configuration can once again be recognized: in the way the eruption of meaning generated by the paratactic form of montage is replicated in an interruptive configuration of the real.

Only a hundred years on from the first consistent artistic developments of montage, at a time when these forms of meaning and representation by montage are not only available as a poetic device, but dominate the whole of our daily lives, it may be said that their action and effect have become transcendental: that, as acquired and dominant figural habits, these forms of montage have increas-

ingly become the condition of possibility for an experience that is formed of the world, without being noticed in themselves (explaining, among other things, the contemporary cult of the event).

4 Coda: Figurations of the poetic image and metaphysical configurations of the real

> The links should be *superabundant*. […] This is what induces poets to employ figures. […] They are enriched by the similarities and contrasts they awaken: all this ultimately yields the idea of nature enchanted, subjected, as though by a spell, to the whims, the prestige, the powers of language. (Valéry 1957, 450; my translation, emphasis in original)

> The construction of a "world", taken as the totality of sensible or logical, real or ideal objects, can only take place in accordance with certain principles of composition and formation […]. "Conceiving" and "relating" show themselves to be […] correlates. (Cassirer 1998, 350; my translation)

The comparative experience of the transcendental outputs of language – of the way forms of poetic meaning explore the representation of the real and synthesize possible worlds – shows the extent to which the dominant figural habits of the verbal image determine not only how cultures conceptualize basic ideal aspects, but also how they project the characteristic metaphysical configurations whereby they answer the inevitable question of how and why the world is what it is (or, more precisely, what it is represented as being).

It is because of these differences in the dominant figural habits of poetic imagery that the three poems (Horace's ode, Tu Fu's octet, and Pound's canto, all of which seem to be more or less ambiguous tributes to strong literary predecessors) project and make us inhabit very different worlds, namely the topologies of the real characteristic of ontological dualism, correlative process, and interruptive immanence. Clearly, all three poets are strongly aware of the need to determine their own positions vis-à-vis a literary past that possesses an extraordinary inertia, and their poems are explicitly aimed and positioned in relation to the strong poet that preceded them and under whose influence they set out to find their own path (Pindar, Li Po, and Browning & Co.). But these poems do not just stage an archetypal relationship, a kind of tension between homage and resistance where the words of respect and praise, properly read, reveal what more than one critic would insist on calling the "anxiety of influence." What is striking about their twofold approach of respect and defiance is that they have no sooner described the objects of their tribute as incomparable and incommensurable than they set about figuring them by way of comparisons, correlations, and juxtapositions, staging arrangements of em-

phatic and characteristic images that project and invite us to inhabit alternative worlds. Thus, when attention turns to the actual behaviour of their poetic language, we can see the extent to which their foremost poetic figurations, which more broadly echo the habits of linguistic figuration dominant in their respective traditions – analogical metaphor in classical poetics, dynamic parallelism in Chinese poetics, and the fragmentation and juxtaposition of montage in contemporary poetics – project recognizable and differentiated metaphysical-temporal configurations. We encounter, that is to say, comparison and substitutive referral of the sensible image to the idea in Western ontology; the process of correlative unfolding or Tao in the Chinese tradition, with its vibratory parallelisms and correlations at all levels; and that conception of an epiphanic transcendence in immanence, interruption amidst simultaneity, which increasingly defines a contemporary conception of the world.

If language is not only a system of signs that can be used to communicate a shared representation of the world, but is, first and foremost, an organ of poetic synthesis that makes it possible to form a representation of the world (determining modes of perceiving, conceiving, and topologically structuring the real), then of all the myriad possible poetic forms – of all the different ways of projecting breaks and links that constitute representations of the real by accentuating and linking in language (lexicon, syntax, verbal music, contextual effects, and so on) – it is above all the dominant figurations of the verbal image that determine the ways in which different cultures conceptualize and configure their representations of the world. Starting with whatever is ideal and not tangibly experienced, such as feelings, values, time, and, ultimately, metaphysical topology.

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Ana González-Rivas

The Latin Quotation in the Literature of Terror: Birth and Evolution of a Literary Convention

Abstract: From Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) to Stephen King's *It* (1986), the Graeco-Latin Classics have appeared in Gothic literature in the form of quotations, linking two aesthetics that are seemingly opposites. These quotations go beyond mere cultural references, and sometimes even become the key to understanding the stories they are included in. As part of the main text or as part of the paratext, in their complete form or deliberately distorted, translated or in their original language, there is no doubt that quotations add very valuable contextual information that is necessary for the full comprehension of the literary work in which they appear. This article will examine the presence of Latin quotations in works by Horace Walpole, Charles Robert Maturin, Edgar Allan Poe, and M. R. James, considering a relevant selection of texts in order to outline the characteristics of this literary device, as well as to analyse in detail the different implications that the so-called dead languages have when they appear in the literature of terror.

Keywords: intertextuality, Latin language, literature of terror, literary conventions, quotations

1 Introduction

The literary quotation is probably one of the most obvious forms of intertextuality. Its presence alone immediately triggers a dialogue between two texts that until that moment had been separated by time and space, and perhaps by language too. This dialogue usually brings with it a number of evocations and associations that, beyond the two texts, connect two cultures, two different ways of understanding the world that are, for an instant, brought face-to-face in the imaginary space provided by fiction.

When the quotation is written in a classical language, such as Latin or Greek, there may be multiple implications, depending on the historical moment at which the sentence is quoted and the text that includes it is produced. To a twenty-first-century reader, Latin is a dead and unknown language, associated with Christianity (Latin is still one of the institutional languages in the Catholic church) or the

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academic world (in universities such as Oxford or Cambridge, Latin was the language used in examinations until well into the eighteenth century); but to a sixteenth-century audience, any text written in Latin represented an authority. If a Latin text appears in a botanical or medical treatise, the use of the language will be understood as one of the requirements of the genre, but a Latin sentence inserted into a science-fiction novel, on the other hand, would probably require a higher degree of interpretation by the reader. This article will examine one very specific case: the presence of Latin quotations in Gothic literature,[1] where this classical language has sometimes taken on an association with the unknown, and even with evil and the supernatural.

To study this literary phenomenon, I shall analyse the works of four representative authors of the Gothic genre: Horace Walpole (the father of the Gothic novel); Charles Robert Maturin (whose *Melmoth* was the last Gothic novel); Edgar Allan Poe (whose short stories, imbued with ambiguity and unease, represented a turning point in the genre); and M. R. James (who established the pattern for the modern ghost story). The works of the aforementioned authors and the Latin quotations inserted in them will be used to account for the evolution and multiple manifestations of this literary device in horror fiction, where it is still customary and has become a literary convention.

Needless to say, the use of quotations, whatever the source language, is not a device exclusive to Gothic literature, and should be framed, along with allusion and plagiarism, as a type of intertextuality – in Genette's terminology (1982) – that occurs frequently in all types of text. As Bonaby and Jafarigohar (2012, 2617) argue, direct quotations in literature are usually "'thematically motivated' element[s] contributing to produce the literary and aesthetic effect of the text." Quotations can "fulfill different functions simultaneously," but "are determined by the overall function or the metafunctions of the text-type to which the text belongs." In Gothic literature in particular, quotations in Latin enact, on a textual level, the aesthetic and conceptual tension raised between the classical and the Gothic.[2] This tension emerged during Romanticism and, although it became somewhat diluted with the passage of time, eventually consolidated many of the topics and commonplaces of the literature of terror. From then on, Latin quotations became a recurrent element within this literary genre.[3]

1 For sake of space I will focus on Latin, which appears with greater frequency than Greek.

2 This tension has been studied in depth by González-Rivas (2011).

3 González-Rivas (2011); García Jurado (2008b).

2 Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764): The distorted quotation

In 1764, Horace Walpole self-published *The Castle of Otranto; a Gothic Story*, a novel about castles and ghosts that enthused the English reading public of the time. The chances of a novel of this kind succeeding were very low, especially because the chivalric romance was in the doldrums. Aware of this, Walpole presented his novel under the name of "William Marshal," the alleged translator of the text, a supposed medieval Italian manuscript found in a library in the north of England. Nonetheless, in the light of the warm welcome his novel received, Walpole decided to re-edit it in 1765, now preceded by a preface in which he confessed his authorship and threw light on the principles behind this new fiction he had presented to the public. The new prologue is introduced with the following quotation in Latin:

> – vanae
> fingentur species, **tamen ut pes et caput uni**
> reddantur formae. HOR.[4]
>
> (Walpole 2003, 63)

The quotation is taken from Horace's *Ars Poetica* (first century BC). There is, however, a slight modification which radically alters the meaning that the Latin author wished to confer on his verses:

> Credite, Pisones, isti tabulae fore librum
> persimilem, cuius velut aegri somnia vanae
> fingentur species, **ut nec pes nec caput uni**
> reddatur formae.[5]
>
> (Horace 1942, 6–9).

As Lewis (1969, xiii) has suggested, drawing on Mendel, the "typographical mistake" is clearly intentional: so substantial a change in form and meaning cannot be attributed to a lapse of memory or to any other visual error. The abbreviation "HOR.," which closes the verses, does not seem incidental either: Walpole appears to be toying with the homonymy between the name of the Latin poet and his own, allowing a deliberate ambiguity as regards the true author of the sentence. The distorted

4 "[They] are all vain and fictitious ideas, so that both head and foot can be assigned to a single shape" (my translation). The bolding in this and the subsequent quotation is my own.

5 "Believe me, dear Pisos, quite like such pictures would be a book, whose idle fancies shall be shaped like sick man's dreams, so that neither head nor foot can be assigned to a single shape" (trans. Fairclough).

Latin quotation, therefore, is not a simple ornament of the text but a literary device that Walpole uses to make explicit his defiance of Horace's classical rules.[6] This connection with the Latin poet's work is also confirmed in the two prefaces to the novel, in which Walpole raises notions such as the principle of "docere et delectare" or the importance of the internal coherence of the story, ideas defended by both Horace and Walpole. Walpole, though, is also responsible for the introduction into literature of certain fantastic elements that were ridiculed by the Latin poet in the passage quoted above, where Horace describes a sort of imaginary monster (with a human head, a bird's feathers, a horse's neck, and the tail of a fish) as an example of bad discourse. The image itself is also an example of the monstrous and the grotesque, an aesthetic category that was a perfect fit for Gothic fiction according to the later author. Walpole, therefore, undertakes a transformation of the Latin text that should be understood within the framework of parody, the humoristic undertones of which also convey a critical message vis-à-vis traditional poetics.[7]

3 Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth, the Wanderer* (1820): The double quotation

In 1820, in a fitting finale to the first wave of the Gothic novel, Charles Robert Maturin also resorts to a Latin quotation in his novel *Melmoth, the Wanderer*. In this case, the quotation is drawn from Pliny the Younger's letter to his friend Sura (Pliny the Younger 1915, 7.27.5–11), who is questioned by the Latin philosopher about his beliefs regarding ghosts. The philosopher includes in his letter a short story about a haunted house in Athens that is currently regarded as the first ghost story in Western literature. With the quotation, Maturin broadens the already wide use of this story in Gothic fiction: Jan Potocki had already reworked the Latin text in *Manuscript Found in Saragossa* (1804–1805), and its influence also extended to other classical works of the genre, such as Dickens's *Christmas Carol* (1843), Bulwer-Lytton's *The House and the Brain* (1859), and Wilde's *The Canterville Ghost* (1887).[8]

6 In his *Ars Poetica*, Horace gives future poets advice on the art of writing. His instructions (regarding the harmony of a literary work or the structure of a dramatic text, among other topics) set down some of the poetic principles that were to prevail in Western literature until the time of Romanticism.

7 For a deeper analysis of the connection between Horace's quotation and Walpole's work, see González-Rivas (2010).

8 On the reception of Pliny the Younger's letter 7.27 in gothic literature, vid. García Jurado (2002) and González-Rivas (2014; 2016).

Pliny's letter appears in *Melmoth* for the first time in chapter 3:[9] "Apparebat eidolon senex. PLINY" (Maturin 2008, 28). The quotation precedes the first appearance in the novel of the character of Melmoth. Melmoth had made a deal with the devil giving him eternal life, but after two hundred years of rambling all over the world, he seeks to free himself of this burden and pass it on to another person. Chapter 3 in particular focuses on the character of Stanton, who is a kind of counterpart to Athenodorus, the philosopher who confronts the ghost in Pliny's account. This is not, however, the only parallel between Maturin's novel and Pliny's letter: other narrative elements such as the house, described as large and spacious, the suspiciously cheap rent, and the fear felt by all the inhabitants of the town are also common to both texts.[10]

Maturin returns once more to Pliny's letter in chapter 23, but this time within the narration itself, creating, in combination with the introductory quote, what García Jurado (2008a) has defined as a double quotation. Pliny's letter is then mentioned as one of the texts included in an anthology of ghost stories read by Don Francisco de Aliaga:

> Now, whether it was the company I fortuned to be into, [...], or the book I had been reading, which contained certain extracts from Pliny, Artemidore, and others, full-filled with tales which I may not now recount, but which did relate altogether to the revivification of the departed, appearing in due accordance with our Catholic conceptions of Christian ghosts in purgatory, with their suitable accoutrements of chains and flames, – as thus Pliny writeth, "Apparebat eidolon senex, macie et senie confectus" – or finally, the weariness of my lonely journey, or other things I know not, – but feeling my mind ill-disposed for deeper converse with books or my own thoughts, and though oppressed by sleep, unwilling to retire to rest, [...] I took out thy letters from the desk in which I duly reposit them, and read over the description which thou didst send me of our daughter [...]. So, thinking on those dark-blue eyes, – and those natural ringlets [...] I dozed as I sat in my chair. (Maturin 2008, 381–382)

Just as in Walpole's novel, the Latin sentence has been slightly modified: as García Jurado points out (2008b, 183), Maturin writes "senie" instead of the original "squalore" (this also implies a morphological error, as the ablative of *senium* should be *senio* rather than *senie*). Nonetheless, unlike the quotation that introduces the second preface of *The Castle of Otranto*, Maturin's mistake does not seem deliberate: it does not pursue any particular aim or convey any criticism or double meaning, and the mix-up between "senie" and "squalore" is likely to be attributable to a lapse of memory.

9 Maturin does not specify whether he is referring to Pliny the Younger or the Elder.
10 See González-Rivas (2008).

As in chapter 3, this new reference to Pliny's text also precedes the appearance of a supernatural being: the ghost of Isidora, who appears to appeal to her father for her salvation. However, as far as this apparition is concerned, the narrator is intentionally ambiguous, suggesting the possibility that the whole event was but a dream, a trick of Don Alfonso's mind, influenced by his reading. Regardless of the origin of this vision, it remains true that Pliny's text is one of the models used by Maturin to shape his image of the modern ghost.

4 Edgar Allan Poe's tales: The invented quotation

By the middle of the nineteenth century, horror fiction had changed, adapting to the times and coming disturbingly close to the everyday life of the reader. Part of this "domesticization" process is reflected in the tales of Edgar Allan Poe, in which the Latin quotation became consolidated as a literary convention of the Gothic genre.

Poe's interest in Latin goes beyond the ancient antiquity that the language represents. Especially fond of riddles and cryptograms, Poe viewed Latin as a mystery to unravel, a code that had to be deciphered to reveal the keys to interpreting the story in which a quotation is inserted. Furthermore, in Poe's tales the Latin sentences usually anticipate what is coming next, a fact evident only to the reader with the ability to translate the quotations. This is the case in "The Pit and the Pendulum" (first published in *The Gift for 1843*, 1842), "The Cask of Amontillado" (*Godey's Lady's Book*, 1846), "Berenice" (*Southern Literary Messenger*, 1835), or "The Purloined Letter" (*The Gift for 1845*, 1844). As will be shown in this section, in all these tales Latin is no longer linked to Roman literature, but to modern texts that have been translated into the classical language.

"The Pit and the Pendulum" is introduced by the following quotation, which was added to the second edition of the text (1843):

> Impia tortorum longas hic turba furores
> Sanguinis innocui, non satiata, aluit.
> Sospite nunc patria, fracto nunc funeris antro,
> Mors ubi dira fuit vita salusque patent.
> [*Quatrain composed for the gates of a Market to be erected upon the site of the Jacobin Club House at Paris*.][11]
>
> (Poe 1978, 681. Italics in original)

11 The Latin means "Here the wicked mob, unappeased, long cherished a hatred of innocent blood. Now that the fatherland is saved, and the cave of death demolished; where grim death has been, life and health appear" (trans. Mabbott, in Poe 1978, 697).

Through this quotation, Poe alludes to the terror spread by the Jacobins ("impia [...] turba") in France, evoking at the same time the torture inflicted by the Spanish Inquisition, the main theme of the tale. By recalling an event the reader is acquainted with – the French Revolution – Poe brings fear and terror closer. The origin of this quote, however, is uncertain: in his *Pinakidia*, Poe attributes it to Jean-Baptiste de Santeul (1630–1697), a French poet keen on poems written in Latin. On the other hand, as Poe himself explains in brackets after the quotation, the text was said to have been engraved on the main gates of the Saint-Honoré Market in Paris, the same place that was formerly used as the Jacobin Club House. Baudelaire, though, in his translation of the tale into French, affirms that the Saint-Honoré Market never had gates or an inscription. How, then, did Poe come to know this quote? Pope-Hennessy (1971, 135) claims that the author's main source was Isaac D'Israeli's *Curiosities of Literature*, but does not provide further details about the reference. As Pope-Hennesy (1971, 135) argues, Poe "never at any time had the opportunity to become really erudite [...]. He was therefore obliged to pick up what materials he could wherewith to decorate his work and to take short cuts to make himself appear more learned than he was by gathering tags and quotations from secondary authors." Regardless of its origin, it is worth noting that the passage includes a morphological mistake, with the word "longas" instead of the correct *longos* (to agree in gender with "furores"). It seems, therefore, that, like Maturin, Poe was not as philologically accurate as he should have been.

In "The Cask of Amontillado," the Latin sentence is the motto of Montresor's family coat of arms: "nemo me impune lacessit" (Poe 1978, 1270).[12] This motto is a foreshadowing device: it reveals Montresor's plans for revenge, which will finally end with the taking of Fortunato's life. This time, as Mabbott points out, Poe resorted to the motto of the Scottish Order of the Thistle, once more unrelated to Latin literature.

In his tales, Poe also proves himself to be a worthy heir of the double quotation as conceived by Charles R. Maturin. This may be observed in "Berenice." Already in the first edition, this tale included a Latin sentence, attributed to the third-century Arab poet Ebn Zaiat ("Dicebant mihi sodales si sepulchrum amicae visitarem, curas meas aliquantulum fore levatas") (Poe 1978, 209), which Poe translated as follows: "My companions told me I might find some little alleviation of my misery, in visiting the grave of my beloved" (Poe 1978, 219)[13] This quotation appears underlined in one of the books belonging to Egaeus, the protagonist of the story, who finds the volume close to an enigmatic box. The sentence turns out

12 "No one attacks me with impunity" (my translation).

13 The 1835 edition has "visit arem," which was not corrected to "visitarem" until 1839.

to be particularly disturbing to Egaeus, thereby revealing its prophetic nature: as both protagonist and reader will soon discover, the box conceals Berenice's teeth, which Egaeus, probably unaware of what he was doing, pulled out after his cousin was buried alive. The sentence certainly already played an effective role as part of this scenario, but Poe decided to place it in the spotlight by also including it at the start of the tale in the 1845 edition, thus creating the double quotation and anticipating its importance within the story as the trigger for a fatal and self-fulfilling prophecy.

The quotation from Ebn Zaiat is a good example of Poe's deliberate use of Latin in his tales. As Mabbott points out (in Poe 1978, 219), Poe included the English translation of the Latin sentence in the early editions of his tale (1834, 1835, and 1839), though he then decided to remove the translation, which was no longer present in the 1840 edition. Mabbott also indicates that Poe probably took this quotation from a French text, but Mabbott was unable to confirm the source for the Latin version. Regardless of whether Poe himself translated this quotation or not, everything suggests that the use of Latin was a conscious choice, and that the writer opted to eliminate any trace of modern languages, probably with the aim of increasing the enigmatic character of the sentence and thus the mystery of the tale as a whole.

Finally, "The Purloined Letter" offers one of the most significant examples of Poe's use of Latin. In this tale, Poe goes one step further and copies a Latin quotation attributing it to the wrong author – an author who fits better to the plot than the original one. In this case, the tale is introduced with the following quotation: "Nil sapientiae odiosius acumine nimio" (Poe 1978, 974).[14] This is attributed to Seneca, but, as García Jurado and Barrios Castro (2005) have proved, this is false: Seneca is simply the literary mask used by Poe, who disguises himself here as a Roman philosopher in order to present his own ideas as the argument of an authoritative source. Recent research has revealed that the quotation is to be found in Petrarch's treatise *De Remediis utriusque Fortunae* (Theodorakis 2009), and that Poe probably drew it from Samuel Warren's novel *Ten Thousand a-Year* (Butti di Lima 2007). The relevance of this sentence to the unravelling of the mystery Auguste Dupin has to solve is later explained by the detective himself, who at the end of the story points out how, during an investigation, overthinking can prevent one from noticing clues that are visible to the naked eye.

14 "Nothing is more hateful to wisdom than too much cunning" (trans. Mabbott, in Poe 1978, 993). As Mabbott points out (in Poe 1978, 993), Poe used this quote in his 1843 edition of "The Murders of the Rue Morgue," but removed it shortly after.

In short, in Edgar Allan Poe's work the Latin quotation becomes a fictional element. As well as proving the effectiveness of strategies such as the double quotation, Poe uses the Latin quotation to anticipate certain events in the story and the tragic end that the characters are to encounter. Moreover, Poe detached the Latin language from the context of Roman civilization, using it to convey cryptic messages to challenge his readers. Poe's use of the Latin quotation is, therefore, confirmation that this type of intertextuality had become a literary game.

5 M. R. James and ghost stories: The Latin quotation and the supernatural

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the use of quotations in Latin had already become common in horror fiction. An example of this may be found in the ghost stories of M. R. James, where, as will be shown in this section, the use of Latin heralds the menacing and distressing appearance of the supernatural. James thereby consolidates the Latin quotation as a narrative element that helps to ramp up feelings of fear in the reader.[15] The following four stories will serve to illustrate four different uses of the Latin quotation in James's literary work.

In "Canon Alberic's Scrapbook" (1904), the use of Latin anticipates the presence of the supernatural, an unknown and frightening presence that will become the worst nightmare of the protagonist. The story takes place in Saint-Bertrand-de Comminges, in the foothills of the French Pyrenees. An English tourist who happens to pass by and stops to take some pictures of the cathedral is encouraged by the sacristan to buy one of its manuscripts, the work of the canon Alberic. The manuscript includes a text written in Latin, accompanied by a chilling illustration of a monstrous creature. Both inscription and image trigger a feeling of distress in the protagonist who, once alone in his room, has the disturbing feeling of being stalked by the monster in the engraving. Latin makes an appearance on three separate occasions in this tale (James 2007, 9, 14, 21), always accompanying images from the life of St Bernard that show this saint fighting the devil. Latin, therefore, contextualizes the manifestation of the supernatural and works as one of the languages that support it.

In "The Treasure of Abbot Thomas" (1904), Latin represents a riddle, a cryptogram that challenges the linguistic skills of the antiquarian protagonist. This time, the Latin text, hidden in the stained glass of a church in the town of Steinfeld,

15 For a more detailed study on the use of Latin in M. R. James's tales, see González-Rivas (2019).

provides the instructions for finding a hidden treasure. After a great deal of thought, the antiquarian eventually solves the riddle, but when he reaches the site indicated by the text, he finds not a treasure but a monstrous creature that traps him and tries to strangle him, terrorizing him until he finally manages to escape.

The story "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come to You, my Lad" (1904) also includes two Latin sentences ("Quis est iste, qui venit?" and "Fur, flabis, flebis" [James 2007, 118]),[16] the meaning of which will be crucial to the outcome of the story. This time, the sentences appear engraved on a mysterious whistle found by Parkins, a sceptical Cambridge professor who comes to the town of Burnstow to study the ruins of a church. In contrast to "The Treasure of Abbott Thomas," it is not his knowledge but his lack of knowledge of Latin which leads him to the ghost: Parkins understands the first sentence, but he is unable to translate the second. His ignorance of this second sentence leads him to miss its warning, and the professor blows the whistle, which appears to awaken a mysterious being that then stalks him day and night.

Finally, in "A School Story" (1911), the supernatural appears in the context of a Latin class, and in particular in two sentences that one of the students, driven by a superior force, writes as part of a grammar exercise: "Memento putei inter quatuor taxos" – "Remember the well among the four yews" (James 2007, 164) and "Si tu non veneris ad me, ego veniam ad te" – "If you don't come to me, I'll come to you" (165–166). This time the message is addressed to the Latin teacher, who feels a deepening anguish as he reads his student's sentences. The threat is eventually fulfilled, and the corpse of the teacher is found inside a well surrounded by four yews.

All of the Latin sentences in the aforementioned stories are entirely invented. Unlike Walpole, James does not toy with ambiguity, nor does he attribute his sentences to other authors, as Poe did; his work, unlike those of his predecessors, is detached from any sign of erudition, establishing a direct connection between Latin and the supernatural, and thus lending a new twist to this literary device. In M. R. James's stories, Latin becomes an essential element in the development of the plot, emerging in manuscripts, paintings, whistles, and grammar exercises. Sometimes it foreshadows the appearance of a ghost ("Canon Alberic"), and sometimes it indicates the path towards this ghost ("Abbott Thomas"). The message conveyed by the Latin sentence may contain a warning ("Oh, Whistle") or a threat ("A School Story"). The absence of literary references, however, does not entail a lack of philological precision, as may be seen in the grammatical and linguistic observations made by some of the characters. James does not leave anything to

16 "Who is this person who is coming?" and "Thief, you will blow, you will cry" (my translations).

chance, and his quotations, therefore, do not contain morphological mistakes such as those we have seen in the texts of Maturin or Poe.

How, though, did Latin acquire the connotations that associate it with the supernatural? Throughout the nineteenth century, the importance of Latin in the school curriculum had progressively declined, a direct effect of an increasingly industrialized and specialized society. Vernacular languages came to take a prominent place in academia, and, although they maintained their social prestige, classical languages were no longer required to practise professions that were increasingly technical in nature and less intellectual. As a result of these new circumstances, Latin became less and less known to a large majority of the population, thus acquiring an enigmatic and mystical air. As Guy de Maupassant asserts in his tale "La Peur" [Fear] (1884), "on n'a vraiment peur que de ce qu'on ne comprend pas,"[17] and it is beyond question that by this period Latin had already fallen into that category. This is a fact for many characters in Gothic stories, who manage to make readers experience the same uneasiness that the language instils in them. Latin, then, becomes shrouded in a mysterious veil, which is evident even to those who do know Latin but are aware of the exclusivity of the language. The increasing ignorance of Latin, however, goes back much further, to the Middle Ages, when the evolution of the language resulted in the establishment of different vernacular dialects. M. R. James, who was himself a renowned medievalist, was only too well aware of this process, and probably also of the fact that the first works of Gothic literature relied on this period of history as their main source of inspiration: this is, in fact, the reason why the genre was defined as "Gothic," following Horace Walpole's subtitle for his novel. On the other hand, one of the realms where Latin did survive as a vehicular language after the medieval period, though, was that of religion, which unquestionably reinforced the associations between Latin and the afterlife.[18] It is no surprise, therefore, that seances, so in vogue at the end of the nineteenth century, were also performed in Latin. There can be little doubt that James was well able to take advantage of all of this background in writing his chilling ghost stories.

17 "We experience real terror only for the things which we do not understand" (my translation). Cited following http://maupassant.free.fr/textes/peur.html (15 March 2019).

18 Through this association with the Church, Latin ceased to be a pagan symbol, becoming representative of Christianity in the Western world. This tension between paganism and Christianity remains active in horror fiction, where Latin can reference different contexts at the same time.

6 Conclusions

As the examples analysed in this article show, the Latin quotation is one of the key expressions of the classical world in Gothic literature from the beginnings of the genre. Walpole resorts to this device in *The Castle of Otranto*, where, playing with the convention of the introductory quotation, he offers a distorted version of Horace's verses, thus questioning the Latin poet's role as a source of authority. Charles Robert Maturin develops the possibilities of the introductory quotation, creating a kind of double quotation that reveals one of the hypotexts of his novel. In Poe's tales, Latin gains in importance and becomes detached from the specific context of classical literature and Roman antiquity. Aware of the evocative power the language has, as demonstrated by his predecessors, Poe expands the possibilities of the double quotation and also uses Latin sentences to give clues to the reader regarding the outcome of his stories. Finally, M. R. James makes Latin the language of the occult, the demonic, and the supernatural, assimilating it fully into Gothic fiction. The use of the Latin quotation in Gothic literature, therefore, grows progressively more complex and elaborate as the genre develops from its birth and throughout the nineteenth century, as the comparative analysis of these works has shown. All of these examples also show how the Latin quotation progressively becomes another element in the setting, appearing in a book read by one of the characters (Egaeus in "Berenice," or Don Alfonso in *Melmoth, the Wanderer*), in a motto in a family's coat of arms ("The Cask of Amontillado"), in apparently insignificant objects that seem to conceal a mystery ("Oh, Whistle"), or even in scribblings in a grammar exercise book written by a student under the influence of a disturbing force ("A School Story"). In all of these cases, the quotation fuses with the text, thus becoming a new narrative device. It is, of course, still used by modern authors such as Stephen King, who, possibly aware of the literary conventions of Gothic fiction, did not hesitate to resort to the well-known letter of Pliny the Younger in his novel *It*, thus contributing to the further consolidation of the existing tradition (García Jurado 2008b).

There is no doubt that, as Jesús Palacios concludes in his analysis of the use of ancient languages in Lovecraft's work, "the deader the language is, the more powerful the word and the sign are. Words are powerful when people do not waste them by overusing them. Even the most impressive and overwhelming terms wither and shrivel, losing all their meaning when they are constantly uttered" (Palacios 2008, 198; my translation). The masters of Gothic fiction already suspected this, and this is the reason why modern horror fiction still speaks Latin.

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Zofia Grzesiak

The Reading Space of Roberto Bolaño, or How to Use (Comparative) Literature

Abstract: In this essay, I propose a singular look at the works of the Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño (1953–2003). Specifically, I focus on his extraordinary, extremely functional, practical application of intertextuality. In his novels, we find interesting applications of literary texts both in the storyworlds (the use the characters make of books) and in the stories' construction (texts as material or devices for the author). I describe the following functions of Bolaño's use of intertextuality: basic (anecdotal), ontological, life-modelling, life-and-literature-mixing, identifying, prompting, connecting, and data-providing. I argue that, due to Bolaño's foregrounding of the subject and activity of reading, as well as, perhaps more importantly, the author's efforts to assume the position of a reader of his own texts, we can interpret his works as a specific reading space: a virtual, mental, imaginary area where the reader meets the text (including the author perceived as a fellow reader) and the two entities blend. For a reader involved in such a space, Bolaño's work may be considered a manual for the use of literature and for blending one's life with it.

Keywords: author, communication, intertextuality, reader, reading space, Roberto Bolaño

In this essay, I propose a singular look at a literature that is comparative in itself. While "text" might have lost its dominant powers due to the rise of "performance" as the metaphor or analogy for our everyday life (McKenzie 2001), it retains them in the works of Roberto Bolaño (1953–2003). This Chilean author's *oeuvre* makes a compelling case for undertaking one more project aimed at exploring intertextuality and literature as a universal code. The writings of Bolaño seem to possess an extraordinary quality of being an extremely functional, practical application of intertextuality. Comparing and contrasting literary works in the novels of Bolaño is not limited to mere reflections on the subject. Texts are compared with one's own experience and the personality of others, and basically serve as the glue that holds the scattered thoughts of the author, narrator, and characters together.

In Bolaño's texts, the narrators always speak to someone, often to a silent narratee, reminiscent of the actual author, who seems to be posing as a simple scribe or a fellow listener. Even when these dialogues do not concern literature

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explicitly (although they usually, at least partially, do), they still use the literary context as the main source of analogies. Bolaño seems to saturate his texts with literature. However, he manages to do that without pretentiousness and, at the same time, to fill his works with referential and critical reflections on reality. Nonetheless, even the most realistic explorations of the world's horrors are conducted with literature in mind and with literary texts in the hands of the protagonists. In this way, unusual and contrasting contexts are provided for each story, and a specific reading space is created. In the next section, I offer a description of such a space; in the subsequent parts of the essay, I explore the functions of intertextuality in Bolaño's works and the use of reading as a device, focusing particularly on the efforts of the author to assume the position of a reader of his own texts.

1 The reading space

I would like to propose a working definition of the reading space as a virtual, mental, imaginary place of encounter between the reader (who consists of body and mental network) and the text (and all its contexts, including the author), where these two entities, in a manner of speaking, blend into a complex integration network (Fauconnier and Turner 2004). As Wolfgang Iser suggests, in the process of reading we can "think the thoughts of another person" (1980, 125–126) and temporarily be "both ourselves and somebody else" (1989, 244), and we do not perceive the text from the outside, as an object of our study, but observe it actively from within (1980, 109). The German scholar's intuitions currently seem to be supported, to a certain extent, by cognitive research on reading (Gerrig 1998; Hamilton and Schneider 2002).

I propose to see the reading space as a paradoxical area, a sort of deconstruction-inspired double bind, where Iser's active reader,[1] placed by the German scholar inside the text, is also the participating reader from Stanley Fish's 1970 essay on "affective stylistics," who, in turn, contains literature inside of himself (or herself). In this space, the process of reading entails the construction of the perceived "object" by the reader (what Iser dubbed the "aesthetic object"); it is an event, a participatory experience of the text both as a world that one can visit and as a game one can play.

1 I am referring here not to Iser's concept of the implied reader but to his phenomenological hypothesis of an actual reader's process of reading.

Adding Jacques Derrida to the theoretical mix may seem excessive; however, I would just like to consider his performance as an idiosyncratic, "new"[2] reader (Fish 1980, 303), and see deconstruction as a very specific reading practice: an event that *transforms* the "space" of the text (Markowski 2003, 128–129), producing the reading space. The deconstruction-inspired reading space is thus based on the text, but it is not an image of it, nor is it its goal to produce what Iser described as the *Gestalt* of the text (a complete image of the whole). When reading, we seem to be at the same time inside and outside the text, oscillating between extreme immersion and cold critical distance, getting lost in the text and also bringing to it our own components (such as memories, experiences, emotions, knowledge, and idiosyncratic associations).

The reading space of Roberto Bolaño, that is, the one that might be built on the basis of his works as a result of reading, is conditioned by the author's foregrounding of the subject and activity of reading. Most of his characters are readers and writers for whom reading is one of the most basic human activities. What is more, the author, following the tradition of Miguel de Cervantes (Álvarez 2006, 42), positions himself, by means of embedded stories and intertextual relations, as a reader of his own and other texts. Thus, the reading space of Bolaño, based on texts that themselves pose as (or really constitute) acts of reading, includes multiple examples and theories of reading.

The precise definition of reading is more problematic than it may seem, and cognitive psychologists, as Richard Gerrig observes (1998, 22), still wonder what mental activities enable us to interact with the text and, even more, immerse ourselves in it. In order not to oversaturate an already conceptually dense essay, I would like to see reading rather broadly as the creation and participation of the reader in the reading space, following the guidelines of the "definition" proposed by Derek Attridge, according to whom "reading [...] involves a number of different types of activity occurring simultaneously and not always in accord with one another" (2004, 79).

The following analysis of intertextuality and related phenomena in the works of Roberto Bolaño constitutes an approach to, and initial exploration of, the kind of reading space that his texts invite us to build. As a result of such an investigation, we can obtain an image of the many uses he gives to literature.

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2 This adjective was literally accurate in the 1970s, when Meyer Abrams described Derrida, Harold Bloom, and Fish in this way in the critical essay "The Deconstructive Angel" (1977), to which Fish responded (also critically) in *Is There a Text in This Class?* Nonetheless, we can still consider those readers as "new" today, in the sense of the innovativeness and radicalness of their projects.

2 The functions of intertextuality in Bolaño

Bolaño uses reading both as a theme and as a device. On the one hand, he presents different strategies and practices employed by his characters. On the other, the narration is often constructed as the reading of a text (or texts). What is more, books are repeatedly wielded by the author as particular tools. Intertextuality in Bolaño can be analysed according to, for example, Gérard Genette's model; however, it is also possible to specify some particular functions that the Chilean author bestows on the works included in his texts. In this essay I will sketch some of them.

It is important to stress the exuberance of the intertextual connections in Bolaño's texts. For example, in *Estrella distante* (1996), a novel of only 161 small pages, 83 authors are referred to explicitly, not counting allusions and the like. Bolaño establishes critical, metatextual, historical, and parodic dialogues with many authors from different times and different parts of the world (from Homer to Isabel Allende).

2.1 The basic function: foregrounding of reading

In the works of Bolaño, literature is, first and foremost, something to be read. Intertextuality in a novel basically presents a reading list of the author; it reveals the quality of the text as something made out of reading. Bolaño's "basic" uses of literature represent the vastness of his intertextual repertoire, which serves both the plot and the composition of his texts.

The most straightforward image of intertextuality is a character in the act of reading. For Bolaño's protagonists, reading is one of the most important experiences, if not the most important one. Given that many of them want to be writers – more specifically, poets – they consider reading an obligatory education. Bolaño does not see writing as something separate from reading; on the contrary, the first is impossible without the second. In fact, sometimes the aspiring writers, as is the case with the visceral realist poets in *Los detectives salvajes* (1998), only complete the first step of writing, that is reading, and never actually write anything (at least not to the knowledge of the reader). For Bolaño, that does not exclude them from the writing community so long as they live the lives of true poets (Álvarez 2006, 38) and are readers of poetry.

2.2 The ontological function

Reading is also a very intense experience that can possess the power to blur the ontological boundaries between fact and fiction. For example, in the novel *Estrella distante*, the narrator, a writer, cooperates with a Chilean ex-detective to find an old acquaintance, Carlos Wieder, who used to be a poet but was also, however, a member of the army during Augusto Pinochet's regime and a serial killer of women. When the narrator is about to identify the criminal, in a seaside bar, he is reading the *Complete Works* of Bruno Schulz and feels, for a moment, filled with panic and anxiety, that the Polish writer is watching him: he sees the words on the pages turn into Schulz's eyes. In this case, Bolaño's use of the intertext has multiple meanings. One of them could be literary "vengeance" (an auxiliary, avenging function of intertextuality): the narrator is an accessory to the murder of Wieder (that is the detective's ultimate goal) – a neo-fascist criminal – and he reads a book by a Jewish writer killed during the war in a ghetto by a Gestapo officer.

2.3 The life-modelling function

Books are important correlates of the characters' real-life experiences, which are perceived by them (though it may seem counter-intuitive) as actualizations of their literary knowledge. For example, in *Los detectives salvajes* (Bolaño 2011, 427–449), one of the protagonists recalls a strange situation he witnessed during his holidays on the Costa Brava: a young boy got stuck in a chasm, a deep cave, and nobody knew how to help him. Automatically, the protagonist thought of Pío Baroja's short story "La sima" (1900), in which an almost identical occurrence takes place. In the story, the boy dies because everybody is convinced that a devil lives at the bottom of the cave and nobody dares to enter it. In *Los detectives salvajes*, the protagonist began to anticipate a corresponding outcome of the accident, but a guard from the campsite, Arturo Belano, the official literary alter ego of Bolaño, climbed down the cave and rescued the boy. From the protagonist's perspective, this coincidence was very significant and made him feel like his life was mysteriously interconnected with literature. From the writer's point of view, we have a reply to Baroja's text which could be described as a creative replotting. Belano does in the text what Bolaño does with the text: changes the outcome of events and further ridicules superstitions.

2.4 The life-and-literature-mixing function

Life and literature merge in many ways in Bolaño's world. Since most of the protagonists are, or want to be writers, it cannot be surprising that they try to blend their lives with art. Some of their efforts have humorous results (which does not mean that they should not be taken seriously). In one of the most interesting metaliterary fragments of *Los detectives salvajes*, one of the protagonists, Ernesto San Epifanio, a gay poet, explains his specific model of poetics. In his opinion, novels are generally a heterosexual genre and poetry is a homosexual one (the narrator of this part of the book, Juan García Madero, supposes that short stories must be bisexual, but he is not certain).

> Dentro del inmenso océano de la poesía distinguía varias corrientes: maricones, maricas, mariquitas, locas, bujarrones, mariposas, ninfos y filenos. Las dos corrientes mayores, sin embargo, eran la de los maricones y la de los maricas. Walt Whitman, por ejemplo, era un poeta maricón. Pablo Neruda, un poeta marica. William Blake era maricón, sin asomo de duda, y Octavio Paz marica. Borges era fileno, es decir de improviso podía ser maricón y de improviso simplemente asexual. Rubén Darío era una loca, de hecho la reina y el paradigma de las locas. (Bolaño 2011, 83)

> [Within the vast ocean of poetry he identified various currents: faggots, queers, sissies, freaks, butches, fairies, nymphs, and philenes. But the two major currents were faggots and queers. Walt Whitman, for example, was a faggot poet. Pablo Neruda, a queer. William Blake was definitely a faggot. Octavio Paz was a queer. Borges was a philene, or in other words he might be a faggot one minute and simply asexual the next. Rubén Darío was a freak, in fact, the queen freak, the prototypical freak.] (Bolaño, trans. Wimmer 2008, 80)

San Epifanio's theory and the classification of the poets merits a separate analysis that it is impossible to fit into this short essay. What needs to be stressed is that, in Bolaño's text, applying literary rules or categories to real-life situations is as normal and frequent as applying real-life, non-literary criteria or definitions to poetics.

2.5 The identifying (sub)function

One of the most interesting examples of such a process is the substitution of the description of a person with the description of their library. What you read is what you are, Bolaño seems to be telling us, when his narrator presents a character, another poet, first and foremost by describing his literary affiliations. In *Estrella distante*, the protagonists frequent two poetry workshops, one led by Diego Soto and the other by his best friend and rival, Juan Stein. "Sus poemas eran breves, influido a partes iguales por Nicanor Parra y Ernesto Cardenal, como la

mayoría de los poetas de su generación, y por la poesía lárica de Jorge Teillier, aunque Stein nos recomendaba leer a Lihn más que a Teillier" [Like most poets of his generation, he was influenced by Nicanor Parra and Ernesto Cardenal, but also by Jorge Teillier's home-grown imagism, although Stein recommended we read Lihn rather than Teillier] (Bolaño 2010, 56; trans. Andrews 2004, 47). Stein's tastes did not always agree with those of his students: he did not appreciate Jorge Cáceres or Rosamel del Valle or Anguita. He did like Pezoa Veliz, Magallanes Moure (which his students considered a "frivolity" on his part), Pablo de Rokha, and the love poetry of Pablo Neruda and the latter's *Residencia en la tierra*, which was absolutely unacceptable for the young aspiring poets, born, in their own words, with an allergy to the Chilean master, a "neruditis" (Bolaño 2010, 57). These tastes are the basic description not just of the style, but also of the character of Juan Stein. Bolaño suggests that human personality, especially in the case of a poet, can – and perhaps even should – be described in the same way and with the same tools as the works he or she absorbs and produces.

2.6 The prompting function

The texts the protagonists read also serve as starting points for their literary investigations or as clues in them. *Pesquisa literaria*[3] in Latin-American literature could be, and sometimes is, considered a separate subgenre of narrative, stemming from the writings of Jorge Luis Borges, such as "Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote" or "Examen de la obra de Herbert Quain." One of Bolaño's recurring motifs is protagonists who embark on journeys in search of lost writers. The narrator of *Estrella distante* is hired to provide literary expertise in the Wieder investigation (he studies multiple magazines in an attempt to attribute the authorship of various poems to the criminal in order to establish his location), but usually texts the protagonists read prompt them to act themselves. They undertake literary investigations in order to prolong the reading experience, never leaving their reading spaces. In *Los detectives salvajes*, Belano and Lima set out to find Cesárea Tinajero, who disappeared after moving north to Sonora. In *2666* (2004), four European literary critics travel as far as Mexico to find the author they are studying, Benno von Archimboldi.

3 Literary investigations in which the narrator searches for hidden meanings in books (usually apocryphal ones), for missing parts of books or their authors (who might also be missing), and relates his or her reading adventures.

2.7 The connecting function

The connecting function is a paradoxical tool for irrational sense making or establishing coherence. The books the characters read sometimes help them to connect multiple threads in the digressive plots of their own stories. The narrator of *Estrella distante* confesses that he always thinks of Juan Stein and Diego Soto in connection with another person, a transgender performance artist called Lorenzo-Petra. The narrator admits he cannot rationally explain the connection that he sees between them and that there is no specific reason for the fact that he always reflects on the three of them together, except perhaps a book they all read, which turns out to be a French version of Fritz Pearl's *In and Out the Garbage Pail* (Bolaño 2010, 85).

2.8 The data-providing function

Literature also helps to fill in the blanks of the stories that the protagonists (and the author) try to tell us. If we continue to take *Estrella distante* as a primary source of examples, the narrator quotes apocryphal (from our point of view) historical non-fiction by Julio Cesar Muñoz Cano, a former fellow-soldier of Wieder, when he tries to recreate the poet-murderer's life after the military coup. Books function in Bolaño's world as data collections of all kinds, broadening the characters' imaginative horizons and also simply serving as information. From the author's perspective, the function of literature in this instance is multifaceted: it constitutes a literary game (the data provided may be unreliable) and problematizes the distinction between fact and fiction.

It could be said that Bolaño and his protagonists see reality through the filter of literature. They do not perceive things and events as concrete and unambiguous, but rather as signs to interpret. In a way, they are like Don Quixote, of whom Carlos Fuentes has said he "does not see," he "*reads*" (1977, 196; emphasis in original). Unlike some critics, they do not see everything as text because of its structure; instead, they apply the mode of processing they know from reading, their basic experience, and education, to everything else.

3 The author as reader

Bolaño's books are full of other books and their readers, and the author himself also tries to assume the position of the reader. He foregrounds reading, presents

multiple readings or summaries of real and apocryphal works, and saturates his literary universe with intertextual connections. Above all, the writer converts himself into a reader of his own story by creating an autofictional alter ego who takes up the position of the main storyteller, seemingly overthrowing the author. Here we arrive at the point where the case of Roberto Bolaño becomes very curious. *Los detectives salvajes* can be unlocked with a biographical key – it is, among other things, a *roman-à-clef*. The young visceral realist poets of Mexico City correspond to Bolaño's real-life friends from his Mexican times. They also had a poetic movement, called infrarealism (see Madariaga 2010). Ever since the publication of this novel, many naive readers, but also many critics (Massot 2010; Rohter 2009), have tried to unlock all of Bolaño's other works with the same key. Arturo Belano began to be considered not just as Bolaño's official alter ego, but basically as his indistinguishable double.

Bolaño splits his identity: he is present in the text as Belano and on the cover of the work as the author. That is why it is possible to see his texts as structured as conversations, to see them as specifically dialogic. This is particularly evident in *Estrella distante*, where the narration actually is depicted as a conversation (though only one voice is audible): it is explained in the prologue that Bolaño, the writer, is recounting a story told to him by his friend, Arturo Belano. Embedding the narrative permits Bolaño to assume the position of the reader. What is more, *Estrella distante* is in fact a hypertext (in Genette's terminology) of one chapter of Bolaño's previous novel, *La literatura nazi en América* (1996) – a rewrite, or, in other words: a reading of the previous novel. In the prologue, Bolaño states that he and Belano are discussing the text that he (Bolaño) is writing (down) with the other text in hand.

In Bolaño's universe, even when the act of storytelling is backgrounded (which does not happen often), we sense the presence of an "organizer" of the text, of a silent partner in the characters' monologues, which are actually dialogues, as exemplified by *Los detectives salvajes*. The novel consists of three parts. The first and the last one are fragments of the diary of a young poet, Juan García Madero, who describes his initiation into adulthood, intimacy, and poetry, as well as the lives of his friends, the visceral realist poets in Mexico City in 1975, and the search for the lost poet Cesárea Tinajero. The second part is a collection of eighty-three testimonies of different people, collected from 1976 to 1996, which try to recreate the story of Arturo Belano and Ulises Lima, the founders of the visceral realist movement. Every person recounts their own story. Only in the penultimate testimony, narrated by a scholar, Ernesto García Grajales, does the reader get a more tangible glimpse of the anonymous "interviewer," the collector of these testimonies, the narratee of all the second-part narratives:

> En mi humildad, señor, le diré que soy el único estudioso de los real visceralistas que existe en México y, si me apura, en el mundo. [...]. Moctezuma Rodríguez anda metido en política. Dicen que Felipe Müller sigue en Barcelona, está casado y tiene un hijo, parece que es feliz, de vez en cuando los cuates de por acá le publican algún poema. Ulises Lima sigue viviendo en el DF. Las pasadas vacaciones lo fui a ver. Un espectáculo. [...]. De Arturo Belano no sé nada. No, a Belano no lo conocí. [...]. Los real visceralistas del DF. Claro, porque ya había habido otro grupo de real visceralistas, allá por los años veinte, los real visceralistas del norte. ¿Eso no lo sabía? Pues sí. Aunque de esos sí que no hay mucha documentación. No, no fue una coincidencia. Más bien fue un homenaje. Una señal. Una respuesta. Quién sabe. (Bolaño 2011, 550–551)

> [In all humbleness, sir, I can say that I'm the only expert on the visceral realists in Mexico, and if pressed, the world. (...). Moctezuma Rodríguez is involved in politics. I've heard that Felipe Müller is still in Barcelona, married and with a kid. He seems to be happy. Every so often his buddies over here publish some poem he's written. Ulises Lima still lives in Mexico City. I went to see him last break. A real spectacle. (...). About Arturo Belano I know nothing. No, I never met Belano. (...). The Mexico City visceral realists. Yes, because there had already been another group of visceral realists, in the 1920s. The northern visceral realists. You didn't know that? Well, they existed. Although talk about undocumented. No, it wasn't a coincidence. More like an homage. A gesture. A response. Who knows.] (Bolaño, trans Wimmer 2008, 584–585)

Given the general modus operandi of Bolaño, it is very tempting to identify this narratee with the author. Due to this, it seems (in the experience of the reader) that the writer assumes a similar position to that of the reader, as if they both read the diary of Garcia Madero in the first and third parts of the novel and listened together to the testimonies in the second.

4 Conclusions

The categorization and description of the functions of intertextuality (and, by extension, literature in general) in the works of Bolaño proposed in this essay is provisional and, to a certain degree, arbitrary. It is an interesting problem and an inspiring project that I further develop elsewhere.[4]

All the examples so far have pointed to the literary aspect of Bolaño's literature. Nonetheless, there is another side to it. One of the most interesting characteristics of his texts is the fact that he seems to succeed in merging the tradition

4 The observations gathered in this essay form part of my PhD dissertation: *The Phenomenon of Reading in the Works of Roberto Bolaño. The Author's, Protagonists' and Readers' Response Strategies and Practices* (written in Polish, 2019. I describe the Chilean author's different uses of literature in Grzesiak (2015).

of self-reflexive, experimental literature with an acute critique of society and history. He manages to explore the horrors of World War II and Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile, of the female homicides in northern Mexico and the Tlatelolco Massacre of 1968 (see Moreno 2011), while simultaneously presenting the lives of young poets trying to live the lives of true poets, or critics looking for lost writers. Bolaño seems to invite his readers to explore not only the joys of literature, but also the horrors of the world, together.

By foregrounding the act of reading and narrating, the communicatory function of literature, and establishing potential real-world references, Bolaño creates a strong connection with the reader, a sense of complicity and participation in the storyworld. And since, in the reading process, the author and his work figuratively meet readers and their individual contexts, creating an ontologically problematic but cognitively immensely productive reading space, some elements of that space may find their way into the everyday lives of readers. Bolaño's work may be considered a manual for the use of literature and for blending one's life with it.

In the reading space of Bolaño, we can find interesting applications of literary texts both in the storyworlds (the use the characters make of books) and in the stories' construction (texts as material or devices for the author). We can learn to read for educational purposes, for pleasure, and also to use literature as the basic fabric of our world and a handy tool in our description and cognition of it.

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Alicia Hostein

Quand aimer c'est dire : langage et passion chez Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Résumé: Dès la Préface dialoguée de son roman épistolaire, *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*, Rousseau nous présente le langage de ses deux amants en ces termes : « S'ensuit-il de là que leur langage soit fort énergique ? Point du tout ; il n'est qu'extraordinaire. »

S'il est entendu depuis Roland Barthes et ses célèbres *Fragments d'un Discours amoureux* (1977) que l'amour s'inscrit dans le langage selon une modalité tout aussi singulière que rigoureuse, il s'agira dès lors d'étudier de quelle façon langage et passion s'entremêlent chez Rousseau. Se dessine en effet, au sein de son œuvre, une dialectique tout à fait explicite : le langage est né de la passion qu'il constitue réciproquement. Pour le dire autrement, s'il a fallu la violence de la passion amoureuse pour engendrer le langage humain, le statut ontologique de cette même passion est toujours fonction de son expression.

Nous nous appuierons donc sur une lecture croisée de l'*Essai sur l'origine des langues* (1781) et de *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) afin de dégager et d'expliciter les enjeux d'une telle dialectique, qui noue de manière indéfectible les jeux de la passion aux écueils – tout autant qu'à la richesse – de la langue, instituant par-là un véritable langage amoureux aux figures et aux codes bien déterminés.

Mots clés: Rousseau (1712–1778), Amour, Langage, Temporalité, Musique

La formule « quand aimer c'est dire » permet de mettre en lumière l'articulation de deux dimensions fondamentales dans le rapport entre passion et expression chez Jean-Jacques Rousseau. La dimension performative[1] que l'on pourrait attribuer à un tel énoncé doit s'appréhender du point de vue de sa complexité. Dans un premier temps, la conjonction temporelle « quand » témoigne tout autant d'une profération qui trouverait son origine dans la passion que de l'importance du déploiement de cette même profération dans le temps. Une des caractéristiques du langage amoureux est en effet la nécessité que rencontre celui-ci de s'étirer et de se répéter pour faire sens et pour émouvoir. C'est de cette manière que

1 Nous renvoyons à ce sujet à la manière dont Dominique Rabaté envisage l'énonciation lyrique comme une promesse : « Et peut-être, la diction lyrique liée à l'idée de geste lyrique aurait toujours quelque chose à voir avec la structure de la promesse qui conditionne toute prise de parole : promesse que les mots soient conformes à la réalité (intérieure comme extérieure) ; promesse que leur énonciation soit partageable. » (Rabaté 2013, 23).

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s'éclaire la deuxième dimension, qui tient au rapport ontologique qui lie amour et expression. Ce lien se trouve admirablement illustré par l'histoire de Brantôme, rapportée par Rousseau au cinquième livre de l'*Émile* :

> Brantôme dit que du temps de François premier une jeune personne ayant un amant babillard lui imposa un silence absolu et illimité qu'il garda si fidèlement deux ans entiers qu'on le crut devenu muet par maladie. Un jour en pleine assemblée, sa maîtresse, qui, dans ces temps où l'amour se faisait avec mystère n'était point connue pour telle, se vanta de le guérir sur le champ, et le fit avec ce seul mot : parlez. (1762, 745–746)

La passion doit se dire pour s'inscrire dans la temporalité de l'existence. Or, cette nécessité du dire renvoie à la manière dont Rousseau rend raison de la naissance du langage, qui serait intimement lié aux passions : il faut la puissance du sentiment amoureux pour voir l'émergence d'un langage articulé.

1 De la passion au langage

Lors des premières ébauches de son roman, non encore conçu comme tel, Rousseau cherchait un décor propre à accueillir ses personnages, et concluait son examen des lieux possibles de la façon suivante : « il me fallait cependant un lac[2] » (1782–1789, 431). Michel Butor, quant à lui, fait ce constat éloquent : « Revenir au bord du lac, c'est revenir à l'invention du langage » (Butor 2008, 45). Avant d'en venir au lac, Rousseau, dans son *Essai sur l'origine des langues,*[3] remonte aux « premiers temps », afin d'expliciter la naissance du langage : « Dans les premiers temps les hommes épars sur la face de la terre n'avaient de société que celle de la famille, de lois que celles de la nature, de langue que le geste et quelques sons inarticulés » (1781, 395). Il a donc fallu un principe de réunion pour solliciter le besoin d'expression, et Rousseau nous le présente en ces termes : « dans les lieux arides où l'on ne pouvait avoir de l'eau que par des puits, il fallut bien se réunir pour les creuser ou du moins s'accorder pour leur usage. Telle dut être l'origine des sociétés et des langues dans les pays chauds » (1781, 405). Et si la réunion des hommes devient le critère permettant le développement de leur langue, c'est du fait que de cette réunion peut naître le sentiment amoureux. Rousseau l'affirme par une formule célèbre : « Là fut enfin le vrai berceau des peuples, et du pur cristal des fontaines sortirent les premiers feux de l'amour » (1781, 406).

2 Pour une étude de l'importance de l'eau chez Rousseau, voir Starobinski (1971 [1957], 301–316).
3 Pour une étude de l'*Essai* et de ses complexités, voir Derrida (1967, 235–378) et Masuda (1988, 87–109).

Ce qui fait cependant la particularité de la théorie rousseauiste de l'origine des langues, est qu'elle en distingue deux types, à savoir les langues méridionales et les langues du nord. Leurs différences résident dans le type de passion qui les a dictées et cette distinction s'explique par l'inversion du rapport entre passion et besoin[4] : « Dans les climats méridionaux où la nature est prodigue les besoins naissent des passions, dans les pays froids où elle est avare les passions naissent des besoins, et les langues, tristes filles de la nécessité se sentent de leur dure origine » (1781, 407).

Mais pour comprendre plus précisément le rapport entre passion et besoin du point de vue de la distinction entre langues méridionales et langues du nord, il faut se tourner vers la description que Rousseau nous offre des passions des pays chauds. Ce sont, des « passions voluptueuses qui tiennent à l'amour et à la mollesse. La nature fait tant pour les habitants qu'ils n'ont presque rien à faire » (1781, 408).

Dans la formation des langues, le rapport entre les besoins et les passions se trouve prédominant. Du point de vue de l'expression et de son développement, il y aurait donc à la fois adéquation entre les besoins et le langage, et, surtout, une forme de supériorité des langues méridionales qui seraient à même d'exprimer des passions qui parviennent plus difficilement à se faire ressentir dans les pays du nord. C'est donc le sentiment qui dicte la langue, comme on peut le voir au chapitre XII de l'*Essai* : « avec les premières voix se formèrent les premières articulations ou les premiers sons, selon le genre de la passion qui dictait les uns ou les autres » (1781, 410). Ce chapitre, intitulé « origine de la musique », décrit une origine commune de la langue, du chant et de la poésie :

> Autour des fontaines dont j'ai parlé les premiers discours furent les premières chansons ; les retours périodiques et mesurés du rythme, les inflexions mélodieuses des accents firent naître la poésie et la musique avec la langue, ou plutôt tout cela n'était que la même langue pour ces heureux climats et ces heureux temps où les seuls besoins pressants qui demandaient le concours d'autrui étaient ceux que le cœur faisait naître. (1781, 410)

Plus que d'une origine commune, Rousseau parle d'une même langue pour la poésie, la musique et le langage usuel. La distinction entre langues méridionales et langues du nord tire donc ici toute son importance des conditions d'émergence des passions. Pour rendre raison du rapport tendu entre passions et besoins, rapport qui implique la distinction entre langues méridionales et langues du nord,

4 « [...] d'un côté Rousseau veut dire que les deux termes de cette opposition s'excluent mutuellement, mais de l'autre, il doit reconnaître que les besoins aussi bien que les passions participent, bien que d'une manière différente, à la formation des langues et des sociétés dans les deux régions. » (Masuda 1988, 96).

on peut se tourner vers un autre rapport, que Rousseau qualifie de « fausse analogie », et qui met en jeu les couleurs et les sons.

2 Du langage des passions au langage musical

Nous avons vu que les premières langues étaient les filles du plaisir et non du besoin car les seuls besoins rencontrés dans les pays chauds sont ceux que le cœur fait naître. L'entremêlement du chant, de la poésie et de la langue, nous montre la richesse que Rousseau attribue aux langues méridionales. C'est cette même richesse qui se retrouve dans la musique, et qui permet de justifier la supériorité des sons sur la couleur.

Cette supériorité se manifeste d'abord du point de vue de la représentation : « C'est un des grands avantages du musicien de pouvoir peindre les choses qu'on ne saurait entendre, tandis qu'il est impossible au peintre de représenter celles qu'on ne saurait voir […] » (1781, 421). La spécificité de la musique serait liée à sa détermination même, en tant qu'art « qui n'agit que par le mouvement » (1781, 421). C'est par la notion de mouvement que s'éclaire le plus aisément le lien entre passion et musique. En effet, ce qui permet à la musique d'émouvoir et d'attendrir tient au fait que l'art du musicien « consiste à substituer à l'image insensible de l'objet celle des mouvements que sa présence excite dans le cœur du contemplateur » (1781, 422). Ainsi, la musique n'est pas cantonnée à la simple imitation. Il ne s'agit donc pas de représenter directement les choses, mais d'exciter « dans l'âme les mêmes mouvements qu'on éprouve en les voyant » (1781, 422). Ce phénomène est identique à celui que Rousseau introduit, dans la préface dialoguée de *Julie ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*, par le biais de la distinction entre une lettre d'amour écrite par un auteur qui pense à la gloire et une lettre que l'amour aurait réellement dictée :

> Lisez une lettre d'amour faite par un Auteur dans son cabinet, par un bel esprit qui veut briller. Pour peu qu'il ait de feu dans la tête, sa lettre va, comme on dit, brûler le papier ; la chaleur n'ira pas plus loin. […] Au contraire, une lettre que l'amour a réellement dictée ; une lettre d'un Amant vraiment passionné, sera lâche, diffuse, toute en longueurs, en désordre, en répétitions. […] [O]n se sent ému sans savoir pourquoi. Si la force du sentiment ne nous frappe pas, sa vérité nous touche, et c'est ainsi que le cœur sait parler au cœur. (1761, 15)

On voit ici que c'est le sentiment qui permet de distinguer les deux types de lettres. Ainsi, alors que la peinture ne peut représenter que ce que l'on est en mesure de voir, la musique quant à elle, excite en nous le même attendrissement, la même émotion que ceux que l'on pourrait ressentir à la lecture d'une lettre écrite par un amant passionné. On doit cependant noter une seconde distinction,

qui tient au fait que nous sommes émus par la lettre dictée par l'amour, mais « sans savoir pourquoi ». La cause est difficile à identifier du fait que les caractéristiques de ce même type de lettre tiennent à son désordre, ses répétitions et ses longueurs. Il convient donc d'étudier plus avant les rapports entretenus par le langage amoureux et la musique.

Le lien est d'abord établi par Rousseau, dans la même préface, où il compare le recueil de lettres à une romance : « C'est une longue romance dont les couplets pris à part n'ont rien qui touche, mais dont la suite produit à la fin son effet » (1761, 18). Comme le remarque Camille Guyon-Lecoq : « Rousseau souligne lui-même la parenté qu'entretiennent style sensible et formes musicales [...] » (2012, 131). Le choix d'un terme musical pour désigner le roman épistolaire doit ainsi nous conduire à étudier les spécificités d'un langage qui emprunterait sa forme à la musique.[5]

3 Du langage musical à l'écriture épistolaire

La romance musicale est décrite dans un article du *Dictionnaire de Musique*. Elle y est présentée en ces termes :

> Air sur lequel on chante un petit Poème du même nom, divisé par couplets, duquel le sujet est pour l'ordinaire quelque histoire amoureuse et souvent tragique. Comme la *Romance* doit être écrite d'un style simple, touchant, et d'un goût un peu antique, l'Air doit répondre au caractère des paroles ; point d'ornements, rien de maniéré, une mélodie douce, naturelle, champêtre, et qui produise son effet par elle-même, indépendamment de la manière de la Chanter. Il n'est pas nécessaire que le chant soit piquant, il suffit qu'il soit naïf, qu'il n'offusque point la parole, qu'il la fasse bien entendre, et qu'il n'exige pas une grande étendue de voix. Une *Romance* bien faite, n'ayant rien de saillant, n'affecte pas d'abord ; mais chaque couplet ajoute quelque chose à l'effet des précédents, l'intérêt augmente insensiblement, et quelquefois on se trouve attendri jusqu'aux larmes sans pouvoir dire où est le charme qui a produit cet effet. (1767, 1028)

On remarque de nombreuses similitudes entre la romance musicale et la romance épistolaire. Mais tout d'abord, la première chose à noter, dans cet extrait, est la définition de la romance comme un air sur lequel on chanterait « un petit Poème du même nom ». On retrouve ici l'entremêlement de la langue, de la musique et de la poésie que Rousseau décrit dans l'*Essai sur l'origine des langues*. Surtout, ce qui frappe est le surgissement de l'émotion, de l'attendrissement, à

5 Il convient de prendre en compte ici la mise en garde de François Jacob : « si l'intertextualité permet la rencontre de deux textes déterminés [...] elle n'autorise guère un échange de type "transesthétique". » (2002, 462).

partir d'une structure décrite de manière péjorative. Dans le *Dictionnaire*, on voit que la romance n'a rien de saillant, caractéristique commune au roman, qui ne contiendrait « rien de saillant, rien de remarquable, [...] on n'admire rien, l'on est frappé de rien » (1761, 15). On pourrait presque redouter une forme d'ennui. En effet, la lettre dictée par l'amour « sera lâche, diffuse, toute en longueurs, en désordre, en répétitions ». Le cœur de l'amoureux, « plein d'un sentiment qui déborde, redit toujours la même chose et n'a jamais achevé de dire ; comme une source vive qui coule sans cesse et ne s'épuise jamais » (1761, 15). Dans la théorie musicale de Rousseau – la romance étant avant tout un air – on trouve la description suivante des paroles de ce même air : « [...] quoi qu'assez courtes pour l'ordinaire, elles se coupent, se répètent, se transposent au gré du Compositeur : elles ne font pas une narration qui passe [...] » (1767, 640). Le point de comparaison le plus important entre les deux textes réside cependant dans un même phénomène de rupture. En dépit du désordre, avec les lettres du roman épistolaire « on se sent l'âme attendrie ; on se sent ému sans savoir pourquoi ». Avec la romance, « quelquefois on se trouve attendri jusqu'aux larmes sans pouvoir dire où est le charme qui a produit cet effet ». Ainsi, l'attendrissement et l'émotion jailliraient d'éléments non remarquables, mais qui agissent par leur répétition, leur suite ; c'est l'enchaînement qui engendre l'attachement. Si, dans le roman-*romance*, « les couplets pris à part n'ont rien qui touche », « la suite produit à la fin son effet », la romance musicale, quant à elle, « n'affecte pas d'abord ; mais chaque couplet ajoute quelque chose à l'effet des précédents, l'intérêt augmente insensiblement ». Donc, bien que la cause de l'émotion ne soit pas directement identifiable, il semble qu'elle se confonde avec une certaine action dans le temps, avec une accumulation qui permet, progressivement, d'attendrir l'âme. C'est ce qui se trouve confirmé par la description des paroles des airs : « C'est par ces répétitions bien entendues, c'est par ces coups redoublés qu'une expression qui d'abord n'a pu vous émouvoir, vous ébranle enfin, vous agite, vous transporte hors de vous [...] » (1767, 640).[6] On trouve ici un lien entre l'action du sentiment et un déplacement du moi. Le transport amoureux prend alors tout son sens, puisque l'idée de déplacement qu'il contient implique l'inscription temporelle de laquelle il procède. On voit de cette manière qu'une « romance bien faite » et qu'une lettre dictée par l'amour produisent les mêmes effets par leur déploiement dans le temps. Le sentiment engendré n'est en rien lié à une quelconque représentation, mais bien à certains mouvements dans l'âme. Il s'agit dès lors de tenter d'appréhender l'importance de la dimension temporelle dans la formation et dans l'expression du sentiment.

6 « Ces coups redoublés, on les entend dans la phrase de *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, qui offre de nombreux exemples de termes répétés. » (Roulin 2010, 272).

4 Le temps du transport

Nous l'avons vu, si la musique est un art qui agit par le mouvement, son déploiement est nécessairement temporel. Il en va de même pour la passion amoureuse des deux amants du roman épistolaire de Rousseau. Ce qu'offre en effet le roman, c'est la possibilité de mettre en regard le temps de l'amour et le temps de son expression, du fait même que l'expression entretient avec le sentiment un rapport ontologique étroit : l'expression manifeste ce qui la précède du point de vue de l'être, tout en le constituant.

Les différentes figures qui sont apparues comme caractéristiques du langage amoureux impliquent un attachement et un attendrissement progressif. On rejoint ici le réquisit de la romance, « dont les couplets pris à part n'ont rien qui touche, mais dont la suite produit à la fin son effet. » (1761, 18). Et avant cette détermination en tant que romance, on trouve, dans le même texte, la description suivante :

> Mes jeunes gens sont aimables ; mais pour les aimer à trente ans, il faut les avoir connus à vingt. Il faut avoir vécu longtemps avec eux pour s'y plaire [...]. Leurs lettres n'intéressent pas tout d'un coup ; mais peu à peu elles attachent : on ne peut ni les prendre ni les quitter. La grâce et la facilité n'y sont pas, ni la raison, ni l'esprit, ni l'éloquence ; le sentiment y est, il se communique au cœur par degrés, et lui seul à la fin supplée à tout. (1761, 18)

Le temps dont il est question ici positionne Rousseau contre la théorie du coup de foudre. L'inscription temporelle de la passion répond à celle de la musique, à savoir que l'émotion surgit par des répétitions et des longueurs. Cette conception se répercute dans la forme même du roman. On peut en prendre pour exemple les trois premières lettres, dans lesquelles Saint-Preux déclare sa flamme à Julie. Dans la première, on trouve l'inquiétude liée à un aveu[7] dont le jeune homme ne sait quel effet il va produire : « Il faut vous fuir Mademoiselle, je le sens bien : j'aurais dû beaucoup moins attendre, ou plutôt il fallait ne vous voir jamais. Mais que faire aujourd'hui ? Comment m'y prendre ? » (1761, 31).

Dès la seconde, on voit apparaître le désordre et la confusion. La réitération même de l'écriture, avant d'avoir reçu une réponse, en témoigne :

> Que je me suis abusé, Mademoiselle, dans ma première Lettre ! Au lieu de soulager mes maux, je n'ai fait que les augmenter en m'exposant à votre disgrâce, et je sens que le pire de tout est de vous déplaire. Votre silence, votre air froid et réservé ne m'annoncent que trop mon malheur. (1761, 34–35)

7 « *La Nouvelle Héloïse* s'ouvre de la manière la plus vive, la plus abrupte et la plus frappante qui soit, sur une voix anonyme, sous le signe de l'urgence et de la perplexité. » (Hochart 2012, 53).

Enfin, la troisième lettre présente le désarroi du jeune homme face à l'absence de réponse : « Ne vous impatientez pas, Mademoiselle ; voici la dernière importunité que vous recevrez de moi. » (1761, 34–35).

Ce qui nous intéresse ici est d'observer la nécessité de répéter un aveu qui se fait de plus en plus douloureux mais en même temps de plus en plus indispensable. Cette appréhension de l'écriture amoureuse comme une nécessité, où la lettre devient le lieu de dépôt d'un sentiment qui déborde, rejoint tout à fait les descriptions de la seconde préface et de l'*Essai sur l'origine des langues*. Ce qu'on lit dans ces trois débuts de lettre n'est pas tant affaire de contenu qu'affaire de forme. L'amant se trouve face à un conflit qui met en jeu les règles classiques de la communication d'une part, et ce que ses sentiments lui dictent d'autre part. Le sentiment amoureux contient, en son sein, l'inquiétude qu'il fait naître et le débordement qui le caractérise. Ces deux éléments conduisent à l'expression, par le biais d'une forme de reconquête de soi.

L'idée d'un débordement associé à l'amour se retrouve de manière encore plus nette dans la quatrième partie de l'ouvrage. Saint-Preux écrit à son ami Édouard : « Je me lève au milieu de la nuit pour vous écrire. Je ne saurais trouver un moment de repos. Mon cœur agité, transporté, ne peut se contenir au dedans de moi ; il a besoin de s'épancher. » (1761, 418).

Cette nécessité de l'épanchement est justement recueillie par l'écriture. Sans enlever quoi que ce soit à l'inquiétude ou à l'agitation du jeune homme, l'expression devient ici le moyen de prendre acte d'un état qu'il faut avant tout partager.

L'amour se conçoit donc comme un transport, qui nous fait sortir de nous pour mieux nous y ramener, dès lors que l'expression permet la réunification d'un moi en apparence détaché de lui-même. Ce mouvement dialectique est à rapprocher de la lecture. Nous l'avions vu, à un premier niveau, par rapport à l'effet produit par une lettre dictée par l'amour, et nous le retrouvons désormais par le biais d'une singulière mise en abîme opérée par Rousseau.

5 Quand aimer c'est lire

L'évocation de la lecture[8] du point de vue du roman épistolaire de Rousseau nous fait en premier lieu songer à la scène de lecture comme *topos* de la littérature amoureuse. Dans *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, ce *topos* est en réalité une réécriture de la

8 « Lire, sera donc repérer ou établir des réseaux, travailler le texte au moins autant qu'on se laissera travailler par lui […] » (Seité 2002, 365). Au sujet de la lecture chez Rousseau, voir Ganochaud (1999, 3–18) et Bocquentin (1999, 329–349).

scène que l'on trouvait dans la correspondance médiévale entre Héloïse et Abélard. Son importance n'est pas de premier plan, sachant que cette scène prend place, dans les deux œuvres, au sein du contexte particulier de la relation entre précepteur et élève, ce qui déplace la scène de lecture du côté de la scène d'étude, cette dernière devenant le moyen de peindre la naissance de sentiments amoureux qui perturbent ladite étude. Il est cependant important de relever que Rousseau fait intervenir la lecture par un autre biais, à savoir la question de la manière de bien juger un livre. Cette méthode apparaît trois fois au sein du roman épistolaire.

La première se trouve dans la seconde préface de l'ouvrage. Rousseau fait alors référence à la règle de Julie : « Mais Julie s'était fait une règle pour juger des livres : si vous la trouvez bonne, servez-vous en pour juger celui-ci. » (1761, 23). La seconde occurrence est donc la lettre dans laquelle Julie énonce cette méthode, dans la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage : « Je n'ai point, pour moi d'autre manière de juger de mes Lectures que de sonder les dispositions où elles laissent mon âme, et j'imagine à peine quelle sorte de bonté peut avoir un livre qui ne porte point ses lecteurs au bien. » (1761, 261). Et à cette description présentée par Julie, Rousseau ajoute une note : « Si le lecteur approuve cette règle, et qu'il s'en serve pour juger ce recueil, l'éditeur n'appellera pas de son jugement. » (1761, 261).

Rousseau renvoie donc, par deux fois, le lecteur à la méthode de lecture qui est celle de son héroïne. L'accent y est mis sur les dispositions dans lesquelles une lecture laisserait l'âme. L'attendrissement provoqué par l'authenticité d'un sentiment qui jaillit de son expression est le même que celui qui établit le critère discriminant entre bonnes et mauvaises lectures. Si Rousseau invite son interlocuteur à appliquer la règle de lecture de Julie pour juger de son ouvrage, c'est bien parce que l'on se situe dans un registre passionnel, où « le cœur sait parler au cœur » (1761, 15). Or, bien que l'on trouve trois mentions de la méthode de lecture dans l'ouvrage, il convient de bien distinguer les positions : d'un côté, Rousseau qui se place en éditeur des lettres, et de l'autre, Julie qui se positionne vis-à-vis de ses lectures personnelles. Rousseau enjoint en effet à suivre une méthode qui s'applique à la lecture d'un livre qu'il a lui-même écrit. Et avant d'entrer plus avant dans le détail de cette position singulière, il convient de déterminer le troisième type de lecteur présent dans le roman, à savoir les personnages face aux lettres qu'ils reçoivent, en particulier les deux amants. Il faut bien insister sur le fait que ce qui s'exprime au travers de leurs lettres n'est jamais un soi qui contemple sa propre image au travail. Bien au contraire, c'est toujours le cœur qui ordonne l'expression, interdisant par là toute projection narcissique du fait même que ce moi qui s'exprime n'est déjà plus, car c'est celui ou celle à qui je m'adresse qui a pris sa place. On ne peut donc pas,

comme a pu le faire la critique,[9] voir dans l'écriture des deux amants la volonté de faire œuvre et d'admirer un soi devenant écrivain. La lecture est en effet un problème à part dans l'exégèse de *La Nouvelle Héloïse*.

Nous avons tenté de montrer les liens entre les mouvements de l'âme et l'expression, et il s'agit désormais d'observer le phénomène inverse : la lecture laisserait l'âme dans certaines dispositions ; l'âme de Julie face à ses lectures, et l'âme du lecteur face au roman épistolaire de Rousseau. Puisque la méthode de Julie doit servir de méthode au lecteur de *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, c'est sur celle-ci qu'il convient de s'arrêter. La première préface de l'ouvrage exclut plusieurs lecteurs potentiels : « Ce livre n'est point fait pour circuler dans le monde et convient à très peu de lecteurs. » (1761, 5). Dans ce petit nombre de lecteurs, on ne trouvera ni gens de goût, ni gens sévères, ni dévots, ni libertins, ni philosophes, ni femmes galantes, ni honnêtes femmes. Surtout, la préface commence par cette phrase célèbre : « Il faut des spectacles dans les grandes villes et des romans aux peuples corrompus. » (1761, 5).

Cette déclaration coïncide avec les exigences du système rousseauiste, du point de vue de la volonté de réforme qu'il met en œuvre. On sait que l'écriture romanesque a coïncidé, pour Rousseau, avec la naissance de son amour pour Sophie d'Houdetot, invitant certains à reléguer l'ouvrage au rang de rêverie sentimentale. Pourtant la création ne saurait jamais se réduire à une projection narcissique, puisque la création est cela même qui efface l'individuel et le singulier. C'est de cette manière que peuvent se dessiner plus nettement les liens entre passion et expression. Si le langage amoureux peut se trouver décrit du point de vue de ses répétitions, de ses longueurs et de son désordre, il ne s'agit là que de sa forme. Or c'est par sa forme qu'il accède à l'universalité et à la difficulté qu'il affronte, à savoir l'expression de l'extrême singulier, le sentiment amoureux, par le biais du langage qui est le symbole par excellence de l'universel. Roland Barthes parlait de gâchis :

> Vouloir écrire l'amour, c'est affronter le *gâchis* du langage : cette région d'affolement où le langage est à la fois *trop* et *trop peu*, excessif (par l'expansion illimitée du *moi*, par la submersion émotive) et pauvre (par les codes sur quoi l'amour le rabat et l'aplatit). (1977, 115–116)

C'est donc la forme qui touche, forme qui permet une inscription temporelle particulière, qui agit en martelant et, par là-même, en attendrissant. Le rapport de la

9 Voir Baucher (2012, 149–169). « La leçon de Dante appliquée au texte de Rousseau permet peut-être de comprendre que l'écriture des lettres, cherchant à donner une voix à l'ineffable du désir, vise en fait moins directement l'être aimé, que l'explicitation de l'amour pour elle-même et l'assouvissement d'un désir littéraire des scripteurs dont le but inavouable est de faire œuvre de romancier. » (Baucher 2012, 166).

singularité de la passion amoureuse à l'universalité du langage ne peut alors être résolu que dans la reconnaissance d'une conquête de l'identité par l'expression. En effet, ce que la passion amoureuse interroge, ce sont les conditions de possibilité de la fidélité à soi-même d'un sujet, qui ne peut renier une passion qu'il constitue et qui le constitue, notamment par le langage. Si la conscience intérieure est bien une instance de vérité, on ne peut la congédier sans risquer d'attenter à l'identité comme à l'unité du sujet : « Une ontologie du langage soutient donc l'apologie de la conscience comme cette voix qui me *rappelle*. » (Rueff 2014, 108). Or, cette conscience intérieure ne saurait être détachée du sentiment qui l'habite, et qui conditionne le langage par lequel elle s'exprime.

6 Conclusion

En conclusion, nous reprendrons les mots de Rousseau : « il fallut toute la vivacité des passions agréables pour commencer à faire parler les habitants » (1781, 407), mais nous y ajouterons que l'expression amoureuse ne saurait être conçue en dehors de son ancrage temporel, qui est avant tout langagier. Un débordement caractérise ce phénomène de transport hors de soi et qui est adéquat tout autant à la musique qu'à l'amour. Saint-Preux l'exprimait en ces termes, prenant l'image de la vague pour représenter son amour : « Mais sur la mer tranquille en apparence, on se sent élevé, porté doucement et loin par un flot lent et presque insensible ; on croit ne pas sortir de la place, et l'on arrive au bout du monde. » (1761, 676). Ce mouvement qui se fait sans qu'on s'en aperçoive nécessite l'expression pour devenir conscient, et l'écriture pour perdurer dans le temps et dire à l'autre son absence physique comme sa présence intérieure en nous. Pour le dire autrement, nous citerons une dernière fois Roland Barthes : « savoir que l'écriture ne compense rien, ne sublime rien, qu'elle est précisément *là où tu n'es pas* – c'est le commencement de l'écriture. » (1977, 166).

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Ekaterina Kondratyeva

Stratégies de la poésie linguistique : vers un nouvel humanisme (Hédi Bouraoui, Valérie Rouzeau, Céline Zins)

Résumé: Cet article met en évidence le point d'aboutissement de l'évolution poétique qu'a connue le XX^e^ siècle : la poésie du langage, née en anglais aux États-Unis et adoptée par d'autres langues, dont le français. En dégageant la manière dont trois auteures francophones – Hédi Bouraoui, Valérie Rouzeau, Céline Zins – recourent aux ressources familières de la poésie du langage, nous mettons en évidence de curieuses variations dans cette pratique : le mot, privé de son sens direct et de sa référence mimétique, comme si le texte poétique était rédigé dans une langue étrangère, conserve sa signification même si elle est inconnue. Il se fait parfois discours universel, utilisé pour parler aux défunts. Pour décrire ce processus, on peut employer la métaphore de la réaction nucléaire : l'énergie cachée au cœur des mots est libérée sous l'effet des transformations à l'œuvre au micro-niveau du texte. La poésie devient celle d'un contact soudain, d'un mouvement direct, touchant le lecteur au-delà de ce qu'il imagine. Le mot reconquiert ainsi sa dimension humaine.

Mots clés: poésie francophone, poésie française, modernité, poésie du langage, signe

Le XX^e^ siècle, fondateur de la textualité, n'a cessé d'affirmer les positions de la littérature au sein de son langage même. En cherchant encore plus loin dans l'établissement de nouveaux faits littéraires, en se faisant découvrir davantage, l'écriture s'enfonce au cœur d'elle-même. La modernité portant une attention à la mise en évidence du côté technique, aux procédés employés dans le texte, a été une expérience primordiale de ces processus. Mais au tournant du XXI^e^ siècle, la modernité littéraire paraît être détrônée et discréditée par la pratique du postmodernisme, qui va encore plus loin. Dans le contexte poétique, l'expérience de cette écriture se manifeste dans l'exacerbation de la pratique linguistique, l'attention portée au signifiant, au mot même.

À travers l'œuvre de trois poètes français ou francophones écrivant au tournant des XX^e^ et XXI^e^ siècles (à partir des années 1980 et jusqu'à aujourd'hui) – Hédi Bouraoui, Valérie Rouzeau, Céline Zins –, essayons de montrer comment la poésie du langage devient celle de la communication et se tourne vers un être humain qui se retrouve au centre de cette écriture.

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1 L'attention portée au langage au tournant du XXI^{e} siècle

Ce sont les années 1960–1970 qui voient apparaître le mouvement de la « poésie du langage », ou « language poetry ». Né aux États-Unis, il brise de nombreuses conventions de l'écriture poétique : la narration cède la place au flux de conscience traduit par la fragmentation ; l'auteur se voit disparaître de l'expression de soi pour se convertir en un moyen de transcription de la parole poétique : ce sont les mots qui doivent intéresser le lecteur et non pas la personnalité du poète. Cette forme de poésie se s'exprime non seulement en format papier, mais également, sous forme d'expression visuelle et sonore, en format numérique.

Voici comment le critique Hank Lazer décrit la poésie du langage :

> Language writing can be seen as an oppositional literary practice that questions many of the assumptions of mainstream poetry. Instead of considering poetry as a staging ground for the creation and expression of an "authentic" voice and personality, language poetry arises out of an "exploded self", blurs genre boundaries … and seeks actively collaborative relationships between reader and writer. (Lazer 2004, source Internet)

Que représente le « soi brisé » de l'ancien auteur ? L'un des fondateurs du mouvement, Ron Silliman, propose de se concentrer sur le mot même, non plus de manière chaotique, mais, au contraire, de manière réfléchie, car « la révolution de la parole est tout sauf anarchique » :

> I get to determine unilaterally which words in what order will set forth the terms through which the experience shall occur. (Silliman 1986, 15)

Un autre fondateur du mouvement, Steve McCaffery, écrit :

> There is a group of writers today, united in the feeling that literature has entered a *crisis of the sign* […] and that the foremost task at hand – a more linguistic and philosophic than "poetic" task – is to demystify the referential fallacy of language.
>
> Reference I take it, is that kind of blindness a window makes of the pane it is ; that motoric thrust of the word which takes you out of language into a tenuous world of the other and so prevents you seeing what it is you see. (McCaffery 1977, 1)

Formulée ainsi, l'expérience de la poésie du langage est avant tout libératrice : libérant le mot de son auteur et de sa référence, elle le rend pur et transparent.

Le travail du modernisme, ne serait-ce que par son introspection savante, est traduit dans la tension extrême des deux côtés du signe de Saussure : le signifiant, mis en valeur, alourdit l'importance du signifié. Le modernisme, cependant, ne coupe pas encore le signifiant de la réalité mimétique dont il se sert. La poésie du langage, au contraire, prétend ne plus avoir besoin de cette réalité, car le texte se

referme désormais sur lui-même, devenant à la fois son propre signifiant et son propre signifié. Le texte se transforme en un mouvement abstrait de vocables, une sorte de danse contemporaine qui s'appuie sur le mouvement ainsi déformé et rien que sur le mouvement. Mais quel est le but de cette poésie unidimensionnelle, privée de tout appui ? Se peut-il qu'un signe soit privé de sa moitié, tel une feuille de papier qui n'aurait d'un seul coup plus qu'une seule face ? Comment les termes du signe se répartissent-ils dans cette nouvelle création poétique ?

L'écrivain et critique russe Aleksandr Genis écrit dans son article « Модернизм как стиль XX века » [Le modernisme vu comme le style du XX^{e} siècle] :

> Сегодняшнее искусство переняло у модернизма мечту о прямом внепонятийном контакте, который позволит одному сознанию перетекать в другое [...] Опыт модернизма определил пути всего современного искусства, которое, чередуя бешеный напор с трагическим отчаянием, ищет новый способ связи.
>
> [La pratique de la création actuelle a adopté le rêve moderniste d'établir un contact direct entre des consciences différentes, – contact non-conceptuel [...]. L'expérience du modernisme a été à l'origine de tout l'art contemporain (y compris de la littérature), qui, dans son allure frénétique liée au désespoir tragique, cherche un nouveau type de lien.] (Genis 2000, source Internet)

Dans notre étude, nous nous pencherons sur ce nouveau type de lien ou du moins sur les expériences allant dans ce sens à travers ce qu'on peut considérer comme une « littérature nomade » caractérisée par son intégration absolue au texte, une absence de mimesis proprement dite et une attention portée au mouvement en tant qu'image et en tant que procédé. C'est une nouvelle perception, celle d'un contact direct, que va proposer cette forme de poésie, illustrée ci-dessous par trois voire quatre recueils de trois poètes contemporains francophones : Hédi Bouraoui et son texte *Nomadaime* (1995), *Adamah* de Céline Zins (1988) et les deux recueils de Valérie Rouzeau, *Pas revoir* (1999) et *Va où* (2002).

2 Le français, langue étrangère : Hédi Bouraoui et son « écriture nomade »

Tous les écrits analysés dans notre étude sont des poèmes-narrations sous forme de cycle. Mais c'est la langue qui se retrouve au centre de la narration. Langue réactualisée, perçue comme langue étrangère, bien que maternelle. Pour Hédi Bouraoui, poète, écrivain et universitaire tuniso-canadien lié à la France, cette dimension de la langue est naturelle, voire obligatoire, car il vit et écrit « dans les interstices, les béances du non-dit, les dimensions culturelles les plus diverses et

les plus contrastées » (Beggar, 2014, source Internet). L'originalité de son style, avec tout son éventail de procédés, se révèle surtout (mais pas uniquement) dans ses *Nomadaimes*, recueil où il fait découvrir le fait même d'écrire au croisement des cultures. Sa langue d'expression poétique est la langue française, mais en plus d'être délibérément choisie, elle est aussi une langue perçue a priori comme une langue étrangère. En quoi se reflète cette étrangeté, comment se définit-elle ?

Cette langue, tel un bateau ivre de son extrême puissance, privée d'une ligne généralisatrice et poussée par son propre mouvement, va à la découverte d'elle-même dans les lueurs et les pénombres de l'existence. D'après l'expression de Marina Tsvetaïeva lancée dans l'une de ses lettres à Rainer Maria Rilke, où elle analyse les poèmes français de son correspondant autrichien,

> Поэзия – уже перевод, с родного языка на чужой. Для поэта нет родного языка [...]. Орфей взрывает национальность или настолько широко раздвигает ее пределы, что все [...] включаются в нее. И хороший немец – там! И – хороший русский!
>
> [Il n'y a pas de langue maternelle pour le poète. Écrire de la poésie est déjà traduire, raconter. [...] Pour Orphée, la nationalité n'existe plus ou bien ses limites sont tellement repoussées que tout le monde fait partie de ce langage de poésie, un bon Allemand aussi bien qu'un bon Russe !] (*Nebesnaja arka* 1992, 92).

La langue utilisée pour l'écriture est a priori une langue étrangère. Mais ici, les choses se compliquent – à moins qu'elles ne deviennent au contraire plus claires. Car il n'y a plus que la langue prise dans sa liberté absolue qui, selon Abderrahman Beggar,

> nie toute frontière (tant physique qu'intellectuelle) et [...] encourage l'expérimentation de nouvelles formes d'expression et d'agir ... Cette manière de considérer le travail créatif repose sur un vitalisme esthétique où les deux ingrédients essentiels sont la surprise et l'élan vital, jugés « à l'opposé de toute fondation, de toute présence définie. Qu'elle soit géographique ou mentale ». (Beggar 2014, 5)

La langue dont se sert Bouraoui est une langue apprise, étudiée, employée dans sa non-finitude de sens potentiels autant que réalisés. Quatre caractéristiques essentielles la définissent : premièrement, c'est une attitude dénuée de tout automatisme, attentive et pleine de caresses. Deuxièmement, l'égalité de tous les niveaux de connaissance de la langue : c'est pourquoi la sonorité a la même importance que la sémantique ou même l'étymologie, que celle-ci soit vraie ou fausse. Cela provoque dans le texte des cas récurrents et complètement magiques de réunion en un seul point focal de la phonétique, de la grammaire et de la sémantique du texte. C'est ainsi que le texte se met littéralement en marche. Troisièmement, cet univers est riche en innovations car le poète cherche en permanence à créer de nouvelles formes et s'il y a des découvertes non conformes à la règle, mais condi-

tionnées par la logique interne du texte, elles ne sont pas fautives. Et, dernièrement, ce texte peut faire preuve d'une grande maîtrise qui néanmoins pourra être considérée comme l'improvisation accidentelle d'un novice, avec toute la fraîcheur possible.

Parmi les procédés textuels à retrouver dans les textes bouraouiens, nous allons commencer par les phénomènes lexicaux :

– La création de mots par la séparation par un trait d'union de mots déjà existants, ce qui implique une nouvelle répartition du sens :

  inter-dit : le sens d'interdiction est remplacé par l'idée de « dire entre »
  dé-livre : outre un verbe substantivé, ce verbe prend un autre sens en tant que substantif : « livre détourné, déformé »

  Paradoxalement, le sens initial est sauvegardé malgré ces cicatrices qui parcourent le texte.
– La conversion des parties du discours. Le plus souvent, ce sont des substantifs qui deviennent verbes, ce qui semblerait plus caractéristique de la langue anglaise que du français, préférant la substantivisation :

  les ancêtres … étoilent l'outre-mer (Bouraoui 1995, 49)
  nos corps se diapasonnent (Bouraoui 1995, 71)
  triomphe qui néoplasme (Bouraoui 1995, 79)

  Dans le cas de l'homographie, de la ressemblance totale entre le substantif et le verbe, le défi est plus grand encore :

  l'écrit nomade vers lui-même (Bouraoui 1995, 59)
  hibernant les cristaux que dentelle à mi-chemin … (Bouraoui 1995,5)
  baisers qui astrent l'harmonie (Bouraoui 1995, 80)

  Parfois les mots qui représentent différentes parties du discours se retrouvent ensemble pour se souligner et se valoriser. Le mot ainsi répété de façon différente se retrouve flambant neuf, réactualisé, prononcé comme pour la première fois grâce à cette fausse duplication :

  Qui peut prédire quand le silence
  Peut dire son dire (Bouraoui 1995, 13)
– Les mots-valises qui sont les mots-clés, mots-philosophie du texte : nomadance, nomadaime, avionomade (Bouraoui 1995, 66).
– La paronomase rimique posée grâce à la prononciation et à l'étymologie différente des mots, qui se ressemblent quand même :

  s'étiole – les étoiles (Bouraoui 1995, 58)

  À l'état de rime graphique, même les noms de Jésus et Judas peuvent coexister l'espace d'une seconde :

  Judas trahit Jésus
  Pour que l'écrit s'assigne
  Le rôle du hérisson (Bouraoui 1995, 59)

– Les noms propres et les mots imaginaires surgissent :

  les arcs-en-âmes (Bouraoui 1995, 82)
  l'arc-en-désert (Bouraoui 1995, 89)
  disert (Bouraoui 1995, 53)
  ulyssés (Bouraoui 1995, 79)

  C'est au niveau syntaxique que se passent les choses les plus intéressantes :

– L'absence d'article rend l'écriture plus dense : « que pluie et mains façonnent » (Bouraoui 1995, 15)
– Le mot se voit dans sa double fonction syntaxique : « Guide enfant en-têté de la conscience » (Bouraoui 1995, 49). Le mot « guide » est perçu en même temps comme substantif et comme verbe (un enfant qui guide et un enfant qui est guidé), en partie grâce à la double lecture du mot « en-têté », qui elle-même est rendue possible par son écriture : entêté = têtu et en-têté comme en tête (de la conscience).

  Un mot court le monde
  Fissure la loi (Bouraoui 1995, 55)

  Le premier vers se lit de deux façons : « un mot parcourt le monde » et « le monde est un mot court ». Une lecture suggérée par le deuxième vers, dans lequel une double lecture du mot « fissure » est possible, en tant que substantif ou en tant que verbe (même si, dans cet extrait, syntaxiquement, seul le second cas est en fait réalisable).
– La création des images « sur la ligne » de la syntaxe.

  Mes Africains l'ont propagé
  unis contre *les blancs* de la mémoire (Bouraoui 1995, 11)

  Initialement vue comme réalité purement textuelle, l'apparition des « blancs » du deuxième vers devient presque physique (les êtres blancs, les envahisseurs européens du continent noir) et ainsi dire menaçant pour les Africains du premier vers.
– La création d'un nœud ou réseau de suggestions :

  les cristaux que dentelle à mi-chemin
  l'Écho-lecteur
  quand mon livre télévoyage
  dans les arcs-en-veines de l'anonyme (Bouraoui 1995, 5)

  Un seul mot, *Écho-lecteur*, permet une double interprétation : premièrement, c'est l'instrument de l'échographie, qui permet de lire l'échographie ; deuxièmement, un lecteur qui sert d'écho à l'auteur.

  Les deux interprétations se croisent tout au long du texte, se réunissant et se transformant mutuellement.

3 La réaction nucléaire du signe

Le langage ivre et libre, voué à lui-même, ne cesse de créer et de recréer les sens. On aurait pu appeler cette poésie tout simplement « poésie du langage », phénomène dont on a déjà parlé. Mais le cas des trois auteurs étudiés ici donne un exemple encore plus rare et plus complexe que les œuvres issues de cette filière poétique. Elena Brazgovskaja qui est l'auteure d'un ouvrage dédié au poète polonais Czesław Miłosz, poète également linguocentrique, définit deux dimensions de la poésie : la première est le « laboratoire du langage » (la langue se voit dans la langue même), la seconde est « l'étude du langage » (la langue parle d'elle-même) (Brazgovskaja, 2009, source Internet). Dans notre cas, semble-t-il, les deux tendances se rejoignent : l'expérimentation du langage au sein de lui-même, d'une part, et son investigation, par la perception intellectuelle du langage à travers ce même langage. Ainsi, le langage se voit double, si ce n'est triple : le langage (sujet de l'expression poétique) qui parle dans le langage (objet ou milieu de l'expression poétique) et à travers le langage (qui s'emploie comme son instrument). Comme il n'y a pas d'autre réalité que celle-ci, le signifiant et le signifié perdent leurs places définies et inversent constamment leurs rôles dans un espace ultra-signifiant, polyvalent. Le signifié ne se voit pourtant pas détruit au détriment de l'absurdité du langage ou de sa musique.

Comment cela se passe-t-il ? J'oserai comparer ce processus à celui d'une réaction nucléaire. Processus parfaitement souple, guère visible, il atteint quand même la profondeur et provoque de grands changements que l'on ne peut pas ignorer. C'est le noyau d'un atome qui se voit touché – dans la langue, c'est le signifié, cœur de l'expression. Ce qui s'effectue, c'est la fission du noyau – dans la poésie, c'est le signe linguistique qui devient objet de fission : normalement binaire, il est désormais triple à cause de ce jeu sujet–objet–instrument. Le signifié, tout comme le noyau atomique, n'est pas détruit mais transformé. Privée d'une référence directe à la réalité, la poésie condense au fond d'elle-même une grande énergie qu'elle finit par libérer. Paradoxalement, cette énergie vient se répandre sur les émotions humaines – beaucoup plus que sur le raisonnement – et touche les sens du lecteur.

Dans l'une des récentes études russes sur la sémiotique de l'art et de la poésie du XX^{e} siècle prise dans le contexte du signe, Vladimir Feščenko et Oleg Koval' parlent de la fonction compensatoire du signe déformé. Privé de son sens, réduit à l'absurde, le texte poétique retrouve non seulement sa valeur musicale mais aussi toute la plénitude du sens et l'accès plus direct à la réalité même. Deux poètes représentant un mouvement d'avant-garde russe des années 1920–1930, l'Oberiou, ou Association pour l'Art réel, décrivent ce mécanisme dans ces deux extraits cités par Feščenko et Koval' :

> Бессмыслица не относительна. Она – абсолютная реальность – это Логос, ставший плотью. Сам этот личный Логос алогичен, так же как и Его вочеловечение. Но эта бессмыслица стала пониманием моего существования.
>
> [L'absurdité n'est pas relative. C'est la réalité même – un Logos incarné. Ce Logos est quand même alogique, ainsi que son incarnation. Mais cette absurdité s'est convertie en la raison de mon être.] (Druskin 2000, 292)
>
> Непонимание – как позитивное понятие : не понимая, мы открываем себе более непосредственный доступ к реальному.
>
> [La non-compréhension est une notion positive : sans comprendre, on accède plus librement au réel.] (Druskin 2000, 292)

L'incarnation idéale de ce processus ne se retrouverait-elle pas dans la fameuse phrase de Gertrude Stein « A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose », où la répétition d'un même mot représenté consécutivement comme sujet et comme prédicat révèle cette rose, figure abstraite, archétypique, absolue et finalement absurde en tant que cliché de la poésie romantique et postromantique, à son vrai sens, à la réalité d'une vraie rose d'avant l'expression poétique et la classification.

4 Au contact d'un être cher désormais disparu : les cas de Valérie Rouzeau et de Céline Zins

Chez Hédi Bouraoui, c'est plutôt son état, sa position de personne plurilingue déchirée entre plusieurs cultures, avide de les faire rencontrer, qui a causé ces transformations linguistiques. Les cas de Valérie Rouzeau et de Céline Zins sont différents, et très évidents. C'est l'espoir de toucher par la parole un être décédé, une figure paternelle, qui motive l'écriture. Dans son recueil *Pas revoir* (1999), Valérie Rouzeau pleure la mort de son père. Ayant dû prononcer un discours à ses obsèques, elle a écrit un poème, mais celui-ci s'est avéré incapable de traduire tous ses sentiments, et c'est à travers un long poème en séquences qu'elle a pu atteindre son objectif spirituel. La suite de ce texte, *Va où* (2002), effectue le même trajet, mais cette fois-ci, c'est le trajet de sa propre âme à travers la vie comme existence généralisée et abstraite, la vie d'une poète limitée par la langue et y retrouvant sa seule source de vie, qui se trouve au centre du recueil. Dans son recueil *Adamah* (1989), Céline Zins évoque soit son propre père, soit une figure paternelle presque inconnue, celle d'un homme disparu pendant la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, pendant la Shoah (le mot « catastrophe » est mentionné dans le texte). Le texte nous apprend seulement qu'il était d'origine juive et analphabète. Ce n'est que dans le moment de l'écriture, dans un discours proche de la Kabbale, énigmatique et profond, qu'elle reconstitue

le lieu possible de sa mort, son corps non-identifié et même son lieu de naissance à elle, car c'est la mort du père qui l'a déterminée. C'est en créant une situation à la fois irréelle et poétique que les auteurs arrivent vraiment, sans métaphore, à rejoindre par la parole ceux qui ne sont plus là.

Nos poètes emploient tous les trois le vocabulaire du voyage, Céline Zins l'élargissant à travers l'idée d'un voyage-regard, voyage immobile, comme elle le qualifie dans son long poème (Zins 1988, 63). En même temps Céline Zins et Valérie Rouzeau comparent l'activité poétique avec le labeur agricole qui leur permet d'avancer sur la ligne de l'horizon, vers l'impossible (on retrouve l'expression des marges de l'écriture : « traverser la marge vers l'éblouissement » (Zins 1988, 62)). Chez Hédi Bouraoui, c'est plutôt la poétique de la danse qui sert de métaphore du voyage. Différents moyens de transport sont évoqués : le train pour Valérie Rouzeau, l'avion pour Hédi Bouraoui.

Valérie Rouzeau, poète qui travaille « sur la ligne » de la syntaxe, écrivant en petites périodes, possède cependant, outre cette maîtrise syntaxique, quelques clés magiques dans le vocabulaire même. Tout comme Hédi Bouraoui, elle voit le potentiel des mots-valises représentant des inventions comme « mouranrir » (mourant et mourir), « désespérir » (désespoir et périr), « infinir » (infini et finir) dans le poème dédié à son père mourant qui ouvre le recueil, « Pas revoir » (Rouzeau 2010, 13). Les mots « père » ou « papa » y subissent des transformations, devenant « paparler » et « paparce que » (Rouzeau 2010, 36), la réduplication de la première syllabe rendant la force de la parole qui atteint son destinataire. Ailleurs, l'ancien verbe inusité « pernocter » donne le pouvoir d'un chant magique au désir de la poète de voir son père vivre au moins jusqu'au matin. Elle joue avec l'étymologie – vraie ou fausse :

> Salut au revoir il faut que je me sauve (Rouzeau 2002, 16)
>
> Ni d'épître de pitre ni de strophes épiques … (Rouzeau 2002, 23)

Au niveau syntaxique, nous analyserons de plus près un poème de Valérie Rouzeau issu du recueil *Va où*, poème qui incarne sa propre réalité linguistique dans le cadre de l'autoréflexion sur la conscience et la forme littéraire en nous renvoyant à la réalité complète et pleine de l'existence – aussi humaine qu'abstraite.

> Je ne quiers plus qui m'a trouvée l'amour qui fait faire la poète
>
> Plutôt me sonne encore les cloches rester digne dingue jusqu'au bout donc
>
> Je perds le fil de mon histoire comme une ancienne corde à sauter
>
> Les heures les saisons les années voilà et du plomb dans la tête s'il faut retomber sur ses pieds
>
> Digne dingue et sur toute la ligne donc (Rouzeau 2002, 16)

Le début du texte joue avec la valence du verbe. Employant trois fois une transitivité inversée (qui m'a trouvée l'amour – l'amour que j'ai trouvé ; l'amour qui fait faire – faire l'amour ; me sonne encore les cloches – les cloches sonnent), la poète représente à travers le langage la condition imposée de l'écriture. Le poème linéaire reproduit et certifie par sa propre forme marmorisante l'existence absolument libre mais absolument contrainte dans sa liberté innovante, l'existence de ce texte qui, en quelque sorte, explique tous les autres textes du recueil. La deuxième ligne « digne dingue jusqu'au bout donc » mène physiquement le lecteur vers la fin de la phrase, le dernier son de la cloche – donc – résonnant avec la surdité naissante du silence et donnant ainsi une pure sonorité. Les trois mots « sonores » représentant également le son des cloches – digne, dingue, donc – apparaissent ici dans leur définition première : rester *digne* et à la fois *dingue*, c'est ce que les cloches imposent à la poète, de conserver la liberté et la contrainte ultime de ses vers. La conjonction *donc* qui résume la ligne prend ici sa valeur de conclusion, avec sa généralisation impatiente. La ligne suivante nous donne toujours cette impression de liberté absolue : « Je perds le fil de mon histoire » – puis de la contrainte : « comme une ancienne corde à sauter » – la comparaison qui identifie la ligne à la corde devient la seule existence possible de la ligne, la corde perdue est en même temps retrouvée dans cette même phrase. Dans la ligne suivante, l'expression « du plomb dans la tête » donne à la fois l'idée de la mort (une balle dans la tête) et de la pesanteur – approfondie vers la fin de la phrase « s'il faut retomber sur ses pieds », ce qui signifie à la fois : retrouver la pesanteur d'une vraie vie ; retrouver la finitude de la ligne ; retrouver une sorte de régularité des « pieds » poétiques – mission à la fois impossible, irréalisable dans le poème irrégulier – mais réalisée quand même à travers le langage. Comme si l'irrégularité était la seule régularité possible dans ce texte, dans ces conditions. Comme si cette régularité obéissait à des lois autres que celles de la poésie classique, mais y était attribuable. L'association « guerrière » du mot *plomb* résonne dans la dernière ligne « sur toute la ligne » (ligne du front) – mais c'est le son des cloches (digne dingue) qui revient changer la connotation de l'expression « sur toute la ligne », lui donnant celle du téléphone, d'une ligne que l'on occupe en parlant.

Ainsi, ce qui est pure sonorité retrouve toute sa valeur sémantique. Celle-ci entre en jeu moyennant les associations textuelles pour se répandre sur la forme – infiniment libre mais inévitable – du poème en général. Dans ce qui paraît être son crédo poétique, Valérie Rouzeau montre avec dextérité cet enchaînement de réactions qui transforment le noyau de la poésie, le noyau sémantique, ce qui amène à la libération de l'énergie. C'est l'accès direct à sa poésie et c'est le contexte humain existentiel dont ces lignes témoignent.

Les poèmes de Céline Zins, écrits sous l'impression de l'impossibilité de toucher et de retrouver celui qui n'est plus là, arrivent également à atteindre ce ni-

veau de l'existence physique. Sans changer leur forme ni jouer sur la fonction, les textes de Zins réunissent sémantiquement les antinomies existentielles :

> Oui, je reviens d'où je ne suis pas allée (Zins 1988, 13)
>
> D'où ne suis-je pas ? (Zins 1988, 27)
>
> Pour pénétrer en l'heure d'exil
>
> dans la parole de celui qui déjà n'a plus de mots (Zins 1988, 30)

Parfois à travers le parallélisme entre les groupes de mots comportant les éléments abstraits et concrets, c'est l'abstrait qui se voit concrétiser – le sens de la phrase est également amplifié par la présence du mot « tendre », lu comme verbe (tendre = donner) et comme adjectif (tendre = délicat) :

> Ne savait-on pourtant le jour, sa grammaire, et
>
> cette façon de tendre le mot comme la main (Zins 1988, 34)

Au niveau de la syntaxe, il s'agirait plutôt de la cohabitation et de l'organisation commune de différents fragments du texte dédiés à différents sujets qui s'opposent et s'aident, séparés par des pauses et des blancs (chaque fragment commence sur une nouvelle page), par exemple :

> Fragment 1 :
>
> La mer s'est retirée
> laissant un sable d'où s'écoule
> un azur primordial
>
> Fragment 2 :
>
> Ils dirent
> D'où viens-tu
>
> Et je dis
> Oui, je reviens d'où je ne suis pas allée
> (Zins 1988, 12–13)

L'image de la nature coexiste avec une image personnelle, les deux servant à illustrer l'idée de l'ignorance des racines, de la perte du passé, qui mènent à la compréhension encore plus profonde, faisant découvrir ces racines d'une manière subconsciente. Grâce à cette coexistence non évidente, qui fait travailler l'esprit du lecteur pour réunir les deux morceaux, ce dernier s'approprie l'idée de la perte suivie par celle des retrouvailles pénibles.

C'est à travers tous ces procédés de coupures, de répétitions, de koâns qui recouvrent le paradoxe, mais surtout à travers la composition de tout le texte en général percé de béances et de graines de silence, que son voyage immobile se réalise pour retrouver l'être perdu – le rescapé.

Cette voix, cette technique, qui arrive à évoquer la mort, à parler aux disparus par la libération aussi grande de l'énergie émotionnelle qui se retrouve dans la puissance de l'expression poétique – mais sait aussi évoquer l'homme, l'existence humaine dans son contexte le plus profond et le plus généralisant – permettrait-elle non seulement la réaction de fission, mais aussi celle de fusion, pour réunir les êtres et le monde là où Orphée écarte les frontières et fait écouter toutes les langues qui existent sur terre, dans une ambiance de « paix », mot si cher à Hédi Bouraoui. On verra alors si la langue poétique sera en mesure de produire une nouvelle perception du monde et des valeurs humaines.

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Ya-huei Lin

“Cock-a-Doodle-Doos”: Calls for Conscience in the Age of Global Warming

Abstract: This essay calls for a profound rethinking of our cultural reflections on the environment in this disastrous age of global warming. It explores the principles of ecology, especially humanity’s unity with nature, through a reading of John Donne, Thoreau, Shel Silverstein, and others. Paul Virilio’s concept of the specific accident and Yann Arthus-Bertrand’s documentary film *Home*, for instance, help shed light on the perils caused by rampant human desires and technological development. This essay further examines how Thoreau puts into practice Emerson’s transcendentalism – mostly in order to regard human beings as inhabitants, or part and parcel, of nature. It delves into Thoreau’s keen observations on humankind’s dilemma in society, especially his call for citizens of good conscience to actively oppose improper policies through non-violent resistance. In an age when man has become, as Freud put it, “a kind of prosthetic God,” the transcendental chanticleer in Thoreau’s *Walden* stands for an urgent call for conscience in action. Hopefully, it will prompt people not only to adopt a simpler and more eco-friendly life, but also to confront bravely the exploitative global structures that destroy ecosystems.

Keywords: ecocriticism, global warming, *Home* (dir. Yann Arthus-Bertrand), Paul Virilio, Thoreau

> I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up. (Thoreau 1992, 30)

In Shel Silverstein’s poem “I Won’t Hatch,” a chicken refuses to be born into this world. It resolutely rejects birth as its manifest destiny because it hears “all the talk of pollution and war / As the people all shout and the airplanes roar” (Silverstein 1996, 127). Given current anthropogenic pollutants and the concomitant global warming and natural disasters, the complaint of Silverstein’s chicken sounds most legitimate, compelling, and alarming. Its grievance, in a larger sense, stands for the outcry of all threatened and endangered species on earth, human beings included.

As citizens of the earth, where should we go from here? Industries, institutions, and individuals alike – what can we do together to address the situation? How can literature help? How can it help us to better understand our crisis, and in turn harvest wisdom for the future? Can literature anticipate life and mould it

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to its purpose, as suggested by Oscar Wilde in "The Decay of Lying" (1973, 983)? Can literature add to reality by enriching "the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides," as claimed by C. S. Lewis (quoted in Holmer 1976, 75)? To put it another way, can we, in this age of global warming, witness a commitment to social responsibility on the part of writers in a manner similar to the nineteenth-century Arts and Crafts Movement, which rebelled against the dehumanizing effects of industrialization and the excesses of the Victorian age? To shed more light on truth and reveal hope for the future, are there any valid enquiries that expose insatiable and rampant human desires as the very cause or, at least, the accomplice of the imminent global perils? Are there any viable ways to empower commitment to social responsibility, to carry social conscience into action, and thereby to encourage many a "Silverstein's chicken" to hatch, live, and respond to the urgent summons of nature?

To recover in old wisdom regenerative energy for the future, this essay engages in a two-pronged investigation. On the one hand, it takes into consideration the various crises in our natural environment in order to spotlight the treacherous "developments" of modern technology and the hazardous consequences that already seem to have followed in its wake. On the other hand, it explores the voices of concern about the destruction of ecology. With the dialogue between present-day environmental contexts and pertinent literary texts from the Western canon as an axis of its argument, this essay brings to the fore the current dilemma of human existence. Most importantly, it highlights the significance of humankind's sense of unity with nature – the vital link which, more often than not, gets lost in humankind's insatiable desire for more.

1 Humanity's desires running wild

Given the necessary evil that accompanies every technological development, or what Paul Virilio in *Pure War* calls the "specific accident,"[1] one cannot but ask how far and high humankind can go with ever-developing technology while re-

1 *Pure War* depicts the invisible war waged by technology against humanity. In his dialogue with Sylvère Lotringer, Paul Virilio asserts that the riddle of technology is also the riddle of the accident: every technology produces, provokes, and programs a "specific accident" (Virilio and Lotringer 1997, 37–38). He notes the accidents that inevitably arise with every technological development: from car crashes to nuclear spillage, to the eradication of space and the derealization of time wrought by instant communication. In the new and updated edition of *Pure War*, Virilio and his co-author Lotringer (2008) consider how the omnipresent threat of the accident – both military and economic – has escalated.

maining safe and sound. The answers perhaps are yet to be found. One thing for sure, nevertheless, is that, the further we venture and push our luck, the more we risk. In terms of humankind's relationship with the world, should we take at face value the claims of progressive good that come with the excessive development of science and technology? Or, rather, to avoid the specific accidents that inevitably arise, should we pledge our allegiance to faith in moderation and simplicity, just like what Thoreau practised in *Walden*? To put this in a different manner: should the Tower of Babel and the fall of Icarus give us pause, even if only for a while? The former is a biblical story about humanity's desire to reach heaven, the latter a tale about the mythical Greek pioneer's disregard for the limitations of human invention. While each narrative unfolds against its specific cultural background, both of them highlight humankind's unquenchable thirst for more than we can afford.

Icarus and his artificial wings, together with humanity's intricate relationship with God in the construction of the Tower of Babel, correspond interestingly to Sigmund Freud's survey of man's great achievements and his desire to become God, or to obtain a Godlike quality: "Man has, as it were, become a kind of prosthetic God. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs he is truly magnificent; but those organs have not grown on to him and they still give him much trouble at times" (Freud 1989, 44). Freud further maintains that "present-day man does not feel happy in his Godlike character" (45). Does such unhappiness on the part of man have anything to do with the trouble given by the "auxiliary organs," the artificial inventions, which "have not grown on to him" naturally? In our age, the answer seems affirmative when it comes to the chaos and disasters of recent history. If permitted to develop out of control, science and technology might strike back in ways that go beyond human imagination, like the creation of Frankenstein's monster in Mary Shelley's fiction.[2] The "History of Global Surface Temperature since 1880" graph in Lindsey and Dahlman (2018), released by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in 2018, for instance, alerts the public to the rapidly growing menace of climate change. Also in 2018, the world seems to be on fire – or so it appears in an image from NASA's *Worldview* tool (Jenner 2018). Thanks to the immoderate development of malevolent science and technology, accelerating global warming has given rise to more and more crises and disasters. Humankind's hubris, the overestimation of human technology, finally reaches breaking point

2 The Chernobyl disaster in 1986, for instance, released large quantities of radioactive contamination into the atmosphere, which spread over much of the western USSR and Europe. It is considered the worst nuclear power plant accident in history. And history tends to repeat itself. So does the "specific accident" in Paul Virilio's theory. Four more nuclear reactors were damaged during the 2011 Fukushima nuclear emergency in Japan (Black 2011).

when humanity's achievement is also humanity's downfall. The 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, for example, tolled the warning bell in a most alarming way, chasing after people like the chariot galloping in Andrew Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress":

> But at my back I always hear
> Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;
> And yonder all before us lie
> Deserts of vast eternity.
> (Marvel 2006, 543–544)

There is no denying the fact that time is indeed running out. Not, however, for the shy mistress in Marvell's poem to accept the speaker's passionate courtship under the pressure of the inevitable mortality of all human beings: the nature of the crisis now is not romantic at all. For the people of the twenty-first century, it is going to be absolutely devastating. It will endanger lives on this planet on a much larger scale and to a much greater degree than ever before. The warning bell, according to a report in *The Atlantic*, has reached the villagers of Newtok in Alaska and other potential climate refugees in this age of global warming. What is happening in "the village that will be swept away" will eventually happen to the rest of us if we do not take action in time. It is, in the words of Barack Obama, a "wakeup call" (Semuels 2015).

2 For whom the bell tolls

When the chariot of time is hurrying near, and when the warning bell is tolling loud and clear, it is perhaps time for us to ask: "For whom does the bell toll?" An answer to such a question, firstly, emerges from John Donne's "No Man Is an Island," originally published in *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (Donne 2001, 421). The analogy of island and continent in Donne's work bespeaks the relationship between each individual and their fellow human beings. As structural members of the organic whole, the component individuals cannot live outside the totality of their community at large. All are connected and related, deeply enmeshed in the entirety of their common existence. The private loss of each person also stands for the public loss of the whole community. For whom does the bell toll upon emergent occasions? Confronting the crisis of his life, Donne finds the answer in the unity of the global community. The warning bell reaches both the island and the continent. It tolls for each and every individual in Donne's demographic landscape.

The idea of unity in Donne's text of 1624 finds modern reinforcement in SueEllen Campbell's investigation of human civilization in "The Land and Language of Desire." She particularly emphasizes humankind's sense of unity with nature. Succinctly, she singles out the loss of control of humankind's desire as the cause of the current environmental crisis:

> Because our culture does not teach us that we are plain citizens of the earth, because we live apart from the natural world and deny our intimacy with it, we have lost that sense of unity that is still possible in other cultures. Our desire marks what we have lost and what we still hope to regain. Desire, for ecology, goes beyond the human. (Campbell 1996, 135)

How humankind defines its role on earth, as Campbell argues, determines its living relationship with the natural world. It is a shame that humankind's ignorance of its true position in the universe, under the sway of desire-oriented culture, should have contributed to its alienation from nature. By lamenting its absence, Campbell centres attention on the significance of that sense of unity for today's ecosystems, revealing the urgent task at hand for people today.

In a similar vein, Rutherford Calhoun depicts the sense of unity with the world in Charles Johnson's historical novel *The Middle Passage*. He recollects his position in society: "The 'I' that I was, was a mosaic of many countries, a patchwork of others and objects stretching backward to perhaps the beginning of time. What I felt, seeing this, was indebtedness" (Johnson 1990, 162–163). Spanning time and space, the "I" thus merges into a sense of oneness with the intertwined whole. Closely related to Calhoun's view of ecological entanglement in today's ecocriticism is Timothy Morton's concept of the "mesh." Specifically, it refers to the interconnectedness of all life forms on this planet. On this basis, Morton posits "the thinking of interconnectedness," or what he calls "the ecological thought," as a great opportunity for humankind to open its mind, think, and thereby cope with the great crises in this rapidly warming age (Morton 2010, 30). Furthermore, Calhoun's insight into his involvement in the overall network of ecology corresponds to Ralph Waldo Emerson's view of human existence in nature. Transposed into American transcendentalism, it turns into the "transparent eyeball" in Emerson's *Nature*: "I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God" (2001, 29). Humble yet self-reliant in believing in the divinity of every human being, the transcendental individual thus helps reshape humankind's intimacy with nature, retrieving and revitalizing that lost sense of unity.

We embed this crucial worldview even in nursery rhymes that we teach to our children. "This Is the House That Jack Built," for example, lends itself to exploring further humankind's indebtedness to the unity of the world. What has the farmer in this rhyme to do with the house built by Jack, who probably was a total

stranger to the farmer? How is the cock related to "the rat that ate the malt"? Through its cumulative technique, this nursery rhyme maps a miniature social network, depicting how the house is linked to numerous people, animals, and things in an intricate way. It reveals, in a broader sense, how all living things are connected in a chain and closely related to one another in this world as an interlinked whole. It further stands, in essence, for a symbiotic community, an ecosystem in miniature. Yet a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. The strength of this ecological chain thereby depends totally on each and every component. Take one away, and the others will crumble. Put differently, what would happen if the cow in this nursery rhyme died of a disease caused by polluted water or/and air? "The maiden all forlorn," presumably, would have no cow to milk, which in turn might jeopardize the kiss from "the man all tattered and torn." As a consequence of the absence of that kiss, the priest might not wed the man and the maiden. The cock would therefore have no need to crow in the morning to wake up the priest. Once started, the chain reaction would not stop until it exhausted itself. Likewise, any change in the ecological links will give rise to a ripple effect affecting each and every member of the community. The demise of any link, as Donne has it, diminishes the universal oneness.

There is another interesting house in Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." The house, according to the speaker of this poem, "is in the village, though" (Frost 1979, 224). To wit, it is outside the landscape that embraces the woods and frozen lake, serving as something that goes more with the artefacts of culture than with nature as the ultimate sublime. Throughout the poem, two contending forces flow and dance in between the lines, perhaps in a way which is as gentle and peaceful as "the sweep of easy wind and downy flake." One is the soothing and assuring attraction of nature, the other the call of conscience from outside the landscape – the "promises to keep" and "miles to go" before sleep. His conscience reminding him of duties and promises to be kept, the speaker cannot but evade the woods, which are "lovely, dark, and deep" (224). The sentiment of attraction or love between the speaker and nature in this poem, furthermore, corresponds interestingly to the author's complex emotions toward the world in "The Lesson for Today":

> And were an epitaph to be my story,
> I'd have a short one ready for my own.
> I would have written of me on my stone:
> I had a lover's quarrel with the world.[3]
> (Frost 1979, 355)

3 When Frost died in 1963, this poem of his was in fact inscribed on the headstone of his grave in Bennington, Vermont. The poem was originally published in Frost's *A Witness Tree* (1942).

In pursuing his visions of reality, Frost often sails against the currents of his time. When truth is ignored, a quarrel with his beloved world becomes inevitable. In addition to this "lover's quarrel," Frost also considers humankind's mortality and the nature of civilization in this poem. While science rapidly gains momentum in its further development, Frost contends that human beings are not happy in the dark age of uncertainty, perhaps not unlike "the God with artificial limbs" in Freud's theory. Frost therefore proposes "how to be unhappy yet polite" as the lesson for people of his day (1979, 353). In spite of the darkness and lack of certainty in his time, he refuses to let that uncertainty determine his outlook on life (350). Frost chooses instead to embrace with love the world as well as the woods. Affirmative as well as radical, such a mentality chimes interestingly with what Thoreau made clear in the epigraph to *Walden*. Thoreau, too, refuses to wallow in lament. He proposes instead to alert people to reality the best he can, "to brag as lustily as a chanticleer in the morning." Although not always smooth and sweet, Frost's intimate relationship with his beloved world, very likely, will inspire adoration, envy, or even anxiety in environmentalists nowadays. This is mainly because such a dear attachment, like humankind's intimacy with the natural world in Campbell's argument, might not survive the disasters induced by the escalating global warming. The nature of the quarrel this time, in other words, may well go beyond human imagination.

Are there ways to regain our intimacy with the world, as Campbell urges? Yann Arthus-Bertrand offers his answer in *Home*, a documentary released in 2009. Through a candid representation of the current situation, this film anticipates humanity's coming life and alerts the public to the impending catastrophe. A few things are especially noteworthy. Firstly, this cinematic critique of today's society reinforces vividly the core principle of ecology: all of us are interconnected in our symbiotic global community. Citing examples from the history of our planet, it joins forces with the common belief in the sense of unity. In particular, *Home* turns the spotlight on the natural balance between all organisms and the earth. What is truly at stake now in our environmental struggles, it further expounds, is maintaining that delicate but crucial balance. Should the balance be tipped by the effects of global warming, our planet cannot but face havoc. The graph and the image from NASA's *Worldview* mentioned above, indeed, speak volumes where this imminent nightmare is concerned. When it truly happens, needless to say, no one will remain intact.

Secondly, *Home* may be seen as a modern filmic rendition of "This Is the House That Jack Built" – one in which the many ecological links of our symbiotic community are revealed to be extremely vulnerable. Besides, right from the beginning of the film, a human voice repeatedly addresses humankind as *Homo sapiens*. Clearly intended as an admonition, it helps raise awareness that wisdom is

an ideal state for humankind to live up to. Ample examples, one after the other, further expose the urgency of today's human beings working together wisely to sustain that crucial balance between all lives on earth. It is obvious that our civilization can no longer tolerate the excessive development of malevolent science and technology, which are often endorsed and manipulated by the exploitative enterprises that jeopardize ecosystems. *Home* thereby proposes a new awareness, "a new human adventure based on moderation, intelligence and sharing." No more greedy monopoly and extravagance on the part of human beings. What is expected instead is an advance – an adventure leading to the eco-friendly mentality of living and letting live by maintaining the natural balance. Last but not least, *Home*, as a title for Arthus-Bertrand's critique of the modern world, if compared with the traditional sense of "house," emits a feeling of warmth and a sense of belonging. Its form of singularity further reinforces the sense of unity underscored by John Donne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Charles Johnson, SueEllen Campbell, Timothy Morton, and others who believe in the common wealth of all lives on earth.

When it comes to critiques of human influence on the natural world, especially in the context of global warming, Al Gore's remarks invite special attention. In *An Inconvenient Truth*, a 2006 documentary film, he warns that our world faces a true planetary emergency, a challenge to the moral imagination. Gore also calls into question the dubious role of the politician in the face of current environmental struggles. He points out specifically that "it is a politician's natural instinct to avoid taking any stand that seems controversial unless and until the voters demand it or conscience absolutely requires it." Surviving this age of disasters will obviously require commitment from all of us. The voters, in other words, should come together and demand the implementation of all possible precautions. Hope will smile more readily on humankind, I would argue, if all politicians choose to heed the voice and call of their own conscience. However, this seems naturally incompatible with the political instincts of many a politician. The significance of conscientious action in Gore's argument would find better support from global citizens than politicians, given the risk that the latter would probably choose to follow their political instincts when the issues become controversial or "inconvenient."

3 Humans thinking

Gore's emphasis on conscience in the environmentalists' struggles accords with Thoreau's views in *Resistance to Civil Government*. In the nineteenth century, Thoreau espoused the need to prioritize one's conscience over the dictates of

laws. Government, to him, is but an expedient at best. It is the rule of conscience that human beings should follow. Thoreau thus argues:

> Can there not be government in which majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? – in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume is to do at any time what I think right. (Thoreau 1992, 227)

Here Thoreau appeals to the human instinct that knows right from wrong. It is conscience that can resist gravitation toward the world of false values. And it is the innate goodness of humanity that one can trust when the view of truth becomes dark and confusing.

Applied to the metaphorical chanticleer in the epigraph to *Walden*, Thoreau's reliance on instinct, interestingly, agrees with a discovery in a recent biological experiment. Takashi Yoshimura and Tsuyoshi Shimmura highlight the functions of the internal biological clock that tells roosters when to crow:

> Our observations prove that the rooster breaks the dawn every morning as a function of his circadian clock. It has been known for a long time that crowing is also induced by external stimuli. We conclude that not only anticipatory predawn crowing, but also external stimulus-induced crowing, is under the control of a circadian clock. (Yoshimura and Shimmura 2013, R232)

For a rooster to crow, in other words, requires nothing from the outside. Rather, it takes something natural from inside. It is an instinct that a rooster can rely on when left in the dark. Likewise, in the scenario of Thoreau's philosophy, the metaphorical chanticleer can trust his instinctive conscience and thereby crow heartily and sing clearly to help people remain sober when the rest of the world is in unconsciousness or confusion.

Thoreau, as a matter of fact, is not the only philosopher who underscores respect for what is right, the value of human conscience. The ancient Chinese philosopher Mencius also advocates the innate goodness of the individual. He believes that it is society's negative influence that causes bad moral character. The way of learning, therefore, is none other than "finding the lost mind" (Mencius 1963, 58), and the beginning of wisdom is "the feeling of right and wrong" (65). Likewise, David Hume, the eighteenth-century Scottish philosopher, affirms the rule of what is right. In his opinion, the affection of humanity for the public good stands as the foundation of morals:

> The notion of morals implies some sentiment common to all mankind, which recommends the same object to general approbation, and makes every man, or most men, agree in the same opinion or decision concerning it. It also implies some sentiment, so universal and comprehensive as to extend to all mankind, and render the actions and conduct, even of the persons the most remote, an object of applause or censure, according as they agree or disagree with that rule of right which is established. (Hume 1777)

Emphasizing the prevalent conformity to what most people consider to be morally good, Hume's theory thus resonates with the common belief in human conscience. The core of morality, in a nutshell, is telling right from wrong. It requires the capacity not only to recognize the interests of other people but also to choose the public good over self-interest.

While echoing the above-mentioned advocacies of morality, Thoreau's call for conscience proves even more radical and challenging. This is mainly because it demands conscience in action, not merely the acknowledgement of the human instinct that knows right from wrong. His appeal for the moral uplifting of society requires the courage to dissent, to break the bad laws, and to do the right things through conscientious objection and non-violent resistance. Thoreau's *Walden*, furthermore, demonstrates the government of conscience in his relationship with the natural world. It is simplicity, not extravagance, which Thoreau pursued in his life. He went to the woods by Walden "to front only the essential facts of life" (Thoreau 1992, 61) – or, put in Yann Arthus-Bertrand's cinematic language, to live out the true wisdom of *Homo sapiens*. As for Thoreau's belief in action, it affirms the remarks of his mentor Emerson: "Without it, thought can never ripen into truth" (Emerson 2001, 61). Thoreau thereby encourages people to put foundations under the castles of their dreams, not to mention the action he urges people to take for justice. In a sense, he is "Man Thinking," the seer and doer, not a mere thinker, according to Emerson's definition in "The American Scholar" (Emerson 2001, 57). Interestingly, both Emerson and Thoreau fit the vivid portrayal of the transparent eyeball in action in a caricature of 1951 by Christopher Cranch (2015). Enjoying "an original relation to the universe" (Emerson 2001, 27), the transcendental eyeball, the "Man Thinking," thus practices in life his green conscience – the conscience that values humanity's unity with nature.

In this age of global warming, it is also this very conscience that is expected to perform its duty to the global community. For one thing, it has to brave the malicious powers that keep damaging the planet and upsetting the already vulnerable natural balance. Through the joint efforts of conscientious industries, institutions, and individuals, it must hold responsible the exploitative structures that ruin ecosystems. Meanwhile, this conscience needs to be acted out in the daily life of every individual on earth. There is no denying that human beings have now arrived at the point where all must realize that change is necessary to

reduce harm to the environment, and that such change would be in everyone's best interest. The decision to lead an eco-friendly life, in the moral calculus of climate change,[4] has to be the only choice. Accordingly, the rule of insatiable human desire cannot but succumb to the rule of right, which, preferably, is also the rule of "moderation, intelligence and sharing." Hopefully, the collective conscience of *Homo sapiens* in action – embodying a collaborative fusion of acquired technological knowledge with inner wisdom – will make possible a feasible niche of "conscience," the foundation for all virtuous sciences to come together and help save our endangered planet.

4 Coda

In his examination of Robert Frost's relationship with his world, Seamus Heaney calls attention to Frost's letter to Amy Bonner in June 1937 that said "there are no two things as important to us in life and art as being threatened and being saved. What are ideals of form for if we aren't going to be made to fear for them? All our ingenuity is lavished on getting into danger legitimately so that we may be genuinely rescued" (quoted in Heaney 1996, 62–63). Being genuinely saved, in other words, requires being threatened first – to learn to fear for our ideals of form and thereby truly appreciate them. If this argument of Frost proves true, what could we learn from it? Will humankind eventually be rescued after experiencing earthquakes, tsunamis, and a series of nightmarish threats? Fearfully, many people have learned their lesson for today – to fear for the earth which they closely and dearly rely on. Wishfully, many people have been striving for a chance to regain their intimate relationship with the world, a chance to transform Frost's epitaph into an epigraph to humankind's new adventure in a global community that values a dear symbiosis between humanity and nature. And that chance, most probably, will find realization in actions rooted in, and nourished by, the powerful call of human conscience.

4 Alex Blasdel calls attention to Timothy Morton's insight that we are condemned to live with the awareness that we are driving global warming and ecological destruction. We therefore live in a world with a moral calculus that did not exist before. Now, doing just about anything becomes an environmental question (Blasdel 2017).

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Spatiality and Conflicted Meanings in Borges's "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"

Abstract: This paper examines issues of language, knowledge, and location in the story "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" by Jorge Luis Borges. There is a sense in which this story is fundamentally about the nature of language, and the story comments on ways in which human language articulates a relationship between knowledge itself and location. The basic premise is the challenge of establishing locations, commenting on them, and examining the nature of them. This process can be seen to be related to the search for a type of understanding, the possibility of which is always in doubt but which serves as motivation for action and endeavour, thus making possible the very notion of the availability of alternatives, of multiple paths, of a range of choices. In this way, a goal such as reaching the minotaur at the centre of a labyrinth is not only figured as being unattainable but is like the notion of a perfect translation or the production of a perfect utterance, a concept more fruitfully utilized as a spur to provoke us to think harder and to weigh up more options and possibilities, to strive towards goals and enhance achievements, rather than being seen as a state of idyllic verbal expression we should realistically aim for.

Keywords: conflict, Jorge Luis Borges, literary spatiality, space, "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius"

> In every poem chaos must shimmer through the regular veil of orderliness (Novalis 1990, 114)

In this article, I comment on the story "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" in order to explore the notion that this narrative by the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986) is fundamentally about the relationship between spatiality and the nature of language, and that the story comments on ways in which human language articulates a relationship between knowledge itself and conflicts about location. The basic premise of this story is seen to be the challenge of establishing conflicted locations and their implications, commenting on them, and examining the nature of them. This process is related to the search for a type of understanding, the possibility of which is always in doubt, but which serves as motivation for action and endeavour. That search for understanding entails the depiction of characters and events that proceed towards a future that is undefined and essen-

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tially unknowable, thus opening up the very notion of different alternatives, multiple paths, and a range of possible options.

In 2015, the German philosopher Markus Gabriel published a book called (in English) *Why the World Does Not Exist*. In it, he outlines an epistemological approach that suggests that the key fact about our knowledge of what surrounds us is that it is limited by our inability to escape from our condition of being ourselves *in* the world. The idea that we can "grasp the whole" (Gabriel 2015, 12), that is, think about the entirety of what we usually call "the world," is an illusion, since "it is in principle too big for any thought"; thus, "the world cannot in principle exist because it is not found in the world." Note that Gabriel is not attempting to claim that the universe is an illusion or that life is a dream; indeed he explicitly states that "considerably more exists than one would have expected – namely, everything else except the world." In this set of what exists he includes those concepts and thoughts that we conjure up in our imaginations, so that what is imaginary exists – the example he gives is of unicorns wearing police uniforms and living on the far side of the moon (13). The latter exist because we can imagine them; what we cannot do, he insists, is imagine "the world." And the point is further reinforced by the following assertion: "The question is never simply whether something exists but always *where* something exists. For everything that exists, exists somewhere – even if it is only in our imagination" (emphasis in original). And the only exception to this is, of course, the world, since "this we cannot imagine at all" (13–14).

Whether or not we are convinced by Gabriel's argument, we can presumably see where he is coming from, and can appreciate the point. He quotes Wittgenstein's two opening statements in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*:

I. The world is everything that is the case.
II. The world is the totality of facts, not of things. (Gabriel 2015, 33)

He then develops this to suggest that the world is "neither the totality of things nor the totality of facts, but it is that domain in which all existing domains are found," approvingly citing Heidegger's formulation of the world as "the domain of all domains" (Gabriel 2015, 45), which leads to the conclusion that "there is no such thing as the domain of all domains," that is, that the world, as such, does not exist.

There are two main thoughts emerging from Gabriel's argument, ideas that correspond in a fruitful way to the kind of thinking about language, spatiality, and identity that emerges from a reading of the work of Jorge Luis Borges. The first is the notion that there exists a tension between what we could call a commonsense view that assumes that the world exists and that we exist in it, on the one hand, and a position such as Gabriel's that concludes that there is no such

thing as that "world" which is the domain of all domains. The second is the position that this argument entails about language, namely that language is fundamental to the discussion itself, since it is precisely when we attempt to refer to "the world," that is, to make some statement about existence, that the problem comes into focus; after all, the only means whereby we can address the issue in question is language – it is only through language that a statement about such things as the meaning of life, or explanations of our existence, or the fact of the world's existence or non-existence, can be uttered.

Both of these are crucial dimensions of several Borges stories, and they raise important concerns about how this author's *ficciones* function as stories. In particular, they relate in important ways to how notions of spatiality are employed – either explicitly or implicitly – in order to explore certain fundamental insights into our humanity. Note that this is not to say that Borges simply calls into question the idea that we are capable of understanding our own existence, nor am I suggesting that Borges is peddling a postmodernist conceptualization of the world as an illusory notion, constantly relativized and functioning as merely a series of self-induced deceptions about our being. Rather, what I wish to suggest is that Borges is more inclined to deal simultaneously with two opposing ideas which are mutually contradictory but which both have equal truth value. Thus, in Borges, we may find that the world does and does not exist, and that language does and does not reference reality. Perhaps the best example of how Borges does this, creating a domain in which conflicting truths coexist, is the 1940 story "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius."

This is one of Borges's best known *ficciones*, but it is one that is often misunderstood, in terms of the fundamental point that it addresses. In it, the narrator discovers a conspiracy to invent an imaginary world, one in which there are no material objects, and one where languages do not contain normal nouns or references to things, but rather only verbs and references to qualities. What I want to claim is that the central concern of the story – as in the case of many other Borges stories – is not the issue of escaping reality by playfully inventing a world of fantasy, but is something deeper and, ultimately, much more human than that: the issue of the conflict between such things as reality and fantasy. This story explores the nature of human conflict by addressing universal intellectual conflict and how that relates to human understandings of space. It does this by offering us a version of the conflicted state in which we live, one that hinges on our struggle to comprehend our place in the universe, and the possible sense of anguish associated with that struggle around meaning. It enquires into the nature of the self and the nature of identity, taking identity to mean the sense we have of the reality of the self. Is there an I that we can allude to as having real existence, or is this just a fiction, an invention? And, if it is an invention, in what way is it an

invention? That is, do we invent reality? Is that which we refer to as real merely a fiction, so that idealist notions of being as perception are in fact key to understanding the nature of existence?

What I want to suggest is that this claim is never actually resolved in the story "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," and that this lack of resolution is central to what the story is about. The story succeeds, in other words, by articulating an intellectual aporia, a fundamental conflict – between existence and non-existence, reality and the imagination, and meaningfulness and lack of meaningfulness – and I suggest that this conflict is articulated in spatial terms. The story conjures up an entire alternative universe, one that we experience imaginatively while always also remaining tied to our everyday existence; via language, it places us outside our own universe and allows us to experience the sense of inhabiting a radically different "otherness," while continuing to be part of the universe we actually inhabit.

We can trace the process by which this happens by reviewing some of the key moments of conflict in the story, moments that lead us through a labyrinthine series of steps that take us to a place removed from normality but one that constantly confounds us by blurring the boundaries between the fictional and the real. It seems to me that there are four key phases in the story when conflict is foregrounded, phases that are characterized by issues of spatiality. We can sketch these spatial conflicts in the following terms.

1 Conflict over the existence of Uqbar

The narrator and his friend stumble upon the fact that there exists an anomalous version of the *Anglo-American Cyclopaedia*. This is a version that includes a description of a place called Uqbar. The encyclopaedia in question is said to be an inferior version of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. But the friends find that the "normal" edition of the encyclopaedia does not even refer to Uqbar; only this one anomalous version does. In it, they find an odd statement about existence which reads as follows: "Para uno de esos gnósticos, el visible universo era una ilusión o (más precisamente) un sofisma. Los espejos y la paternidad son abominables porque lo multiplican y lo difunden" [For one of these gnostics, the visible universe was an illusion or (more precisely) a sophism. Mirrors and fatherhood are hateful because they multiply and disseminate that universe] (Borges 1996, 431).[1]

1 English translations of Borges's text in this article are my own.

So, in the "world" as it is conceived by this gnostic, the visible universe is not a kind of passive entity waiting to be observed by us. As a sophism, it has the same degree of agency as a linguistically formulated sentence, and serves to deceive us into thinking that it exists. Hence, the unresolved conflict we are left with is one in which we somehow manage to observe a world, but that world is just a deception or an illusion: it both exists before us as something we can witness, and simultaneously does not exist.

2 Conflicting characteristics of the imaginary world

The main feature attributed to the invented world in the story is its immateriality: that is, there are no material objects in this "world"; there is only thought and impressions or perceptions. This universe – which, at this point, is not even Uqbar, but the world of Tlön, that is, the universe invented within the literature of Uqbar – is not a spatial world. As the narrator puts it: "El mundo para ellos no es un concurso de objetos en el espacio; es una serie heterogénea de actos independientes. Es sucesivo, temporal, no espacial" [For them, the world is not a set of objects in space; it is a heterogeneous series of independent acts. It is successive and temporal, not spatial] (Borges 1996, 435).

The result of this is that the language used in this "world" – a language whose existence is implicitly called into question in a fundamental way, since it is itself referred to as "conjetural" [conjectural], and as being merely the posited origin of this place's current languages – does not have nouns in it, just impersonal verbs with adverbial affixes. There is extensive discussion of the nature of the languages of Tlön – there is another language that only has adjectives in it – but the upshot of the discussion is that the narrator, in company with the hapless reader, has to come to terms with paradoxical statements and ideas about the linguistic features being discussed, so that we are left with conflicting insights into not only the nature of these languages, but conceivably into the nature of language itself. We are told, for instance, that "el hecho de que nadie crea en la realidad de los sustantivos hace, paradójicamente, que sea interminable su número" [the fact that nobody believes in the reality of nouns means, paradoxically, that they are interminable in number] (Borges 1996, 435), so that all the "nouns" that Indo-European languages possess are also available in the languages of the northern hemisphere of Tlön, as well as many more.

3 Conflict created by intrusion of the imaginary world into the everyday world

As the story proceeds and we come to what is called the "Postscript," there is an increasing sense that the clash between our everyday world and the invented world of Tlön is coming to a head. A compass is found with words written on it in Tlönian lettering; the narrator comes upon a cone made of a metal heavier than any known on earth, and we are told that such cones are images of the divinity in Tlön; a version of the *First Encyclopaedia of Tlön* is found, but with parts deleted from it in order to make it fit in more with the characteristics of the real world, while schools begin to teach children the Tlönian language and the history of Tlön starts to replace conventional history. As our narrator states, "ya en las memorias un pasado ficticio ocupa el sitio de otro, del que nada sabemos con certidumbre – ni siquiera que es falso" [in people's memories, a fictional past has now taken the place of another past, one that we know nothing about with any certainty, not even that it is false] (Borges 1996, 440). Language and expression are therefore central to the world that is replacing our everyday world; in order to convey anything at all about that other world, we need to have recourse to a discussion of language itself, and ultimately, this boils down to uncertainty and ambiguity: we can say nothing with certainty because there is nothing material in existence about which we could even make a claim.

4 Conflict of private vs public realities

The final conflict presented by the narrator is that between public and private worlds: the public space in which there is obsessive assimilation of a fantastical alternative to the real, and a private world which is figured as a quiet, untroubled existence in which our narrator retires to a place apart (a hotel in Adrogué, twenty kilometres outside of cosmopolitan Buenos Aires) in order to work on a translation of the classic seventeenth-century English meditation on death, Thomas Browne's "Urn Burial": "Yo no hago caso, yo sigo revisando en los quietos días del hotel de Adrogué una indecisa traducción quevediana (que no pienso dar a la imprenta) del Urn Burial de Browne" [I don't pay it any heed. In the peace and quiet of the hotel in Adrogué, I just keep working on revising my indecisive translation of Browne's "Urn Burial," written in the style of Quevedo – a translation I have no intention of publishing] (Borges 1996, 440). This statement about what the narrator is now doing allows him to dismiss the universe that has been fabricated in the preceding paragraphs and return us to the highly personal starting point with which he

began when he talked of his conversation with a friend that led to the initial discovery of Uqbar.[2] But the references to copies, simulations, and inventions continue here, since, for all that he evokes the private world of the individual in this final sentence of the story, he still suggests that the translation he is working on is not especially reflective of his own personality, that is, that the world is not really *him*. Rather, we are told that the translation is being written in the manner of the Spanish Golden-Age satirical poet, Francisco de Quevedo, and that it is "indecisive." Even the narrator's retreat from the chaotic conundrums associated with the public appropriation of the alien world he has described, then, is characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity.

*

The instances of conflict that have been outlined above all serve to reinforce the central point of the story, which is that everything is uncertain, nothing can be taken for granted, and that the general issue of personal identity, the question of the existence of "the world" and the issue about the capacity – or lack of capacity – of language to convey anything substantial about that world are all called into question. In an interview conducted in 1984, Borges said that he "never stopped laughing from beginning to end" while writing "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," and that the story was "all one huge metaphysical joke" (quoted in Kearney 2006, 346). But, of course, when he said that, he may have been only joking: the story is clearly more than a joke; indeed, it is more than a story. While we must not make the mistake of treating Borges's *ficciones* as if they were simply philosophical essays in which the author was attempting to explicate complex questions – a common enough error in my view[3] – we must also acknowledge that, as well as being fictional stories, they are indeed incursions into knotty conundrums about metaphysical issues. In a radical sense, then, the story is both a fiction and an exercise in philosophical reflection, and it leaves unresolved the tension between these two questions of genre, just as it deliberately leaves unresolved the various enigmas it references in the course of the narrative. In this sense, it is precisely this characteristic – the conflicted nature of the very genre of this piece of writing – that affords the story its ultimate originality, and presumably it is precisely this fundamentally ambivalent quality that accounts, at least in part, for its universal appeal.

2 Note how this chimes with the discussion in Italiano (2016) of the links between real and imagined places in the context of the "imaginative geographies" conjured up in literary texts.

3 See, for instance, Richardson (2012, 176–177) for a discussion of this point in relation to another Borges story, "The Library of Babel."

This is achieved, I would suggest, by spatial means.[4] Each of the conflicts identified above is spatial in nature. First, the existence of Uqbar is debated and disputed, with an initial clear acknowledgement that what is being referred to is imaginary but with subsequent claims that the imaginary universe that has been invented is growing and expanding. Second, the characteristics of this imaginary world are explained to us in terms that allow us to see the various contradictions inherent in them, so that issues about the reality of objects are left unresolved and features of imaginary languages are seen to be paradoxical. Then, the conflict, attendant on the intrusion of objects from Tlön into our everyday existence, is depicted as a spatial conflict as if it were a kind of war of worlds, the implication appearing to be that inevitably the dystopian but rational imaginary universe will prevail over our mundane world, as we sink into an abyss of obsession with, and blind faith in, the superiority of this alien alternative. Finally, even the option of escaping the juggernaut of Tlön and Uqbar by having recourse to the consolation of poetry is seen to be fallacious, since uncertainty also characterises this move, and the tenuous nature of the self is emphasized by the admission that what is being produced reflects the influence of another writer (Quevedo), and the result is yet more lack of clarity.

Language is seen to be tied up with epistemology here, as well as with fundamental notions about identity. The labyrinthine world which we are invited to enter takes us through a series of steps that deposit us in ambiguity and ambivalence. There is no rational hyper-ego, no "self," that can impose order on this chaos or present a rational map of the territory in question.[5] At each turn, significations slip away from us, and the impression we are left with is one of a vast maze of hints and half-truths that somehow seem to convey something valid about how we apprehend things, but which will not sit still long enough or simply be stable enough to allow us to fix meanings in anything like a permanent manner. Just as there are no nouns in Tlönian languages, there are no objects in this world, and the ambiguities in the story undermine any sense that we can grasp hold of what surrounds us. In this story, even our private self is seen to be evanescent, and we are left adrift in a fundamentally nebulous universe.

Most of the individual issues that have been raised here in relation to this story have been addressed on numerous occasions elsewhere, often with great

4 This discussion is informed by my reading of key texts on literary spatiality such as Westphal (2011), Dünne and Günzel (2012), and Tally (2017); for more detailed discussion of the matter, see Richardson (2018).

5 In this regard, it is worth noting that this story itself may well be deemed to qualify, in the conception of literary spatiality outlined by Stockhammer (2006), as being both "mappable" and "unmappable."

insight.[6] But I would like to comment briefly on three fairly general aspects that I think are central both to the story itself and to any consideration of the relevance of Borges's work to the ongoing evolution of creative writing. These are as follows: questions about existence, about the nature of language, and about the conflicted journey towards meaning that the story's trajectory represents.

Firstly, in relation to the question of existence, there is a fundamental ambiguity in operation in the story, one that serves to undermine any degree of certainty about our knowledge of the universe around us. The point here is not so much about whether what we can call "the world" does or does not exist: common sense may dictate the former, while, as we saw above, philosophers such as Markus Gabriel can argue effectively in favour of the latter. What the story seems to suggest, however, is that our focus needs to be epistemological, rather than ontological: what is impossible is certainty in relation to our knowledge of the universe around us, and the reason for that uncertainty is a spatial one: we cannot pin down the universe, that is, know *where* it is, precisely because we do not know *what* it is, and we cannot have knowledge of the universe because we do not know *where* that knowledge is. Just as Borges and his friend strive to locate the meanings behind the fantasy world of Tlön, so we too flounder as we search within the story to identify the location of reliable knowledge about all that there is around us.

Secondly, language comes into play when we attempt to formulate meaning of any kind. The fundamental ambiguity of language is signalled by the discussion in this story about the nature of the languages of Tlön. Not only are there no nouns in Tlönian languages; there are also two contrasting ways of addressing the resultant deficit: we can rely on references to times and events, or we can allude to qualities through the use of adjectives. The very fact that two such options exist obviously adds to the sense of uncertainty and ambiguity: our only recourse is to rely on the two fundamental phenomena of events happening and things seeming to have qualities. In an archly idealist move, the search for alternative ways of articulating meaning takes us back to ourselves as perceivers of what is around us, acknowledging the primacy of perception and the basic ambiguity of linguistic codes. Those codes are seen here in Whorfian terms as both reflecting and creating alternative ways of thinking, and these ways of thinking, rather than offering solid options, reveal only further bifurcating paths in a labyrinth, so that the more our narrator attempts to identify the characteristics of the

6 See, for instance, the remarks on the "reality" of the Tlönian universe in the context of quantum theory in Merrell (1991, ch. 6), the discussion in Sarlo (1993) of issues relating to order and chaos in this story, Seargeant (2009) on questions relating to the languages of Tlön, and Fishburn (2015) on how "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius" can be read as a story about the world created within the story itself.

languages he is describing, the more he uncovers further uncertainty and debate around their core meanings, and the more further possibilities for meaning emerge.

In such a context, as Krzystof Ziarek (2009, 84) suggests, "being becomes tied to the notion of possibility, and not simply to possibilities but to the very force of the possible," so that "to experience being means to experience its historical-temporal happening in terms of the force of the possible." This is the third – and perhaps crucial – dimension of this story that has not been given due attention: the way in which its labyrinthine structure serves to leave unresolved the various forays that the story undertakes into the nature of meaning and the location of knowledge. Starting with the initial scene where the narrator and his friend begin the process of discovering Uqbar, and wending our way through all the various twists and turns on the path to understanding the Tlönian universe, and having been tempted with the possibility of the creation of an "Orbis Tertius," we end up experiencing, with the narrator, the ambiguities associated with his own efforts at translating an English text into Spanish. We find ourselves immersed in a maze of meanings and half-truths, always waiting to discover the next twist in the tale that will finally reveal a good understanding of what is going on, only to realize that in fact what we are destined to discover is that there is no prize at the centre of the labyrinth, indeed that the centre of the labyrinth is itself unattainable, that the journey in search of that prize is in fact the fundamental meaning we are pursuing, not the unattainable prize itself. In the terms of this labyrinth, reaching the minotaur at the centre of the labyrinth is not only figured as being unattainable but is, as the story hints, like the notion of a perfect translation or the production of a perfect utterance in any human language, a concept more fruitfully utilized as a spur to provoke us to think harder and to weigh up more options and possibilities, to strive towards goals and enhance achievements, rather than being a blissful state of idyllic verbal expression we should realistically aim for.

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7 Translingualisms

Julia Bacskai-Atkari

Intertextuality, Shared Language, and the Many Transformations of Cain: A Comparative Analysis of Byron's *Cain* and Ransmayr's *Der fliegende Berg*

Abstract: The article concentrates on two paraphrases of the archetypical Cain and Abel story: Lord Byron's *Cain* and Christoph Ransmayr's *Der fliegende Berg* [The Flying Mountain]. In both cases, language has a central role in the protagonist's relationship to his brother, and this is also intertwined with an extreme existential situation in which the protagonist is disconnected from his usual sociocultural (and linguistic) environment. Byron's Cain is alienated from his brother, which has linguistic reflexes: the two use different languages. However, Cain's killing of his brother is an act against God. The narrator of Ransmayr's verse novel is partially alienated from his brother Liam: yet Liam, once their late father's favourite, seems to be less at peace with himself and the world than the narrator, and thus takes on attributes of Cain. The brothers' shared journey to the Tibetan mountains reconnects them, however. They are either by themselves or among a local tribe, and their experiences on the border between life and death recreate a shared language between them. The presence/absence of a shared language thus results in different outcomes in the two texts.

Keywords: alienation, Byronic hero, intertextuality, narrator, paraphrase, verse novel, Lord Byron, Christoph Ransmayr

1 Introduction

As pointed out by Quinones (2014, 3), the biblical story of Cain and Abel is an archetypal story which has often been rewritten in literature. The description of the murder and its cause is very brief in the Bible. It is said that Cain sacrifices fruits of the ground, while Abel sacrifices an animal; God accepts Abel's offerings but not those of Cain, but there is no explicit explanation why. The story continues as follows:

> And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire,

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> and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. (King James Bible, Gen. 4.5–12)

God then curses Cain to be a fugitive and a vagabond.

There are some important features that need to be highlighted here. First, there are only three characters, God, Cain, and Abel; however, Abel has no linguistic presence of his own. Second, there is a conflict between two events: God's acceptance of Abel's sacrifice and God's rejection of Cain's sacrifice. In other words, there is no direct conflict between Cain and Abel, or between Cain and God. In this way, the conflict between Cain and Abel is generated by Cain's metonymic substitution of the conflict between the events with the participants in the events (more precisely, with Abel and Cain, since God is a constant participant in both cases). Furthermore, this metonymic substitution is a two-step process, as God's reaction in each case targets the sacrifice itself, and the person making the sacrifice is affected only indirectly. Third, the only dialogue takes place between Cain and God: there is a direct connection between the two.

The adaptations of the Cain story do not necessarily differ considerably regarding these points; this is especially true for mystery plays. One example of this is in the *Chester Cycle* from the Middle English period, where the story is extended only as much as necessary, adding the characters of Adam and Eve (*The Chester Mystery Cycle* 1992, second play, lines 425–705). There are altogether more dialogues, but Abel is still only minimally present in terms of speech.

In adaptations, the conflict between the two brothers is naturally a central issue, and, as Quinones (2014, 19) notes, in the Byronic and post-Byronic era, the slaying of the brother is part of the process of Cain's coming to selfhood, thereby constituting an instance of regeneration. In the present article, I am going to examine two adaptations in this light. The first one is, logically, Lord Byron's *Cain*: this is a famous instance of foregrounding the negative hero (see Butler 1990, 65, 76). Importantly, the subtitle calls the text a "mystery"; however, it is altogether different from a traditional mystery play (this includes an explicit breakaway from the biblical worldview; see Michaels 1969, 72; Bostetter 1960). The second one is Christoph Ransmayr's *Der fliegende Berg* [The Flying Mountain]: this novel written in verse uses the archetypal story of Cain and Abel (see Lütkehaus 2006), and, just like Byron's text, it arrives at a regeneration. However, as this text is not a strict adaptation of the Cain story, there is no factual slaying and the conclusion regarding the two brothers' relationship differs as well. I will argue that the difference between Byron and Ransmayr is closely intertwined with how language functions in both cases. Both texts show an extreme existential situation, in

which the protagonist is disconnected from his usual sociocultural (and hence linguistic) environment. In *Cain*, the journey to regeneration is taken by Cain without his brother, which causes further alienation between the two: this alienation is reflected by their linguistic differences. In *Der fliegende Berg*, the journey is taken together by the brothers, resulting in reconnection, which is made possible and expressed through shared language.

2 Cain as a Byronic hero

Byron's Cain is a prototypical "Byronic hero" (Michaels 1969, 71): among other features, this involves a revolt transgressing certain conventions (see Steffan 1968, 39–41; Butler 1990, 66; Beatty 1990, 131; McGann 2002, 158). This trait was largely responsible for the negative reception of the work by its contemporary audiences (Steffan 1968, 9–18; Barton 1990; Knight 1957; McGann 2002).

Byron introduces various new characters (compared to the Bible): apart from Adam and Eve (who are partial towards Abel), Lucifer and the wives of Cain and Abel appear in the play. Crucially, God does not appear. This has the consequence that the most important dialogues take place between Cain and Lucifer, and there are no dialogues between God and Cain. As God is not present, there are naturally no dialogues in the text, but the point is that there is no un-narrated dialogue either: it is evident that God is not accessible.

Cain's questions throughout the play are essentially existential in nature. Thus, he cannot receive (satisfying) answers from his family (his parents and Abel are essentially dogmatic; see Steffan [1968, 29–34] for a detailed analysis) or from God (since no immediate dialogue is possible with God). In this way, the only possible source of answers is Lucifer, who is naturally willing to approach him as he thinks that he can use Cain in his fight against God. Lucifer takes Cain on an extraterrestrial journey, whereby Cain must confront his own insignificance[1] and is thus further alienated from God. On the other hand, his questions essentially remain unanswered by Lucifer as well, who tries to use Cain for his own purposes (see Steffan 1968, 37, 53) and who mostly replies by asking other questions (see Michaels 1969, 73). Hence, Cain ultimately rejects Lucifer too. In this sense, the journey makes Cain more isolated than he was before.

On returning to earth, Cain is even more alienated from his family; essentially no dialogue is possible at this point. This is evident from Cain's words to Abel, as an answer to the question of what he saw on his journey:

1 As pointed out by Steffan (1968, 9), this was highlighted by Byron himself in a letter to Murray.

> The dead,
> The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,
> The overpowering mysteries of space –
> The innumerable worlds that were and are –
> A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,
> Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres
> Singing in thunder round me, as have made me
> Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.177–184)

Cain at this point tries to avoid a dialogue, not least because he does not want to hurt Abel. Abel registers the change in his brother and says the following:

> Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light –
> Thy cheek is flushed with an unnatural hue –
> Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound –
> What may this mean?
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.184–187)

Even so, Abel does not want to accept his brother's reservations and insists on making a sacrifice to God. Cain essentially respects Abel and tries to avoid the situation, in an act of love towards Abel; but in the end, he does not resist any more. The differences between the two brothers are especially clear when it comes to the sacrifices, and the contrast is expressed linguistically as well.

Abel kneels when performing his sacrifice, and he uses a language of devotion and identification. Consider the beginning of his monologue:

> Oh God!
> Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life
> Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,
> And spared, despite our father's sin, to make
> His children all lost, as they might have been,
> Had not thy justice been so temper'd with
> The mercy which is thy delight, as to
> Accord a pardon like a Paradise,
> Compared with our great crimes: – Sole Lord of light!
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.223–231)

By contrast, Cain stands upright during his sacrifice, and he uses a language of alienation and scepticism. His monologue begins as follows:

> Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er thou art,
> Omnipotent, it may be – and, if good,
> Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil;
> Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!

> And it may be with other names, because
> Thine attributes seem many, as thy works: –
> If thou must be propitiated with prayers,
> Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
> And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
> Two beings here erect them unto thee.
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.245–254)

Cain's speech questions all elements of Abel's speech, even though his primary addressee is not Abel but God. He does not acknowledge the authority of God, which is evident already from the way he addresses him: he refers to him as "Spirit," and the notion "God" occurs only indirectly, that is, as a name that God uses in heaven. In addition, Cain also questions the omnipotence and the goodness of God, without denying either of them.

Hence, the contrast between the brothers is expressed linguistically: they are using different languages while naturally still capable of understanding each other. This is important because the conflict is not only reflected by language: it is also caused by language. Namely, language reveals their inherent differences: Abel abhors Cain's speech and Cain rejects Abel's language. While Abel uses a language that acknowledges God's authority, Cain questions the legitimacy of such a language and the authority of God. Apart from this, he also poses a question, for he includes a choice for God in his speech:

> If thou lov'st blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes
> On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service
> In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
> In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
> Or if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
> And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
> I spread them on now offers in the face
> Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
> Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
> Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
> A sample of thy works, than supplication
> To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
> And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
> Look on it! and for him who dresseth it,
> He is – such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
> Which must be won by kneeling: if he's evil,
> Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st –
> For what can he oppose? If he be good,
> Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
> Rests upon thee! and good and evil seem
> To have no power themselves, save in thy will;
> And whether that be good or ill I know not,

> Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
> Omnipotence, but merely to endure
> Its mandate; which thus far I have endured.
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.255–279)

Strictly speaking, the question is whether God prefers a bloody sacrifice or mild fruits. Importantly, Cain's question is ambiguous. In one reading, the question can refer to the specific sacrifices (the sacrifice of Cain and that of Abel). On the other hand, it may refer to whether God generally requires blood as a sacrifice, which is related to Cain's fundamental preoccupation with mortality and thus also to a more general question of human existence. In addition, he explicitly says that God's choices regarding what is good or evil are arbitrary, and hence even if God chooses one of the sacrifices, it does not necessarily mean that he approves of the underlying concept and that the underlying concept is good.

As a result, God's answer is ambiguous too. In principle, God could accept both sacrifices, yet he accepts the sacrifice of Abel but not that of Cain. In one reading, his choice has to do with the sacrifices and perhaps with the way Cain spoke: Abel's sacrifice is acceptable, Cain's is not. In the alternative reading, his choice is an answer to Cain's existential question and indicates that he prefers blood. Crucially, God's answer uses a non-linguistic code: Abel's sacrifice is consumed by fire, while Cain's is scattered down from the altar by a whirlwind. The lack of linguistic presence from God thus contributes to the ambiguity.

Slaying Abel is an answer to God on Cain's part, and this time not just on a linguistic level. Initially, Cain wants to destroy Abel's altar, but Abel intervenes, saying:

> Thou shalt not: – add not impious works to impious
> Words! let that altar stand – 'tis hallow'd now
> By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
> In his acceptance of the victims.
> (Byron 1986 [1821], 3.294–297)

Abel warns Cain against turning language into action; at the same time, he intervenes not only linguistically but also physically (he stands between Cain and the altar), thus establishing the connection between action and language that Cain was merely trying to achieve. By killing Abel, Cain makes this connection irreversible, providing an answer to a concern that is central to Byron's *Cain* (see Callaghan 2010). In this way, Cain destroys the source of devotional language preferred by a supposedly bloodthirsty God. Naturally, this leads to a paradox: Cain abhors death and mortality (see Steffan 1968, 44), and yet he is the first human to cause death (whereby Abel is the first human to die). As Michaels (1969, 74) puts it, he "simultaneously creates and discovers death" (whereby Abel's slaughtering

of animals does not count as creating death). In other words, he is the first human to transform the linguistic concept of death into action (see Callaghan 2010, 125). In addition, his refusal to proffer blood as a sacrifice or to acknowledge the authority of God stems from his inherent resistance to offering blood to God (thus including the slaughter of animals), but by slaying Abel he is apparently satisfying the supposed request of a God who requires blood (see Steffan 1968, 48; Michaels 1969, 75).

Importantly, God does not appear even after the murder, but an Angel does. The dialogue between Cain and the Angel is essentially the same as that in the Bible (between Cain and God), and hence Cain's question ("Am I then / my brother's keeper?"; Byron 1986 [1821], 3.468–469) is also directed at the Angel,[2] and it is the Angel who utters the curse on Cain. The curse is slightly different from standard interpretations in the Bible. The most obvious consequence of the curse for Cain is the loss of his brother, whom he killed by his accident and in rage. In addition, he becomes an outcast and is cursed by his family, except for his wife (and sister) Adah. However, it is also evident from Byron's text that he had a marginal position in his family anyway and was largely isolated from his environment (see Michaels 1969, 74, 77; Steffan 1968, 39–40), and that his parents loved Abel more. Life becomes impossible in his original home, and, crucially, the experience of an extreme existential situation (the extraterrestrial journey) does not bring answers to his questions. Instead, it contributes to the ultimate disaster.

3 Cain and reunification

Where adaptations of the Cain and Abel story are concerned, Byron's *Cain* had a central role in shifting the focus on the conflict between the two brothers in such a way that Abel's death constituted a regeneration for Cain, and this aspect is

2 As pointed out by Michaels (1969, 71), Byron's sentence contains an additional "then" compared to the Bible, which indicates that Cain identifies himself as Cain the biblical murderer. According to Michaels (1969, 71), this addition "to the notorious question suggests that Cain has read the Bible" and that the form of the question "reveals the curious way in which Byron has conceived this particular hero – as reliving rather than living the Biblical myth," ultimately resulting in the effect that he plays Cain until, by actually murdering his brother, he discovers he *is* Cain. This claim is in line with the strongly reflective character of Cain and his questions that seem to be trying to interpret the world around him as if it were a text; indeed, Cain acts like an enlightened philologist who tries to arrive at his own interpretation using a critical mind (see also Steffan 1968, 38) rather than accepting received knowledge as the rest of his family does (see Michaels 1969, 71, quoting Bostetter 1960).

present in post-Byronic adaptations too (see Quinones 2014). Ultimately, killing Abel is an extreme way for Cain to differentiate his self from that of his brother; moreover, as pointed out in the previous section, Cain in many ways stands in the shadow of Abel (at least for God and for their parents). In this respect, Christoph Ransmayr's *Der fliegende Berg* is particularly interesting, as this text in many ways depicts exactly the opposite development between the two brothers, which I will show to be related to the possibility of a shared language. Nevertheless, the making of the self in the case of the brother who stays alive is similarly related to differentiation and loss. Ransmayr's text is also particularly interesting because, while the basic conflict of Cain and Abel is clearly recognizable, the roles are not neatly separated but instead distributed between the two brothers: this postmodern version of the archetypal story blurs the boundaries between the two figures.

The text features two brothers from Ireland, the narrator (Pad) and his elder brother Liam. Both are trained mountain climbers, and Liam used to be the favourite of their father. The brothers were raised by their father since the mother had left the family for another man; the father was a member of the IRA and had strict opinions about manhood, which he included in the boys' upbringing. In the novel, the two brothers take a journey together to Nepal; their lives between their childhood and this journey have been different, as is their fate during the journey. The narrator, a seafarer, has lived in several places, and he finds his love (Nyema) in the nomadic mountain tribe that the brothers travel with in the mountains. Liam stayed in Ireland all his life; he is single (and secretly gay). The journey is their first shared experience since their childhood and is therefore particularly important.

While various elements of the story of Cain and Abel can be detected in the novel, there are some crucial differences as well. Importantly, the properties of Cain and Abel are distributed between the brothers. Liam is the elder brother and, just like Byron's Cain, more melancholic. He is also more dissatisfied with the world and rebels against authority: in this novel, that is not the authority of God but rather that of nature, which Liam, a programmer, wants to dominate, while the narrator is more in harmony with it, just like the tribe (see Grimm-Hamen 2013, 124–125). On the other hand, the narrator has more reason for jealousy (due to their childhood, when Liam was the favourite son). Also, it is ultimately not the narrator but Liam who dies (though the narrator does not kill him), and the narrator eventually utters Cain's sentence ("Am I my brother's keeper?"), directing it at the Chinese authorities.

It is evident that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the biblical story and Ransmayr's novel. Indeed, in a later essay Ransmayr (2014, 79–80) claims that the story of two brothers as such is an archetypal story, and he says

that he adopted the free-verse form (*Flattersatz*, *fliegender Satz*, literally "flying sentence"; see also Ransmayr's "Notiz am Rand" [Aside] in *Der fliegende Berg*) precisely because it is also an archaic form, primarily due to its closeness to speech.[3]

In the novel, the two brothers climb various mountains which are more and more difficult: the last one is a mysterious mountain that is not directly accessible as it appears and then disappears from time to time. It is referred to as the "flying mountain." The way in which the two brothers leave the ordinary world behind is partly reminiscent of the extraterrestrial journey in Byron's *Cain*: the participants not only emerge beyond the ordinary world but are also isolated from it. While most of the mountains have a direct connection to the ordinary world, the flying mountain is an extraordinary phenomenon which has its own rules.

The first death that occurs in the novel, described right at the beginning of the text, is that of the narrator:

> Ich starb
> 6840 Meter über dem Meeresspiegel
> Am vierten Mai im Jahr des Pferdes.
> (Ransmayr 2007, 9)

> [I died
> six thousand, eight hundred and forty metres above sea level
> on the fourth of May in the Year of the Horse.]
> (Ransmayr, trans. Pare 2018, 1)

While narrating about his own death might at first seem a paradox (see Lütkehaus 2006), chapter 1 describes how the narrator is brought back to life by Liam (and later by Nyema). Bringing him back to life is made possible by language: Liam tells him repeatedly "Steh auf!" [Get up!] (first occurrence Ransmayr 2007, 11–18; trans. Pare 2018, 3–10), whereby his call is reminiscent of Jesus resurrecting Lazarus.[4] In addition to this command, the narrator is gradually brought back to life by his brother's speech:

3 The text is broken into verse lines (of varying length) and into strophes, and while there is clearly no strict form of versification underlying it, rhythm plays an important role (see Lütkehaus 2006; Schröder 2006; Nüchtern 2006); as pointed out by Mangold (2006) and Neumann (2006), it can be thought of as rhythmic prose. A longer narrative written in verse evokes the epic (see Lütkehaus 2006; Schröder 2006; Grimm-Hamen 2013) even though the text is considerably more subjective than epics are (see Mangold 2006). While the epic is indeed markedly different in several respects, Ransmayr's text can be related to the contemporary verse novel (see Bacskai-Atkari 2017, 397, 404–405).

4 In addition, as pointed out by Mangold (2006), the *pietà* is also evoked by the fact that Liam holds his brother in his arms, similarly to the Virgin Mary holding the dead Jesus.

Vielleicht sah mein Bruder an meinen Augen,
daß es vor allem sein atemloses Reden war,
das meine Aufmerksamkeit gefangennahm
und mich Satz für Satz in unser Leben zurückzog.

Er sprach so eindringlich und hastig,
als wären seine Worte die letzte Möglichkeit,
mich zu erreichen,
und ich müßte für immer verschwinden,
wenn er verstummte.
(Ransmayr 2007, 16–17)

[Perhaps my brother read in my eyes
that it was above all his breathless speech
that captured my attention and
pulled me, phrase by phrase, back into our life.

He spoke so insistently, with such urgency,
as if his words were his last hope
of reaching me
and I would disappear for ever
were he to fall silent.]
(Ransmayr, trans. Pare 2018, 8–9)

The narrator is thus brought back to life and kept alive by the speech of his brother. Liam is at first at a loss regarding what exactly he should do, but as soon as the narrator discovers the power of speech, Liam keeps talking, mostly listing names that the narrator can remember:

Nyema … Es war Nyema, die gesagt hat,
daß mein Bruder mich im Windschatten
meiner letzten Zuflucht wohl aus dem Tod
ins Leben zurück*erzählte*,
indem er mit seiner Litanei von Namen eine gemeinsame Erinnerung beschwor,
so unauslöslich,
daß sie die Vergangenheit in Gegenwart verwandeln
und mich selbst aus einer Ferne zurückrufen konnte,
in der ich schon verschwunden war.
(Ransmayr 2007, 18; emphasis in original)

[Nyema … It was Nyema who said
that, in the shelter of my final refuge,
my brother had *talked* me back from death
to life,
evoking with his litany of names
a shared memory

> so indelible
> that it could turn the past into the present
> and call me back from the distant horizon
> beyond which I'd already vanished.]
> (Ransmayr, trans. Pare 2018, 10; emphasis in original)

In this interpretation, the narrator was resurrected by language – moreover, by the poetic use of language, whereby poetry is not tied to any particular genre but appears in its archetypal form (see also Ransmayr 2014, 79–80). Apart from Liam saving the narrator's life, it is true of the journey more generally that the extreme existential situation (see Mangold 2006) is shared by the brothers: they are alone in the mountains, and even if they are among the tribe, they are in a foreign environment, isolated linguistically. They are brought closer to each other by their shared experience, resulting in the dissolution of any conflict between them. This contrasts with Byron's *Cain*, where the two brothers speak mutually intelligible but different languages, resulting in the escalation of the conflict between them. In addition, after Cain kills Abel, he speaks to him, yet he cannot resurrect his brother through language.

The second death is that of Liam, and this time there is no way back either: the narrator cannot find him on the "flying mountain" and his calls to him in the silent landscape remain unheard. Consequently, no dialogue is possible between the two any more and, hence, the narrator cannot bring his brother back to life. This is not a case of murder, but the narrator nevertheless feels responsibility. The story of Cain is indirectly evoked by his sense of guilt and directly evoked when he denies responsibility before the Chinese authorities, who question him about where his brother is. He gives Cain's response as an answer, which is ambiguous and partly ironic, as the Chinese authorities obviously do not understand the biblical reference. They understand the most superficial meaning of the sentence, namely that the narrator is not the keeper of his brother and cannot tell where his brother is: in this case, the question is a rhetorical question substituting for a statement. There is, however, a personal meaning, in which the question is interpreted literally as a question; this is in line with the narrator factually questioning himself whether he is or was the keeper of his brother – more precisely, whether he looked after his brother enough and whether he could have saved his life (see Neumann 2006). Note that chapter 12, in which Liam is lost, is entitled "Alleingänge: Ein Hüter seines Bruders" [Going It Alone: His Brother's Keeper].

In addition, there is a third meaning that arises from the reference to the Bible, in which the question is again a rhetorical question and the meaning can be decoded from the biblical text (that is, the speaker has killed his brother). As stated earlier, this meaning is not accurate, in the sense that the narrator is not a

murderer, but his inability to save his brother's life makes this reading salient nonetheless. The irony in this case, of course, stems from the superiority of the narrator over the Chinese authorities regarding biblical knowledge: if the authorities understood the relevant meaning, the narrator could be charged with murder. In this way, the narrator's life, or at least freedom, is put at risk by his own use of biblical language and at the same time saved by the lack of a common language with the authorities.

Where the Cain story is concerned, it is important to stress that there is no real curse of Cain for either of the brothers here. The narrator loses his brother, but Liam may have found peace; hence, Liam's death is not necessarily entirely negative. Prior to the journey, partial outcast roles were chosen by both brothers: Liam had a secluded life in Ireland and kept his occasional homosexual encounters secret, while the narrator chose to travel around the world and live away from his original home. After the journey, life becomes impossible for the narrator in his original home: he returns to Ireland only for a short while and plans to go back to Nyema. Thus, his previous life of travelling comes to an end as well. The journey, which counts as an experience in an extreme existential situation, brings not only failure (the death of Liam) but also reunification, both between the brothers and in the narrator's private life (see Mangold 2006; Schröder 2006). The lack of Cain's curse is naturally related to the fact that Ransmayr uses a peculiar way of rewriting the Cain and Abel story insofar as the properties of Cain and Abel are distributed between Liam and the narrator, and hence the differentiation between the two is also more complex. While in the Byronic and post-Byronic interpretations, as pointed out by Quinones (2014), the redefinition of Cain's self is tied to the event of murder, the blurring of the boundary between the two characters in Ransmayr's text results, instead, in there being two deaths, both of which contribute to the redefinition of the main character without either of them qualifying as a murder.

4 Conclusion

In this article, I have examined two adaptations of the archetypal story of Cain and Abel, concentrating on how the Byronic way of interpreting Cain's figure is related to the use of language and how this is modified in Ransmayr's work. Importantly, the original (biblical) story contains several gaps and includes direct communication with God. In Byron's *Cain*, the lack of direct communication with God and the lack of a shared language between the brothers result in disaster. In Ransmayr's *Der fliegende Berg*, dialogue functions best between the brothers in

their extreme existential situation; language is able to bring one of them back to life, but the lack of dialogue (when there is no opportunity for it) means that this poetic power cannot be exercised in the case of the other. The importance of both works in terms of the Cain story lies not only in their different ways of transforming the original story, but also in the fact that they indicate that the story is archetypal – not only in terms of brothers' relationships, but also in terms of language and the way language not only reflects, but also shapes human relations, either connecting or alienating the participants.

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Fausto De Michele

Die Rolle des Kinos als *hyper-translator* in der Konstruktion des Polysystems „Weltliteratur“ oder: Lernergebnisse durch kooperatives Lernen im Bachelorseminar

Abstract: Nach der *Polysystem theory* der Tel Aviv-Schule von Itamar Even-Zohar und Gideon Toury spielen die Übersetzungen innerhalb der Dynamiken des literarischen Polysystems einer Nation eine große Rolle. Die Operation der Übersetzung ist immer eine Adaption eines Textes an den soziopolitischen bzw. kulturellen Kontext des Landes, in das sie eingeführt wird. Man könnte im Sinne von Bassnett und Lefevere sagen, dass jede Übersetzung einem Verfahren des Wieder-Schreibens unterliegt, einem Verfahren des *rewriting*.

„Kon-*vertierte*“ Texte von bereits existierenden erfolgreichen und bekannten Originalkunstwerken sind auch die filmischen Adaptionen von Literatur. In meinem Beitrag werde ich mich daher vorwiegend mit den Prinzipien und theoretischen Überlegungen der Polysystemtheorie zu den Dynamiken der Rezeption der Literatur durch das Kino beschäftigen, um zu beweisen, wie die siebte Kunst zu einer Konstruktion einer Weltliteratur beiträgt.

Keywords: Weltliteratur, Polysystemtheorie, Übersetzung, Literatur und Kino

Die *vexata questio*, was man unter Weltliteratur verstehen soll, ist wohl jedem bekannt. Johann Gottfried Herder (vgl. Herder 1772), eine Art Komparatist *ante litteram*, und Madame de Staël, die bekannteste Vorläuferin einer Soziologie der Literatur, stellten sich schon diese Frage. Der Begriff Weltliteratur wurde aber, wie man weiß, von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe geprägt, der ein begabter Polyglott und ein Gelehrter war. Er verwendete diesen Begriff, so wie wir ihn kennen, das erste Mal in seiner Zeitschrift *Über Kunst und Altertum* (1827) (vgl. Goethe 1982, 361).[1]

1 Man könnte sogar behaupten, dass die Geschichte der vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft mit dem Begriff „Weltliteratur“ begonnen hat. Ein Begriff, den Goethe das erste Mal 1827 im Gespräch mit Eckermann verwendete. Man findet aber den Ausdruck Weltliteratur schon in einer Notiz von Wieland. (Vgl. Weitz 1987).

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Als Grundlage meines Essays möchte ich nun hier eine sehr klare Definition zitieren, der jeder zustimmen kann und die ich dem *Handbuch Komparatistik* (2013) entnommen habe, einem Buch, herausgegeben von Achim Hölter und Rüdiger Zymner und verfasst unter der Mitarbeit vieler Kollegen und Kolleginnen der Wiener Komparatistik:

> Als Begriff wie als Konzept findet sich ‚Weltliteratur' ab den 1830er Jahren in zahlreichen literatur- wie gesellschaftskritischen Diskussionen und wird milieubedingt unterschiedlich funktionalisiert. Erst ab ca. 1848 setzt sich die heute verbreitete Vorstellung eines transnationalen und transhistorischen Literaturkanons durch, der sich in den zahlreichen Weltliteraturgeschichten dokumentiert und zu einem kollektiven, meist bürgerlichen Bildungsideal wird. (Zymner und Hölter 2013, 138)

Die Hauptcharakteristika der Weltliteratur scheinen nicht nur ihre Transnationalität und Transhistorizität zu sein, sondern auch die Möglichkeit der Dokumentation, und somit ein Beweis der Rezeption, sowie die Macht, zum Bildungsideal einer Gesellschaft wesentlich beizutragen. Diese vier Merkmale möchte ich unterstreichen, weil es genau diese besonderen Charakteristika der Weltliteratur sind, die uns zur Theorie der Polysysteme führen.

Ich werde mich hier auf die *Polysystem Theory* der Tel Aviv Schule von Itamar Even-Zohar und Gideon Toury beziehen. Die Theorie der Polysysteme ist eine relativ neue und auch, in gewisser Weise, modische Theorie. Nichtsdestotrotz werde ich diese Theorie im Sinne eines ihrer Väter verwenden, der meinte, die Theorie sei mehr dienlich als wahr (vgl. Even-Zohar 1978, 22). Wenn die zwei Theoretiker Even-Zohar und Toury von „Polysystemen" sprechen, meinen sie alle Systeme, aus denen die Literatur – betrachtet in ihrer dynamischen Entwicklung – besteht. Sie beziehen sich zum Beispiel auf Hauptbegriffe wie „literarischer Kanon" und „Interferenz" bzw. „Wechselbeziehungen" unter verschiedenen Kulturen oder/und auf dynamische Gegensätze wie Zentrum vs. Peripherie oder Tradition vs. Innovation. Als Teil des literarischen Kanons wird ein Werk gesehen, das einer Reihe von Charakteristika entspricht, die von einer herrschenden Gruppierung von Literaten festgesetzt wurden. Unter Interferenzen versteht man die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen verschiedenen Kulturen. Im Zentrum des literarischen Polysystems befinden sich alle kanonischen Texte und in der Peripherie befinden sich alle anderen Texte, die nicht als offiziell zu betrachten sind. Die Tradition ist ein *secondary system*, in dem man Werte, Modelle und Texttypologien findet, die allgemein bekannt sind und akzeptiert werden. Im Gegensatz dazu wird die Innovation als *primary system* gesehen. Dort befindet sich eine Reihe von Charakteristika, die in der Lage sind, das System zu erneuern und neu zu definieren. Ein System ist stabil, wenn es in der Lage ist, die Innovation zu kontrollieren, indem diese voranschreitet, ohne das System ins Wanken zu bringen.

Es sind die Übersetzungen, die eine große Rolle innerhalb der Dynamiken des literarischen Polysystems einer Nation spielen. Sie können die Rolle eines primären bzw. sekundären Systems einnehmen, je nachdem, ob sie zur Innovation oder zur Erhaltung des bestehenden Systems beitragen. Die Übersetzungen ergeben also, nach der Theorie der Polysysteme der Tel Aviv Schule, auch ein eigenes System innerhalb des Polysystems. An dieser Stelle muss eine interessante Aussage dieser Theorie erwähnt werden, und zwar, dass ein stabiles Polysystem die Übersetzungen stark beeinflusst, indem die Übersetzungen an seine Modelle angepasst werden. Wenn das System aber instabil ist, geschieht das Gegenteil und die Übersetzungen leiten neue Modelle ein, die wiederum das ganze Polysystem stark beeinflussen und erneuern können. Die Übersetzungen, die neue Texte anderer Literaturen in ein literarisches Polysystem einführen, spielen immer eine sehr wichtige Rolle, vor allem dann, wenn sie in eine Nationalliteratur gelangen, die noch sehr „jung" ist und eine gewisse Stabilität sucht, und wenn es sich um eine Literatur handelt, die man als peripher definieren kann, oder auch wenn sich die Literatur in einer Krise befindet.

In der Betrachtung der Rezeption einer Übersetzung innerhalb eines Polysystems ist auch die Rolle des Übersetzers wichtig, der natürlich mit seinen Entscheidungen die zu übersetzenden Texte stark beeinflusst. Kein Übersetzer rezipiert in einer passiven Art und Weise einen Text, den er der Literatur einer anderen Nation entnimmt und übersetzt. Der Vorgang des Übersetzens an sich ist immer verbunden mit einer Adaption eines Textes an den soziopolitischen bzw. kulturellen Kontext des Landes, in das der übersetzte Text eingeführt wird. Man könnte im Sinne von Bassnett und Lefevere sagen, dass jede Übersetzung einem Verfahren des *rewriting*, des „Wieder-Schreibens", unterliegt (Bassnett und Lefevere 1998; Bassnett 2004; Lefevere 2004). Auch könnte man die Übersetzungstätigkeit mit dem lateinischen Ausdruck *vertere linguam* bezeichnen. Maurizio Bettini unterstreicht in seinem Buch *Vertere. Un'antropologia della traduzione nella cultura antica* (vgl. Bettini 2012, 32–59), dass man im Rom der Antike mit Übersetzen im Sinne von *vertere* eine „Änderung" der Identität des Textes meinte, eine Art Metamorphose. Wenn man die Aufgabe der Übersetzer und die Übersetzung selbst in diese etwas erweiterte Kategorie von Texten inkludiert, erscheint es eindeutig, dass man wohl auch Filmadaptionen wie Übersetzungen behandeln kann.

Filmadaptionen ‚übersetzen', ‚ändern' bzw. ‚adaptieren' Texte – in unserem Fall literarische Werke – nicht einfach nur von einer Sprache A in eine andere Sprache B, sondern vom Medium Buch in das Medium Film, und das besteht ja bekanntlich aus verschiedenen sprachähnlichen und zur Dechiffrierung notwendigen audio-visuellen Mitteln. Für das Kino adaptierte Prosawerke sind mit Sicherheit „kon-*vertierte*" Texte von bereits existierenden, erfolgreichen und bekannten Originalkunstwerken, und zwar nicht nur aus anderen Literaturen, sondern auch aus

anderen Medien. In diesem Sinne hat das Kino sowohl eine Art transnationale als auch transkulturelle Mediatorrolle, in deren Funktion es unter Nationen und Kulturen die Rezeption von Kunstwerken „aushandelt" (Albersmeier und Roloff 1989, 15–37) und dabei Texte, Modelle, dramaturgische Strukturen und letztendlich Wertesysteme vermittelt (vgl. Tynjanov 2004). Dieses Aushandeln konkretisiert sich auf verschiedenen Ebenen der Polysysteme. Die Transnationalität hat heute auch dank der neuen Medien globale Ausmaße erreicht. Darüber brauche ich keine genauere Erläuterung zu geben; der Begriff *Global Village* aus dem Buch *Die Gutenberg-Galaxis* (1962) von Marshall McLuhan (vgl. McLuhan 1968) wird den meisten von uns bekannt sein. Und die Transkulturalität findet in verschiedenen Dimensionen statt; es gibt zum Beispiel eine soziale Dimension (also Hoch- und Popkultur), eine internationale bzw. transnationale Dimension, eine intermediale Dimension sowie eine intertextuelle Dimension. Dieses Aushandeln ist auch das Ergebnis von Dynamiken, die sich nicht nur innerhalb des kulturellen Diskurses entwickeln, sondern die ebenso durch die Prinzipien der Nachfrage und des Angebots innerhalb des sehr prägenden ökonomischen Diskurses der Kinoindustrie beeinflusst werden.

Im Wintersemester 2015/16 habe ich ein Bachelor-Seminar mit dem Titel „Interaktion zwischen Kulturen. Die literarische Übersetzung innerhalb des literarischen Polysystems" für die Studierenden der Wiener Komparatistik mit der Methode des ‚Kooperativen Lernens' gehalten, in dem wir uns mit dieser Theorie beschäftigten. Mit den bei weitem größeren Implikationen der Intermedialität wollte ich mich in diesem Seminar nicht beschäftigen, da es über den Rahmen der Lehrveranstaltung hinausgegangen wäre. Ich wollte meine Studierenden wie Effi Briest, die Protagonistin des bekannten Romans von Theodor Fontane, behandeln. Das war ein Fehler. Einige wollten sich trotzdem mit der intermedialen Dimension der Theorie beschäftigen, und auch aus den Diskussionen im Kurs sind etliche der Ergebnisse, die ich in meinem Essay präsentiere, entstanden. Ich verdanke daher die hier berichteten Reflexionen und Schlussfolgerungen einer gewissen emanzipierten Sturheit meiner Studierenden, die unbedingt gelobt werden muss. Diese kleine Anekdote soll meine Argumentation unterstützten, die am Ende dieses Essays die notwendige Synthese finden wird und die über die Ergebnisse berichten wird, die dank der freien und kooperativen Forschungsdynamik innerhalb dieser Gruppe von jungen Wissenschaftlern der Wiener Komparatistik erzielt werden konnten.

An dieser Stelle möchte ich kurz einige Beispiele von gelungenen und weniger gelungenen Rezeptionen von Werken durch Übersetzungen erwähnen, welche die Glaubhaftigkeit der Theorie der Schule von Tel Aviv bestätigen. Viele dieser Beispiele sind deshalb sehr interessant, weil jedes von ihnen eine konsequente Schlussfolgerung mit sich bringt, die meine These unterstützen wird. Zunächst sollen Rezeptionsfälle von Literaturwerken besprochen werden, die durch

Übersetzungen rezipiert worden sind, und dann solche, bei denen Literatur durch kinematographische Adaption rezipiert wurde.

Et dukkehjem – in der deutschen Übersetzung *Nora oder ein Puppenheim* – von Henrik Ibsen entspricht quasi vollständig den Dynamiken der Theorie der Rezeptionsgeschichte. Das Drama wurde unterschiedlich aufgenommen (chronologisch zuerst in Deutschland und später in Österreich), nicht zuletzt wegen der schlechten Übersetzungen, die das Stück teilweise stark beeinträchtigten. *Nora* aber erklomm als *primary system* rasch die Spitze der Pyramide der deutschsprachigen Literatur – man könnte auch sagen: sie „fand das Zentrum" – und wurde schnell ein kanonisches Vorbild, das Autoren vom Format eines Theodor Fontane, Gerhart Hauptmann und Artur Schnitzler beeinflusste. Interessant ist, dass die erste autorisierte und bedeutsame Übersetzung von Wilhelm Lange sogar den Schluss des Stückes veränderte und aus dem dramatischen Finale des Originals von Ibsen ein weniger dramatisches Ende mit einem „versöhnlichen Schluss" machte, in dem Nora eben das Haus nicht verlässt. In der Rezeption von *Nora* finden wir auch ein Beispiel für Adaption und „Metamorphose", wenn man so will, im Sinne von *re-writing* (vgl. Hinterhofer).

Anders verhält es sich mit der Rezeption der Texte des Amerikaners Edgar Allan Poe im deutschen Polysystem, die dank *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* als Grundstein und Vorbild für die Kriminalliteratur im deutschen literarischen Polysystem dienten. Im Fall der Rezeption von Poe war die narrative Struktur des Kriminalromans wichtig (vgl. Pasterk) und weniger die Themen und Motive (auch wenn bewiesen wurde, dass diese Struktur bei E. T. A. Hoffmanns Novelle *Das Fräulein von Scuderi* durchaus präsent ist).

Diese erste Reihe von Beispielen endet mit der Aufnahme von Jules Verne in das britische und amerikanische Polysystem. An dieser Rezeption durch Übersetzungen war die Tatsache interessant, dass praktisch alle Übersetzungen (als Fallbeispiel könnte man *Voyage au centre de la terre* nehmen) extrem schlecht waren und oft sogar Episoden gestrichen und neue Abenteuer hinzugefügt wurden. Die absolute Untreue zum Original konnte aber die Rezeption dieser Texte der *science fiction* nicht verhindern. Es ist hier vor allem eine Gattung und eine Reihe von Abenteuern, die – wenn auch leicht verändert – als *primary system* Eingang in das amerikanische Polysystem gefunden haben (vgl. Kugeler).

Man kann also zusammenfassend feststellen, dass primäre Systeme auf sehr unterschiedliche Art und Weise in ein Polysystem eindringen und dass die Übersetzung oft dem Original nicht treu ist. Man steht also häufig eher vor einer Art *re-writing*, was aus verschiedensten Gründen passiert. Wiedergeschriebene Texte gelangen schnell von der Peripherie ins Zentrum, nicht nur, weil die Übersetzer sie wegen ihres Erfolges auswählen, sondern auch, weil sie die Texte – oft schamlos – an den Geschmack und die Notwendigkeiten der Zielkultur und der Zielspra-

che anpassen. Diese Dynamiken finden wir stark vermehrt, wenn die Fabrik der Träume am Werk ist. Das kann man sehr einfach anhand einer Reihe von Beispielen sehen und nachvollziehen.

Ich werde mit dem Fall *Lolita* beginnen (vgl. Heinrich). Wie allgemein bekannt ist, erhielt Nabokovs Roman sofort ein großes Echo: Das Buch wurde unmittelbar nach der Veröffentlichung nicht nur in Amerika, sondern durch zahlreiche Übersetzungen fast auf der ganzen Welt zum Bestseller. Durch den kommerziellen – wohlgemerkt von der Literaturkritik unabhängigen – Erfolg wurde es schnell in verschiedenen Polysystemen zum Kanon, also ins *secondary system* aufgenommen. Andrigas ist der Ansicht, dass zwei Aspekte des Modells *Lolita* den Kanon geprägt hätten: die prägnanten Merkmale von Nabokovs Schreibstil und die inhaltliche Ebene, d. h. die Beziehung des pädophilen Stiefvaters zu seiner zwölfjährigen Stieftochter und folglich auch deren Auswirkungen auf die Werte und Normvorstellungen der Polysysteme, in denen es aufgenommen wurde (vgl. Andringa 2009). *Lolita* wurde zweimal verfilmt, zuerst 1962 von Stanley Kubrick, unter der Mitarbeit von Nabokov selbst, der das Drehbuch schrieb und sich mit der Adaption sehr vom Original distanzierte – allerdings wurde er von Kubrick und Harris dazu angehalten und war mit dem Endergebnis bekanntlich nicht zufrieden. Eine Leistung, die Nabokov dennoch eine Nominierung für die *Academy Awards* einbrachte. Die zweite Verfilmung erfolgt im Jahr 1997 unter der Regie von Adrian Lyne mit Dominique Swain und Jeremy Irons in den Hauptrollen. Die Liste der weiteren zahlreichen Adaptionen ist praktisch unendlich: *Lolita* fand ihren Weg ins Theater, auf die Musical-, Opern- und Ballettbühnen und wird sogar in Rock-Songs erwähnt. Man kann dies wohl einen „Lolita-Effekt" nennen (vgl. Srivats 2013).

Lolita ist somit zu einem *Branding* geworden und wurde beispielsweise für Parfüm- und Lingerie-Werbungen eingesetzt. Zusammenfassend für dieses erste Fallbeispiel kann man – ohne Sorge, dass einem widersprochen wird – behaupten, dass *Lolita* durch viele Übersetzungen – und auch dank der Verfilmungen – rasant und weltweit von einem primären zu einem sekundären Modell wurde. Nabokovs Roman gehört mit Sicherheit zur Weltliteratur schlechthin, und das trotz – oder vielleicht sogar dank – dem aufreibenden und pikanten Thema.

Ein weiteres interessantes Beispiel für die soziologischen Implikationen der Rezeption eines literarischen Modells auf Weltliteraturebene dank einer kinematographischen Adaption ist *Il Gattopardo* von Tomasi di Lampedusa in der bekannten Verfilmung von Luchino Visconti. In ihrer Bachelorarbeit hat Frau Helena Ganterer das Phänomen der sogenannten „*sicilianità*" in Literatur und Film und die Dynamik zwischen Kunst und soziokulturellen bzw. soziopolitischen Konstrukten anhand der Polysystemtheorie untersucht. Sie ist zur Schlussfolgerung gekommen, dass die schnelle Rezeption durch die Mediation einer Verfilmung des literarischen Werks eine wichtige „Rolle des Mediums Film im Prozess der Etablierung und Wie-

derentdeckung der Stereotypenzeichnung in der postkolonialen Tradition gehabt hat.“ (Ganterer) Die autoritäre Instanz eines Regisseurs von Luchino Viscontis Kaliber hat bewirkt, dass sich ein eindimensionales Porträt Siziliens auf nationaler und internationaler Ebene etablieren konnte.

Zum Schluss werde ich nur noch kurz zwei Fälle erwähnen, deren Ausmaß an Rezeption keinerlei Erklärung benötigt: *The Lord of the Rings* und *The Hobbit* von John Ronald Reuel Tolkien und *Harry Potter* von Joanne Kathleen Rowling. Die Werke von Tolkien haben eine Rezeption in zwei Phasen erlebt, erst als Bücher und dann als Buchverfilmungen; diese letzte Phase gipfelt dank der Adaption und Verfilmung Peter Jacksons in einer regelrechten „Hobbit-Manie“. Interessanterweise hat sich durch die Bücher von Tolkien und deren Verfilmungen eine, in ihrer Gänze nur von einem einzigen Mann erfundene, *Mythopoeia* auf planetarer Ebene etabliert. Die Legenden von Frodo und Sam haben sich über die westlichen Polysysteme hinaus verbreitet bis ins Zentrum der chinesischen, russischen und südamerikanischen Polysysteme und wurden für jedermann ein Begriff. Als besonders ist hier anzumerken, dass diese Art von literarischen Werken durch ihre Verfilmungen auch ein „Nicht-Leser-Publikum“ erreichen konnte, das sich sonst von einer solchen Literatur aus verschiedenen Gründen nie angesprochen gefühlt hätte (vgl. Huber). Hinzu kommt das Phänomen *Harry Potter*, das ich nicht weiter kommentieren werde, weil es für jeden der Inbegriff einer planetaren Rezeption der Literatur ist (vgl. Scharrer).

Schon Walter Benjamin hatte im Jahr 1936 in seinem berühmten Aufsatz *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit* (vgl. Benjamin 1955) verstanden, dass das neue Medium Kino einen riesigen Vorteil mit sich brachte, nämlich, dass das Kino zur Erziehung der Massen wenig alphabetisierter Arbeiterschichten beigetragen hatte. Diese Charakteristik der siebten Kunst, die sie schon von ihren Anfängen an mit sich trägt, macht aus dem Kino eine Art „Aufzug“, der dementsprechend hilft, die adaptierten literarischen Texte – wie einst die Übersetzungen – schnell die Spitze der Pyramide erreichen zu lassen und die Hierarchie der literarischen Modelle zu verändern. Verfilmungen werden vom *primary system* schnell zum *secondary system* und etablieren sich sogar oft als Kanon, trotz schwieriger Inhalte wie bei *Lolita*. Sie erreichen die ganze Welt und durchdringen alle Kulturen von Ost bis West und von Nord bis Süd, und schaffen es dabei sogar, neue Mythologien durchzusetzen, wie *Der Herr der Ringe*. Sie starten neue Moden wie *Harry Potter*, sind aber auch die Ursache für die Etablierung von stereotypen Bildern eines Landes und seiner Kultur, wie es bei der Verfilmung von *Il Gattopardo* der Fall war.

Die hier erwähnten Rezeptionsfälle sind nur einige, die von den Studierenden des Bachelorseminars untersucht wurden; und alle Fälle, auch diejenigen, die ich hier aus offensichtlichen Platzgründen nicht erwähnen konnte, führen zu dersel-

ben Schlussfolgerung: das Kino fungiert als eine Art „Über-Übersetzer“ – als ein „*hyper-translator*“ –, der nicht nur eine Person ist, sondern eine Institution, die durch zahlreiche Personengruppen getragen wird und auf Polysystemebene existiert und tätig ist. Das Unternehmen Kino schafft auf eine „liquide Weise“ eine *re-writing*-Operation von literarischen Werken (im Sinne von Zygmunt Bauman [vgl. Bauman 2005]), die dadurch schnell Eingang in andere Polysysteme finden. Das *re-writing* vermindert aber nicht die Kraft der Texte, sondern macht sie in neuen Polysystemen von *primary systems* (also primären Modellen) zum Kanon. Um es mit den Worten der zu Beginn zitierten Definition von Weltliteratur zu sagen: Beim Adaptieren von literarischen Werken in seine *hyper-language* schafft das Kino viel schneller, wenn auch oberflächlicher und liquider, aber auch effektiver als eine Übersetzung, einen neuen „transnationalen und transhistorischen Literaturkanon, der sich in zahlreichen Weltliteraturgeschichten dokumentieren lässt und zu einem kollektiven, meist bürgerlichen Bildungsideal wird“ – und das auf planetarer Ebene (Augé 1992).

Nachwort

Das Bachelor-Seminar wurde zu einer Art „Brutstätte“ für Ideen, auch dank der Freiheit, die die Studierenden nach einer theoretischen Einführung in die Theorie der Polysysteme genossen haben. Es genügte, wo es nötig war, in der Präsentationsphase der Forschungsprojekte hier und da die Forschungsplanung zu korrigieren, und die Ergebnisse ließen nicht lange auf sich warten. Eine so umfassende Recherche über verschiedene Autoren verschiedener nationaler Literaturen hätte wahrscheinlich einige Jahre Arbeit erfordert, wenn sie nur von einer einzigen Person durchgeführt worden wäre. Diese guten Ergebnisse bestätigen die Wichtigkeit eines hochwertigen (und „freien“) kooperativen Lernens im Universitätsseminar.[2]

2 An dieser Stelle muss ich auch allen anderen Studierenden danken, die das Bachelorseminar „Interaktionen zwischen Kulturen. Die literarische Übersetzung innerhalb des literarischen Polysystems“ besucht haben. Sie haben mit ihren Forschungen ebenfalls zu den Ergebnissen dieses langen Studiensemesters beigetragen, die zu den Überlegungen dieses kurzen Artikels geführt haben. Ich möchte sie hier mit ihren Beiträgen kurz erwähnen: Donaubaum, Sonja. *Der Transfer der Artusepik im 12. Jahrhundert vom französischen ins deutsche Polysystem*; Sandberger, Judith. *Das englische Schauspiel an deutschen Wanderbühnen. Transferierte Charakteristika im bestraften Brudermord.* Bachmeier, Annina Iris. *Kafka, Borges und der magische Realismus. Eine Konfrontation.* Jeger, Tobias. *Der Einfluss französischsprachiger Literatur auf das türkische Polysystem am Beispiel der Fabeln Jean de La Fontaine.* Lammerhuber, Theresa. *August Strindberg als Wegbereiter für das Expressionistische Stationendrama in Deutschland.* Morton, Charlotte Olivia. *An exami-*

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Michaela Frey

“Who is speaking me?”: Moments of (Mis)Translation in J. M. Coetzee’s *Foe*

Abstract: In his metafictional novel *Foe* (1986), the South African author J. M. Coetzee rewrites Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. He significantly alters the popular narrative by including a female protagonist as the narrator and a black Friday who is mute. Not only does Coetzee translate the popular Robinsonade into the female voice of Susan Barton; in the novel, she herself seeks to have her story set down in writing by an author in order to gain fame. Lastly, Susan and the author called Foe try to ascribe to the silent Friday a story, for he can neither speak nor understand their language. This essay regards these features using the concept of cultural translation, which emerged in the course of post-structuralist approaches and is now often applied in post-colonial contexts. By considering translation not as a singular transfer from one language into another, but as an action that always happens in distinct socio-political circumstances, translation is seen as a decidedly political act. Thus, this essay analyses how the moments of translation in *Foe* display the relationship of author and translator, and how translations can manipulate the original text. These will be looked at through mechanisms of exclusiveness, such as the canonization of texts and the struggle of marginalized voices to be heard. As a result, the analysis will show how the novel self-reflexively negotiates the power of authorship, language, and how stories are constructed and controlled.

Keywords: authorship, cultural translation, rewriting, post-colonial studies

Commenting on literary translations of his works,[1] the South African author J. M. Coetzee discusses the power of translators: “The words are written; I cannot control the associations they awaken. But my translator is not so powerless” (2005, 144). It requires trust to hand over your text to translators and includes a sense of loss of control, Coetzee admits (2005, 141). But in contrast to this seemingly powerful status, translators are often invisible actors who find themselves rarely printed on book-covers and only mentioned briefly on the initial pages. They hold an ambiguous position as they walk a fine line between faithful reproduction of the original text and free subjective interpretation. Coetzee himself

1 In his essay “Roads to Translation” (2005), Coetzee examines the issue of translation of his own works.

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partly negotiates this issue in his metafictional novel *Foe* (1986) by including a re-writing of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. This essay discusses Coetzee's novel in regards to aspects of cultural translation. In addition to the author's choice to appropriate Defoe's highly canonized story, I want to analyse translational processes through the function of three protagonists Susan, Friday and Foe and their relation to Defoe's original story.

The interest in translation studies began in the middle of the twentieth century. Inspired by Walter Benjamin's essay "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" (1921), in which he argues that the task of literary translators is not merely a transmission of content but also of the way in which it is expressed, deconstructivist theories suggested that a translation always adds a different meaning to the original text.[2] Later on, post-structuralist approaches raised awareness of the socio-political circumstances in which translations are produced: translation was regarded as a political as well as a self-reflexive act (Buden 2005, 75). These thoughts led to the turn of cultural translation in the 1990s, in which translation also serves as a metaphor for describing a model of a new emancipatory practice. Post-colonial thinker Homi K. Bhabha, for instance, mentions cultural translation in his concept of hybridity, which describes the creation of a third space between two cultural oppositions. Hence, mimetic acts of colonizers through the colonized turn into acts of cultural translation, during which originality can be subverted (Rath 2011, 29). Translation in Bhabha's sense becomes a political expression of cultural mimicry which serves to "desacralize [...] the transparent assumptions of cultural supremacy" and "demands a contextual specificity, a historical differentiation *within* minority positions" (Bhabha 1994, 327; emphasis in original).

The novel *Foe* has often been discussed in a post-colonial context, due to the re-writing and the inclusion of an enslaved, black character. However, it also prompts questions about the silencing of the female voice and the power of language. Scott Bishop, for instance, notes that *Foe* "is a distinctly political novel which forces the reader into the political experience of doubting author, authorial voice, and authority" (1990, 56). Similarly, David Attwell states that the novel ends "with an image in which the absolute limits of its own powers of authorization and signification are defined" (1993, 117), and according to Dominic Head, the novel invites readers to "speculate about [...] the issue of how stories are constructed and who controls them" (1997, 115). Thus, *Foe* criticizes colonial power structures as

2 In his essay "Des tours de Babel" (1985), Jacques Derrida focuses on the untranslatability of proper nouns, whereby "Babel" itself serves him as an example for the impossibility of translation. Similarly, Paul de Man argues that the relationship between rhetoric and grammar in language is never stable and is therefore unreliable, as is apparent in the relationship between original and translation (see Schahadat 2013, 32).

well as their literary promotion in the Western canon. In an essay, Coetzee himself has pointed out the problematic depiction of Friday in Defoe's novel:[3]

> *Robinson Crusoe* is unabashed propaganda for the extension of British mercantile power in the New World and the establishment of new British colonies. As for the native peoples of the Americas and the obstacle they represent, all one need say is that Defoe chooses to represent them as cannibals. The treatment Crusoe metes out to them is accordingly savage. (Coetzee 2002, 24)

Accordingly, Coetzee presents a significantly altered narrative in his novel. The eponymous character Foe evokes ambiguous associations in the reader. While the name orthographically hints at Daniel Defoe, its semantical meaning "enemy" foreshadows the difficult relationship between Susan and Foe. Similarly, Coetzee modified the name of Defoe's main character, Crusoe, by dropping the "-e." The conception of Cruso, who is surprisingly indifferent to his exilic state, also starkly differs from the figure, as the description of the female narrator, Susan Barton, illustrates: "His heart was set on remaining to his dying day king of his tiny realm" (Coetzee 1986, 13–14). He neither keeps a journal as "he lacked the inclination to keep one" (16) nor shares stories about his previous life or of the circumstances that led to his arrival on the island (12). Hence, Susan assumes, "Cruso rescued will be a deep disappointment to the world; the idea of Cruso on his island is a better thing than the true Cruso tight-lipped and sullen in an alien England" (34–35). The character Friday, in Coetzee's novel, is a mute African slave whose tongue has been cut out, probably by slave traders (22–23). Due to his muteness and inability to write or fully understand the English language, Friday's figure epitomizes "the absence of speech" (Turk 2011, 300). He inherits an ambiguous position, that of the subordinated slave to Cruso and Susan who, however, refuses to assimilate to their system by remaining mute and not submitting to language despite their efforts. Another startling alteration is the introduction of a female protagonist: The narrator Susan reports her experience on the island, the return to England, and her ensuing effort to write down her adventures into a best-selling story.

The plot begins when Susan – who searches for her lost daughter in Brazil – shipwrecks and finds herself on an island where she encounters Cruso and Friday. During the plot, all three are rescued, but on the way back to England Cruso dies. In England, Susan consults an author, Foe, to write down her adventures on the island. In contrast to Friday and Cruso, who take on the roles of minor charac-

3 Head notes that Coetzee does not disapprove of Defoe's novel: "Coetzee's response to Defoe is complex. He has spoken of *Foe* as a tribute to eighteenth-century prose style, indicating that he is after something more responsive than a simple pastiche of his models" (1997, 113).

ters and are "but grim shades of Defoe's originals" (Rao 2013, 42), Susan is the protagonist of the story and it is through her voice that the narrative is presented. She is, as Narasimha K. Rao puts it, "a teller of tales, and she carries the central theme of Coetzee's *Foe*, the nature of narrative art" (2013, 42).

This adds another twist to the story, as the novel eventually suggests that Susan, as the female figure, was concealed and left out of the popular *Crusoe* narrative.[4] Coetzee's rewriting eventually implies that *Foe* is the urtext of *Robinson Crusoe*, as the more authentic and trustworthy narrative than the heroic and adventurous tale of Crusoe. This also includes the figure of Friday as the cannibalistic savage who is educated with the help of European mastery but still subordinate. In Coetzee's novel, however, he remains silent and resistant to the attempts of "civilizing" him. Coetzee's rewriting is a conscious act of manipulation which unveils colonial and patriarchal structures in *Robinson Crusoe*, as it gives a voice to "the ghostly absences, exclusions and silences of everything that did not eventually become part of the 'official' story" (Park Sorensen 2010, 100). According to André Lefevere, the manipulation of the original text is also an inevitable occurrence in translational processes. In his book *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, he argues that rewritings are (un)intentionally influenced by ideologies and thus "manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way" (Lefevere 1992, vii). This can be meant in either an enriching or a restricting way:

> Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping of power of one culture upon another. But rewriting can also repress innovation, distort and contain, and in an age of ever increasing manipulation of all kinds, the study of manipulation processes of literature as exemplified by translation can help us towards a greater awareness of the world in which we live. (Lefevere 1992, vii)

Foe's narrative is thus an attempt to undermine canonical structures, "even if it did so by literary means that have traditionally been elaborated as characterising canonic art" (Attridge 1996, 171).[5] Negotiating questions of authorship, it self-reflexively emphasizes the narrative's own constructed nature and intentionally alters the original to undermine colonial and patriarchal structures in *Robinson Crusoe*.

4 Several critics also mention the parallel between the protagonist, Susan, and Defoe's Roxana in the eponymous novel, claiming that Roxana resurfaces in the figure of Susan, for example Head (1997, 115): "If we lay this second transtextual reference over the first, we find a number of interpretive problems lying in wait. Following the premise that Susan Barton's story of the island is the Ur-text of *Crusoe*, we must conclude that she is effaced from this text of Defoe's, and placed in another (*Roxana*)."

5 Nevertheless, this endeavour seems to remain double-edged: "even if it challenges the western canon," it "itself reproduces or promotes mechanisms by which canonicity as such functions" (Park Sorensen 2010, 97).

Coetzee's decision to include the female figure of Susan as a narrator also raises questions of authorship and the power of translators. Upon being rescued from the island by the boat, the captain advises her to write down her story and sell it: "There has never before to my knowledge, been a female castaway of our nation. It will cause a great stir" (Coetzee 1986, 40). Susan, however, is not confident enough to possess enough artistic capability to compose the story herself: "A liveliness is lost in the writing down which must be supplied by art, and I have no art" (40). Back in England, she asks Foe, an "author who had heard many confessions and [was] reputed a very secret man" (48) to write it for her. Financial success and fame are her main goals, as she confesses to Friday: "Mr Foe is weaving [...] a story which will make us famous throughout the land, and rich too" (58). Nevertheless, writing down her story also becomes, as she later realizes, an act of reclaiming her identity. Throughout the story, her name is altered several times: she mentions that her last name was "properly Berton, but, as happens, it become corrupted in the mouths of strangers" (10), while on the rescuing ship she becomes "known as Mrs Cruso to all on board" (42). Additionally, she is often associated with ghostly appearances:[6] "When I reflect on my story I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without substance, a ghost beside the true body of Cruso. Is that the fate of all storytellers?" (51). Susan represents a character who is unable to express herself and who speaks "from a position of marginality in relation to the canon, its recognized literary forms, and its masculinist dominance" (Rao 2013, 41).

This position becomes even clearer as Susan asks Foe to write down her story and insists that she "will not have any lies told" (Coetzee 1986, 40). Foe, however, wants to alter the original tale into a more adventurous one to meet the expectations of a reading audience and gain greater financial success. He includes cannibals and even sends a woman, who claims to be Susan's long-lost daughter, to her house for a more spectacular ending. Susan objects these plans: "You once proposed to supply a middle by inventing cannibals and pirates. These I would not accept because they were not the truth. Now you proposed to reduce the island to an episode in the history of a woman in search of a lost daughter. This too I reject" (Coetzee 1986, 121). Her awareness of her dependence on Foe as an author and his power over her story grows: "Will you not bear it in mind, however, that my life is drearily suspended till your writing is done?" (63). While Foe takes over the role of a "Godlike author," who turns into the translator of her story, as

6 In another instance Susan writes to Foe, when she and Friday move into his house: "We will disturb nothing. When you return we will vanish like ghosts, without complaint" (Coetzee 1986, 64).

he "sees the narrative as an artefact that has to be constructed" (Almargo Jiménez 2005, 11), Susan fears losing her authority and identity: "But now all my life grows to be story and there is nothing of my own left in me. […] Nothing is left to me but doubt. I am doubt itself. Who is speaking me? Am I a phantom too? To what order do I belong? And you: who are you?" (Coetzee 1986, 133). Reading Foe's effort of rewriting Susan's story as a moment of translation highlights the difficulties between author and translator as well as original and translation. Foe – initially intended by Susan to be the phantom-like author through whom she will gain the ability to make her voice heard by others – evolves into an independent author who seeks to leave a visible mark on Susan's story. He interprets Susan's story according to his own art, whereby he takes the place of the author. While Susan insists on the original version, "she becomes increasingly aware of its unsuitability for the established canon" (Attridge 1996, 176). According to Lefevere, the process of canonization is dominated by "very concrete factors" that can be clearly determined when looking at "issues such as power, ideology, institution, and manipulation" (1992, 2). Foe's translation shows the ambiguous relationship between translation and original and the power structures inherent in it. It also hints at marginalized texts that are often authorized, adjusted, and manipulated by their translators. Susan, nevertheless, is an ambiguous character, as she opposes Foe's alterations: "It is still in my power to guide and amend. Above all, to withhold. By such means do I still endeavour to be father to my story" (Coetzee 1986, 123). Attridge argues that the struggle of authorship over Susan's tale hints at the "processes of authorship, empowerment, validation and silencing in a narrative that is constantly aware of the problems inherent in its own acts of representation" (Attridge 1996, 184). Admittedly, Coetzee thereby also reflects on his own status as a canonized author who was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, as he too "shares the powerful position of an author like Foe/Defoe" (Rao 2013, 41). By depicting the power structures between the gendered figures of Susan and Foe, Coetzee negotiates how less established or marginalized authors struggle to have their voices heard in the canonized industry of literature.

While Susan's efforts to construct an identity and gain a voice through her tale display the adversarial relations between original and copy, Friday's speechlessness negotiates the mistranslations and resistance of marginalized voices. The violent mutilation of his tongue, and thereby his lack of speech, as well as his physical appearance (as described by Susan), determine Friday culturally as the Other. Although Friday saves the shipwrecked woman and brings her to Cruso's encampment, Susan is immediately scared by Friday's appearance. Because of the spear he carries and his position as a servant to Cruso, she regards him as a cannibal and slave (Coetzee 1986, 6, 21). The moment she beholds – or more precisely does not behold – Friday's mutilated tongue is also the moment in which

she is confronted with the impossibility of "reading" his story, as she sees "nothing in the dark save the glint of teeth white as ivory" (22) in his mouth. Since Friday "has no understanding of words or power of speech" (39), his cut-out tongue becomes "the sign of his oppression" as well as of "absolute otherness" (Attridge 1996, 183). From that moment onwards she realizes that she can understand neither his character, his thoughts, nor his past:

> It was no comfort that his mutilation was secret, closed behind his lips (as some other mutilations are hidden by clothing), that outwardly he was like any Negro. Indeed, it was the very secretness of his loss that caused me to shrink from him. I could not speak, while he was about, without being aware how lively were the movements of the tongue in my own mouth. (Coetzee 1986, 24)

Due to this confrontation with Friday's condition, Susan feels a need to tell his story, yet she knows nothing of his past. Eventually, by writing down her tale, she does not only seek to establish an identity for herself, but also for Friday. Foe's story should become a "story, which is your story, and your master's, and mine" (Coetzee 1986, 58). Additionally, she wants to teach Friday to understand the English language, as she believes that she can "educate him out of darkness and silence" (61). As Friday already understands some words in English, Susan is well aware of the power of language a means to control, oppress, as well as form an identity. Yet, here, in contrast to her relation with Foe, it is her, who exercises power over Friday: "There are times when benevolence deserts me and I use words only as the shortest way to subject him to my will" (61).

However, Coetzee's novel does not fail to point out that power through language can also be resisted. Towards the end of the novel, there is an instant in which Susan believes that she and Friday have found a mutual level of communication. When Friday starts to play on a flute that he finds in Foe's house, Susan realizes "that if there were any languages accessible to Friday, it would be the language of music" (Coetzee 1986, 96). She accompanies him, yet when she plays a melody that differs from Friday's, he sticks with his own tune, and the hope for a harmonious, mutual communication, is shattered: "I was sure Friday would follow me. But no, Friday persisted in the old tune, and the two tunes placed together formed no pleasing counterpoint, but on the contrary jangled and jarred" (98). Friday's character stays unreadable for Susan, precisely because she believes it is her responsibility to translate Friday's story: "It is for us to open Friday's mouth and hear what it holds: silence, perhaps, or a roar, like the roar of a seashell held to the ear" (142). It is, however, Friday's untranslatability that enables his resistance, which Foe fails to realise: "We must make Friday's silence speak, as well as the silence surrounding Friday" (142), since "as long as he is dumb we can tell ourselves his desires are dark to us and continue to use him as we wish" (148).

In her essay "The Politics of Translation" in *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses the task of the female translator in literary translation and suggests to regard translation as a strategy to "get around the confines of one's 'identity,'" since language "allow[s] us to make sense of things, of ourselves" (Spivak 1993, 179). Translation is thus a space in which identity can be negotiated: "The translator earns permission to transgress from the trace of the other – before memory – in the closest places of the self" (Spivak 1993, 180). In this sense, translation becomes – similar to Bhabha – a space of encounter and negotiation of difference. The intimate encounter in the translational process is thus also a moment of understanding. This process of translation, according to Spivak, where she considers non-Western texts (written by women) is often worked out insufficiently, as the translator cannot enter a dialogue with the text or is not willing to do so (Spivak 1993, 181). This may be because "the experience of contained alterity in an unknown language spoken in a different cultural milieu is uncanny" (Spivak 1993, 181). Spivak's reflections can be applied to *Foe*, as Susan, who fails to translate Friday's speechlessness into her own language, is not willing to enter into an equal dialogue with Friday. Even though Friday's figure can be manipulated by those in control of language as they wish, it remains an unsolvable riddle to them, as Almargo Jiménez points out:

> Thus Friday becomes what the language of others turns him into. His speechlessness turns him into an incomplete sign, a sign castrated, amputated of one of its elements. As incomplete sign, he can only be a signifier which lacks a signified, more so because it lacks the possibility of ever being complete since the only element that could possibly "narrate" its origin for us is missing and Susan's attempts to find out are riddled with all sorts of problems: prejudice, received ideas, and wrong assumptions. (Almargo Jiménez 2005, 18)

The figure of Friday resists a clear "reading," as it is impossible to attach "a final authoritative meaning to [him]" (Rao 2013, 45). This ambiguity is further encouraged in the final chapter, in which a new, unnamed narrator gives a voice to Friday's silence. Here, the dead bodies of Foe and Susan lie in bed, while Friday is still alive in his alcove. Yet this place "is not a place of words. Each syllable, as it comes out, is caught and filled with water and diffused. This is a place where bodies are their own signs. It is the home of Friday" (Coetzee 1986, 157). The end opens the possibility of a reading that foregrounds "the post-colonial moment" (Head 1997, 124): Friday not only outlives Susan and Foe but also undermines the construct of their language. The words are dissolved into signs and Susan, who is "desperate to translate, faithfully, the figure of Friday into the story" (Head 1997, 106) to ascribe to Friday a history and an identity, fails in her attempt, as she is unable to comprehend his Otherness. Translating Friday gains a double meaning: On the one hand, Susan and Foe translate him into a figure of cannibalistic ori-

gins and speculate about his past and his wishes, and thereby exercise power over him. On the other hand, Friday's silence is also a silent resistance to their attempts. Susan and Foe ultimately fail to attach a final meaning to him, since he displays a sign that they cannot read. Furthermore, it has also been pointed out by critics that Friday's muteness opposes the exclusiveness of the canon (Kehinde 2006, 112). Friday's silence therefore turns into a sign for the voicelessness of works excluded by the canon:

> *Foe*'s most telling challenge to the literary canon, therefore, is not its insistence upon cultural construction and validation (an insistence to which we have become accustomed in postmodern writing); it is its representation, through this most powerful of non-representations, of the silence which is constitutive of canonicity itself. (Attridge 1996, 180)

The moments of translation in *Foe* – the rewriting of the Robinson narrative, Foe authoring Susan's story, and the mistranslation of Friday by Susan and Foe – negotiate the questions of canonization, authorship, and the power of translators. As Park Sorensen writes, "*Foe* seems to open an arcade of foreignness in which the 'original' and the 'translation', and the figures of these two terms, may possibly recognize one another in their shared otherness" (2010, 107). The deliberate discrepancies between Crusoe's and Coetzee's plot unveil issues such as patriarchal and colonial structures in the original story. These moments of translation create a space of dialogue between original and translation in which the new perspectives of marginalized positions are made visible. Similarly, Foe's attempt to translate Susan's story into a more adventurous one highlights the relationship between author and translator and the power relations inherent therein. It particularly emphasizes the position of marginalized or less powerful texts that are adjusted to a new socio-cultural or political context when translated into a different culture. Lastly, Susan's and Foe's efforts to translate Friday into their own story show that translational processes always imply an encounter with the Other. Even though both assimilate Friday to their desires, they ultimately fail to comprehend him. *Foe* not only raises awareness of the exclusive structures of the canon, it also addresses the power of language when speaking for others and translating, respectively.

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Katrin Gunkel

„Languages don't abide by borders, or paper": Uljana Wolfs translinguale Poetik

Abstract: Gibt es auch viele Gründe, wirtschaftliche Globalisierungsprozesse skeptisch zu betrachten, so sieht es in Bezug auf eine sprachliche Globalisierung anders aus: „Languages don't abide by borders, or paper. Nor do they stop at other languages." Die Lyrikerin Uljana Wolf (geboren 1979) hat diesen Ansatz zu ihrem poetischen Grundsatz erklärt. Mehrsprachigkeit und Transkulturalität prägen von Beginn an das Leben und literarische Werk der in Berlin und New York lebenden Dichterin, die gleichzeitig als Literatur-Übersetzerin aus dem amerikanischen Englisch tätig ist. So lotet ihr Debüt *kochanie, ich habe brot gekauft* (2007) die Grenzräume zwischen Polen – dem Land ihrer Vorfahren – und Deutschland aus, wohingegen die zwei folgenden Gedichtbände *falsche freunde* (2009) und *meine schönste lengevitch* (2013) kulturelle und sprachliche Grenzen zwischen Deutschland und den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika poetisch auflösen. In ihrem Schreiben spiegelt sich die Idee eines globalen, polylingualen Raumes, in dem sich kulturelle und sprachliche Zeichen unabhängig von nationalen Setzungen und Konzepten bewegen können. Sie lösen sich auf in einer Dichtung, die den transitiven Moment zwischen zwei Sprachen in eine eigene Poetik umwandelt. Uljana Wolfs Werk ist damit beispielhaft für eine gegenwärtige, von Translingualität geprägte Poesie.

Keywords: Mehrsprachigkeit, Translingualität, Transkulturalität, Übersetzung, Poesie

In der Geschichte der Lyrik hat es Mehrsprachigkeit und Kulturkontakt schon immer gegeben. Man denke etwa an das seit der Antike bekannte Figurengedicht, für das nicht nur die Überschreitung der konventionellen Grenzen eines Textes zu den Strukturen eines Bildes hin charakteristisch ist, sondern auch die Überschreitung von Sprachgrenzen zwischen dem Lateinischen und dem Griechischen. Zu nennen ist ebenso die Trobadordichtung oder die Makkaronische Poesie, deren sprachmischende poetische Struktur sich auch in der Konkreten Poesie des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts nachverfolgen lässt – zum Beispiel bei Ernst

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Jandl als Kombination des Deutschen mit dem Englischen.[1] Mehrsprachigkeit und die Verbindung von fremd- und eigenkulturellen Bestandteilen hat in der Lyrik eine lange und abwechslungsreiche Tradition, die sich bis in die Moderne fortsetzt. Bemerkenswert ist das neue Interesse an diesen Formen und die Auseinandersetzung mit diesen, denen auch dieser Kongress mit seinem Thema „Die vielen Sprachen der Literaturwissenschaft" verpflichtet ist.

Es stellt sich die Frage, ob Mehrsprachigkeit neue Dimensionen angenommen hat, und wenn ja, welche. In dieser Arbeit wird davon ausgegangen, dass die deutschsprachige Gegenwartslyrik neue Dimensionen erkennen lässt. Welchen Charakter diese haben, wird in den nachfolgenden Betrachtungen im Zentrum stehen. Die These ist, dass die deutschsprachige Gegenwartsdichtung derzeit von einer vielfältigen Translingualität und Transkulturalität geprägt ist, wobei beidem in der Dichtung hinsichtlich der Qualität und Quantität eine weiter wachsende Relevanz zukommt, die sich auf das Schreiben und die Rezeption von Gedichten auswirkt. Die Phänomene zeigen sich dabei so vielförmig, dass sie sich gegenwärtig nicht in ihrer Gesamtheit beschreiben lassen. Deshalb ist es empfehlenswert, sich zunächst an einzelnen Fallbeispielen wie der deutschen Lyrikerin und Übersetzerin Uljana Wolf zu versuchen. Sie, die gern als „Pendlerin" (Lehmkuhl 2009) zwischen den Sprachen und Kulturen bezeichnet wird, wurde 1979 in Berlin geboren und lebt heute zusammen mit ihrem Ehemann, dem US-amerikanischen Lyriker und Dozenten für *Creative Writing* Christian Hawkey, in Berlin und Brooklyn.

Die Schriftstellerin und Übersetzerin Uljana Wolf hat bisher drei Lyrikbände veröffentlicht und erhielt zahlreiche Auszeichnungen wie den Peter-Huchel-Preis (2006) oder den Adelbert von Chamisso Preis (2016) und verschiedene Stipendien[2]. Außerdem unterrichtet sie Poesie und Übersetzung u. a. an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, am Institut für Sprachkunst in Wien sowie am Pratt Institute in New York. Teile ihres Studiums der Germanistik, Anglistik und Kulturwissenschaft an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin verbrachte sie in Krakau und Kreisau, was auch mit einem biographischen Teil ihres Lebens zusammenhing: Die Großeltern Uljana Wolfs lebten ursprünglich in Schlesien. In Krakau entstand ein Teil der Gedichte des Debütbandes „kochanie ich habe brot gekauft" (Wolf 2005). Bereits ihr erster Gedichtband zeigt sich mehrsprachig, was nicht nur im polnisch-deutschen Titel markiert wird (*kochanie* ist polnisch und bedeutet ‚Liebling'), sondern auch in den Gedichten selbst, deren poetische Grundlage zum Teil polnisch-deutsche Städtenamen wie „malczyce/maltsch" oder „legnica/liegnitz" und damit die polnisch-deutsche

1 Zum Beispiel Ernst Jandls Gedichte „chanson" (1957), „oberflächenübersetzung" (1957) oder „kneiernzuck" (1965).

2 U. a. Arbeitsstipendium des Deutschen Literaturfonds (2008), Künstleraufenthalt in der Villa Aurora in Los Angeles (2010), Stipendiatin der Deutschen Akademie Rom Villa Massimo (2017/18).

Geschichte bildet. (Wolf 2005, 41 und 43) Es folgen literarische Übersetzungsarbeiten aus dem amerikanischen Englisch (zum Beispiel Matthea Harvey oder Eugene Ostashevsky)[3], die ihre eigene Poesie beeinflussen. Dieser Einfluss zeigt sich in ihrem zweiten Lyrikband *falsche freunde* (2009a) und in dem vier Jahre später erschienenen dritten, mit dem erneut mehrsprachigen Titel *meine schönste lengevitch* (2013). Auf die zwei zuletzt veröffentlichten Bücher konzentriert sich der Aufsatz anhand jeweils eines Gedichtes.[4] Es wird sich zeigen, dass Uljana Wolfs Texte repräsentative und zugleich progressive Beispiele für poetische Translingualität und Transkulturalität darstellen. Was jedoch ist unter diesen Begrifflichkeiten zu verstehen?

In Anlehnung an den Philosophen Wolfgang Welsch, der in den 1990er Jahren den Begriff ‚Transkulturalität' im deutschsprachigen Raum maßgeblich prägte, wird darunter die „Vernetzung" und „Verflechtung" (Welsch 2000, 336–337) von Kulturen sowohl „auf der Makroebene der Gesellschaft" als auch „auf der Mikroebene der Individuen" (Welsch 2000, 339) verstanden. (vgl. Gugenberger 2011; Gunkel 2020) Welsch geht davon aus, dass die westlichen Kulturen

> heute eine Verfaßtheit auf[weisen], die den alten Vorstellungen geschlossener und einheitlicher Nationalkulturen nicht mehr entspricht. Sie haben nicht mehr die Form homogener und wohlabgegrenzter Kugeln oder Inseln, sondern sind intern durch eine Pluralisierung möglicher Identitäten gekennzeichnet und weisen extern grenzüberschreitende Konturen auf. Insofern sind sie nicht mehr Kulturen im hergebrachten Sinn des Wortes, sondern sind transkulturell geworden. (Welsch 1994, 28)

Ebenso wie Welsch geht diese Arbeit davon aus, dass es sich bei dem Phänomen der Transkulturalität um ein historisches handelt, das gleichzeitig im hohen Maße aktuell ist: „Die kulturellen Durchdringungen sind heute weltweit stärker, als sie je zuvor waren." (Welsch 2012, 35) Welsch bezeichnet die Gegenwart als ein „Zeitalter der Transkulturalität". (Welsch 2011, 322)

Der Begriff der ‚Translingualität' wird in Anlehnung an die Romanistin Eva Gugenberger als „Analogie" zur Transkulturalität und in Absetzung zur „monolingualen und bilingualen [bzw. multilingualen] Perspektive" betrachtet. (Gugenberger 2011, 17; vgl. Ette 2012) Gemeint ist eine „Durchquerung von Sprachen" (Kilchmann 2012a, 12–13), wobei das Präfix ‚trans-' wie bei dem Begriff der ‚Transkulturalität' die Summierung oder Vermischung und damit eine Prozesshaftigkeit bezeichnet.

3 Harvey, Matthea. *Du kennst das auch*. Gedichte Englisch-Deutsch. Aus dem amerikanischen Englisch von Uljana Wolf. Berlin: kookbooks, 2010; Ostashevsky, Eugene. *Auf tritt Morris Impostornak, verfolgt von Ironien*. Aus dem amerikanischen Englisch von Uljana Wolf. Berlin: SuKuLTuR, 2010.

4 Die Gedichtanalysen werden sich auf die translingualen/-kulturellen Ebenen fokussieren. Dass sich die Texte darin nicht erschöpfen, steht außer Frage. (Für weiterführende Betrachtungen vgl. Gunkel 2020).

Der Begriff bezieht sich auf Phänomene, bei denen der Moment der sprachlichen Zwischenstellung betont wird, im Sinne einer Nichtabgrenzbarkeit und Unabgeschlossenheit von Sprache(n). Dabei ist das Phänomen ebenso historisch angelegt wie das der Transkulturalität.

Poetische Translingualität sowie Transkulturalität und deren Ineinandergreifen kann anhand des ersten Textbeispiels aus Uljana Wolfs Lyrikband *falsche freunde* veranschaulicht werden:

> BAD – BALD – BET ~ T – BRIEF
> am anfang bald, und bald am ende wieder: unsere haare, und
> dazwischen sind sie nicht zu fassen, nicht in sich und nicht in
> griff zu kriegen, weder im guten noch im bad. stattdessen
> morgens zu berg (take a bet?) und nachts out of bed (siehe ad).
> am besten hältst du sie als igel, der hat noch jeden hare besiegt.
> liegt aber eine strähne im brief, gar eine lange, halte sie
> unverfänglich an die wange. (Wolf 2009a, 11)

Gibt es auch viele Gründe, wirtschaftliche Globalisierungsprozesse skeptisch zu betrachten, so sieht es in Bezug auf eine linguale Globalisierung anders aus: „Languages don't abide by borders, or paper. Nor do they stop at other languages."[5] Diese Äußerung Wolfs ist ihr poetischer Grundsatz, wie der abgebildete Text einprägsam veranschaulicht. Er stammt aus dem titelgebenden ersten Zyklus „falsche freunde", dessen Grundlage ein genuin translinguales Phänomen bildet: Als ‚falsche Freunde' gelten in der Linguistik Wortpaare aus zwei verschiedenen Sprachen, die sich phonetisch oder orthographisch ähneln, aber unterschiedliche Bedeutungen haben. Ein Beispiel wäre das englische Wort *gift* (in der Übersetzung von ‚Geschenk', ‚Gabe', ‚Spende' etc.), das orthographisch dem deutschen *Gift* gleicht, jedoch eine völlig andere – geradezu semantisch entgegengesetzte – Bedeutung hat. Für Wolf sind ‚falsche Freunde' keine Fehlerquellen, sondern Quellen von poetischen „Neuschöpfungen", wie sie in einem Interview äußert.[6] Das zeigt sich auch im Untertitel des ersten Zyklus, zu dem das Gedicht „BAD – BALD – BET ~ T – BRIEF" gehört: „DICHTionary / ein deutsch-englisches / wörterbuch / für falsche freunde / verstreute cognates / und andere verwandte". (Wolf 2009a, 9) Mit ihrem „DICHTionary" begibt sich Wolf in die Tradition der Wörterbuchliteratur, zu der Voltaire mit seinem „Le Dictionnaire philosophique portatif" (1764) genauso zählt wie Ernst Jandl mit seinen mehrsprachigen Gedichten in Wörterbuch- oder Wortlistenform[7] oder Yoko Tawada mit ihrer Wörter-Liste als Textform in „Ein Chinesi-

5 Zitiert nach: http://www.poetryinternationalweb.net/pi/site/poet/item/21926/19/Uljana-Wolf.

6 Zitiert nach: http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/alphabet-der-irrtuemer.700.de.html?dram:article_id=84372.

7 Zum Beispiel das Gedicht „chanson". (Siehe Anm. 2).

sches Wörterbuch" (Tawada 2002, 31). Dass Wolf in dieser Tradition gesehen werden möchte, zeigen intertextuelle Verweise wie: „dinge gibt's, die kann man nicht verwechseln (s. yandl)".[8] Zahlreiche weitere Bezugnahmen machen den Band und seine Texte zu einem genuin transkulturellen Lyrikband.

In die Tradition der Wörterbuchliteratur ordnet sich Wolf ein, zugleich hebt sie sich mit ihrem deutsch-englischen „DICHTionary" davon ab, wie der Neologismus aus dem deutschen Wort *Dichtung* und dem englischen *dictionary* (dt. ‚Wörterbuch') verdeutlicht. Die unterschiedliche Schreibweise hebt die sprachliche und begriffliche Verschiedenheit beider Wörter hervor.

Wer Wörterbücher benutzt, bedarf in der Regel der Orientierung, möchte Unvertrautes in Vertrautes umwandeln: „Wörterbücher informieren nicht nur über Wörter, sie vermitteln auch das Weltwissen, das sich an die Wörter knüpft." (Schmitz-Emans) Mit dem Begriff der ‚Dichtung' gehen poetische Konzepte einher, die in der Verfremdung das allgemeine Kriterium der literarischen gegenüber der nichtliterarischen Rede sehen. Beide Reden verbindet Wolf in ihren Texten mit dem Anspruch, aus dem Vertrauten und Konventionellen heraus unvertraute, neue Facetten der Sprache zu erkunden. Weil das Unvertraute sich immer von etwas Vertrautem abheben muss, um unvertraut zu sein, bietet sich die Kombination aus *dictionary* und *Dichtung* als poetologisches Konzept an, um einen Effekt der Befremdung zu erzeugen. Fremdes und Vertrautes werden verbunden, ohne aufgehoben zu werden. Diese Idee zeigt sich auch anhand des translingualen Textes „BAD – BALD – BET ~ T – BRIEF". (Wolf 2009a, 11)

Wolfs „DICHTionary" besteht aus 26 Gedichten. Jeder Buchstabe des Alphabets erhält als Titel ‚falsche Freunde', auf die sich der darunter stehende deutsch-englische Text auf verschiedene Weise bezieht. Der Buchstabe B beschäftigt sich mit den Wörtern: „BAD – BALD – BET ~ T – BRIEF". Die ‚falschen Freunde' können weder im Titel noch im Text eindeutig einer Sprache zugeordnet werden. In der ersten Zeile heißt es: „am anfang bald, und bald am ende wieder: unsere haare". Der ‚falsche Freund' „bald" kann die englische Adjektivbedeutung ‚kahl' oder die Bedeutung des deutschen Temporaladverbs ‚demnächst' haben. Das gleiche poetische Spiel zeigt sich bei dem Wort „bad". Liest man das Wort Englisch und damit in der Bedeutung von ‚schlecht', ergibt sich daraus das deutsche Sprichwort mit der idiomatischen Bedeutung von ‚im Guten wie im Schlechten'. Aber auch die deutsche Bedeutung im Sinne von *Bad* als ‚Badezimmer' passt grammatisch wie

8 Die Zeile ist aus dem Gedicht „YAK – YODEL ~ YAK YAK" zum Buchstaben Y. (Vgl. Wolf 2009a, 34) Sie verweist auf Ernst Jandls Gedicht „lichtung" aus dem Lyrikband *Laut und Luise* (1966), in dem das Thema der Verwechslung poetisch inszeniert wird. Die Schreibung von Jandls Namen mit Y („yandl") ist eine spielerische Referenz auf den Moment der Verwechslung und auf den Buchstaben, dem der Text gewidmet ist.

semantisch. Es gibt noch einen weiteren ‚falschen Freund', der sich in den letzten Zeilen findet: „liegt aber / eine strähne im brief, gar eine lange, halte sie unverfänglich an / die wange." Neben der deutschen Bedeutung des Wortes *Brief* (‚persönliches Schreiben') passt die englische von *brief* (‚kurz') als Gegensatz zur erwähnten „lange[n]" Haarsträhne. Eine Hilfestellung zur Unterscheidung der Sprachen könnte die Großschreibung bieten, wie sie im Deutschen beispielsweise für Substantive geregelt ist. Auf diese jedoch verzichtet Wolf, was zur Ununterscheidbarkeit der Wörter führt und mehrere semantische Ebenen eröffnet. Eindeutigkeit könnte ebenso ein Vortragen der Texte durch die Dichterin bringen, aber auch sie behält sich stets ein Stück poetischer Freiheit vor, indem sie die Wörter manchmal Englisch und manchmal Deutsch ausspricht.

Außerdem spielt Wolf mit den Ähnlichkeiten der drei Morpheme *Bett* im Sinne der deutschen Bedeutung von ‚Schlafgelegenheit', *bet* in der englischen Bedeutung von ‚Wette' und *bed* im Sinne der englischen Bedeutung von ‚Bett als Schlafgelegenheit': „stattdessen morgens / zu berg (take a bet?) und nachts out of bed (siehe ad)." Das englische Idiom „take a bet" (‚eine Wette annehmen') reimt sich auf das darauf folgende englische „bed", dessen deutsche Bedeutung ‚Bett' wie das englische Wort „bet" (‚wetten') ausgesprochen wird. Zugleich reimt sich „bed" auf das Wort „ad" (zu Deutsch ‚Anzeige', ‚Reklame') und „bad" (zu Deutsch ‚schlecht').

„[S]tattdessen morgens zu berg" spielt auf das deutsche Idiom des Haare-zu-Berge-Stehens an. Gleichzeitig verweist es darauf, dass nach dem Schlafen am nächsten Morgen die Haare durcheinander – eben „nicht in griff zu kriegen" – sind. Genauso mehrdeutig sind die englischen Wörter, die keine ‚falschen Freunde' sind. Durch das englische Wort „hare" in der Bedeutung von ‚Hase' wird nicht nur eine phonetische Ebene zum englischen *hair* (‚Haar') aufgemacht, sondern auch auf die Geschichte vom Hasen und dem Igel verwiesen. So wie der Igel in dem Märchen den Hasen überlistet, „besiegt" die Glatze das als unzähmbar beschriebene Haar.

Die Wörter und Phrasen weisen durch Doppelbedeutungen in immer wieder neue Richtungen und spielen gleichsam mit zahlreichen Bedeutungsebenen. Auf dieses poetische Spiel deutet auch das Zeichen der Tilde in dem Wort „bet ~ t" hin, das in Wörterbüchern als Wiederholungszeichen für den bereits angeführten Begriff gilt.

Mit dem translingualen Phänomen der ‚falschen Freunde' verweist Wolf auf die Themen Übersetzung und Übersetzungsprobleme. Die Autorin und Übersetzerin weiß, dass Missverstehen zur Übersetzung gehört, und Übersetzung wird in ihren Gedichten zur Poesie, wie sie konstatiert: „At any given moment, each of these words might be used with German in mind, or English, or both."[9] Betrachtet

9 Zitiert nach: http://www.greenapplebooks.com/UGDP1.

man den Text aus einer formalen Perspektive, zeigt sich auch hier das prägende Moment des Transitiven: Es handelt sich um ein Prosagedicht, über das Wolf wenige Monate nach der Veröffentlichung des Lyrikbandes eine Poetik-Vorlesung mit dem Titel „Box office" hielt. (2009b) Mit dieser poetischen Form begibt sie sich in eine weitere transkulturelle Tradition, die ihren Ausgangspunkt mit dem französischen Schriftsteller Charles Baudelaire genommen hat, bis sie Wolf in der „amerikanischen Lyrik [...] für [sich] entdeckte." (Wolf 2009b, 9) Das Prosagedicht als „Zwitterwesen" ist für Wolf die ideale Formwahl, denn es offenbart ihre Leidenschaft für sprachliche Uneindeutigkeiten: Die Texte seien wegen der fehlenden Versstruktur sowohl offen, als auch aufgrund ihrer Dichte innerhalb des festen Rahmens geschlossen. (Vgl. Wolf 2009b, 8) Dabei kennzeichne das Prosagedicht „eine tiefer gehende Störung, Verstörung syntaktischer und semantischer Strukturen."[10]

An die Ausgangsthese, dass der Translingualität und der Transkulturalität in der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartslyrik eine wachsende Relevanz zukommt, sowohl quantitativ als auch qualitativ, lässt sich eine zweite These anschließen: Zu den Strategien mehrsprachigen Schreibens und dem „künstlerischen Innovationscharakter" tritt eine hohe poetologische Reflexivität und, wie Esther Kilchmann konstatiert, ein „dezidiert *methodische[r] Anspruch* an diese Verfahren". (Kilchmann 2012b, 112) Wolfs poetische Arbeit ist auch dafür ein einschlägiges Beispiel. Fragen zur literarischen sowie sozio-kulturellen Mehrsprachigkeit beantwortet sie ausführlich in Interviews, Essays und Poetik-Vorlesungen. Sie reflektiert umfassend über Themen wie Übersetzung oder das Schreiben in einer anderen Sprache und deren textimmanente sowie produktionsästhetische Umsetzung. Die Grundlage dafür bilden ein internationaler Lebenslauf, Zweisprachigkeit, ein hohes Maß literaturtheoretischer und sprachwissenschaftlicher Kenntnisse aus Studium sowie Lehrtätigkeiten und die Tätigkeit als Übersetzerin. Das zeigt sich auch in ihrem zuletzt erschienenen Gedichtband *meine schönste lengevitch* (2013).

Den Titel des Bandes übernahm Wolf von dem Lyriker Kurt M. Stein, der im Jahr 1925 in Chicago einen Gedichtband mit dem Titel *Die schönste Lengevitch* veröffentlichte. Darin finden sich humorvolle Gedichte in einer speziellen Mischsprache, in der sich Deutsch und amerikanisches Englisch miteinander vermengen. In der Vorrede wird sie als „happy hyphenate Germerican" bezeichnet. (Stein 1925, 12) In diesem Sinne entstand das Wort „lengevitch", das die lautliche Ebene des englischen Wortes *language* in die deutsche Sprache transkribiert.

10 Wolf gibt hier die amerikanische Literaturwissenschaftlerin Margueritte Murphy wieder, die „von einer *tradition of subversion* als der einzigen Tradition des Prosagedichts" spricht. (Wolf 2009b, 14).

Die Verschmelzung verschiedener Sprachen verweist auf die Tradition der Makkaronischen Poesie, eine zur Zeit des europäischen Humanismus entstandene Dichtungsart. Das poetische Prinzip beruht auf der Verschmelzung der Morphologie zweier Sprachen und steht im Kontext der Satire. So wurde sich damals zum Beispiel über die ungenügende Latinität einiger deutscher Scholaren, Juristen und Mediziner amüsiert. Bei Kurt M. Stein geht es um die mangelnden Englischkenntnisse der deutschen Einwanderer in die Vereinigten Staaten Anfang der 1920er Jahre.

Wie Wolf Steins „schönste Lengevitch" für sich poetisch adaptiert, zeigt das Gedicht „doppelgeherrede":

> DOPPELGEHERREDE
> ich ging ins tingeltangel, lengevitch angeln. an der
> garderobe bekam jede eine zweitsprache mit identischen
> klamotten, leicht gemoppeltes doppel. die spiegel aber
> zeigten nur eine von uns, ich schluckte: kalte spucke, spuk.
> hinten hoppelten wortkaninchen aus ashberys hut. zum
> ballsaal dann, mit meinem zwilling zirkumstanzen, am
> tresen ein köpfchen kaffee mit mrs. stein. dass ich
> gespenster seh!, rief plötzlich aus der nische, wo das denken
> dunkeldeutsch blieb, mr. veilmaker im schlafanzug der
> philosophen. ein kressekästchen vor der brust, verblüfft:
> wächst auf einem weißen blatte! ohne alle erde! wurzellos!
> ich wollte nach paar samen fragen, doch mein zwilling
> sprang, ging schwofen mit dem mann. wer schatten hat,
> muss für die spots nicht sorgen, sagte mrs. stein, packte ihre
> knöpfe ein. (Wolf 2013, 9)

Ein lyrisches Ich schildert rückblickend Erlebnisse in einem „tingeltangel". Gemeint ist ein veralteter, abwertender Begriff für ein „niveauloses Tanzlokal", in dem verschiedene Arten der einfachen Unterhaltung sowie der Tanzmusik geboten werden.[11] Besonderes Augenmerk in dem Wort „tingeltangel" liegt auf der Lautmalerei, die zugleich einen Bezug zur umgangssprachlichen Redewendung ‚sich jemanden angeln' (‚sich einen Lebenspartner suchen'/‚eine Liebschaft beginnen') herstellt und ihrerseits die pejorative Konnotation des „tingeltangel" ergänzt. Doch zwischen wem soll eine Liebschaft eingegangen werden? Zwischen den Sprachen Deutsch und Englisch. So erhält das lyrische Ich als vermeintlich ‚deutsche Sprache' eine Zweitsprache mit „identischen klamotten". Es ist der poetische Verweis auf ein Sprachspiel, dessen Grundlage Steins „Germerican" (Stein

11 Vgl. „Tingeltangel". *Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*. https://www.dwds.de/wb/Tingeltangel.

1925, 12) bildet und bei dem nicht mehr zwischen den jeweiligen Sprachen differenziert werden kann.

Stein wendete sich mit seiner „lengevitch" gegen die Normiertheit der Sprache, ebenso wie der amerikanische Gegenwartsdichter John Ashbery[12], der im Gedicht „wortkaninchen" aus seinem „hut" zaubert. Ein weiterer Klassiker der amerikanischen Literatur ist Gertrude Stein[13], die im Text als „mrs. stein" vorkommt. Sie ist wie Ashbery eine Inspirationsquelle für Wolf in Bezug auf die Genretradition des Prosagedichts. Ashbery verfasste Prosagedichte in seinen *Three Poems* (1989) und Gertrude Stein in ihrem Buch *Tender Buttons* (1914).[14] Auf Letzteres verweist Wolf in den abschließenden Zeilen: „wer schatten / hat, muss für die spots nicht sorgen, sagte mrs. stein, packte / ihre knöpfe ein." Besonders interessant ist, dass Gertrude Stein und Kurt M. Stein denselben Nachnamen tragen, was natürlich dem Text sehr entgegenkommt, in dem es um doppelte und dennoch divergente Sprachidentitäten geht.

Auch der deutsche Philosoph Friedrich Schleiermacher kommt übersetzt als „mr. veilmaker" vor. Sein Erscheinen als einziger Deutscher im Text hat seine Bewandtnis: Mit ihm rückt seine berühmte Abhandlung „Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens" von 1813 in den Mittelpunkt. Darin findet man folgenden Absatz: „Allein diese Reden sind auch freilich nicht aus dem Gebiet, wo die Gedanken kräftig aus der tiefen Wurzel einer eigenthümlichen Sprache hervortreiben, sondern wie die Kresse, die ein künstlicher Mann ohne alle Erde auf dem weißen Tuche wachsen macht." (Schleiermacher 1963, 62) In diesem viel zitierten Absatz kritisiert Schleiermacher die Mehrsprachigkeit am Hofe, wo Fremdsprachen meist für oberflächliche ‚Schwätzereien' genutzt werden. In seiner Abhandlung bestimmt er Anderssprachigkeit als „unnatürlich" (Schleiermacher 1963, 55–56) und spricht vom „Doppeltgehen" (Schleiermacher 1963, 64). Eine Wendung, die das Grundgerüst von Wolfs Gedicht prägt, in dem eine doppelte Sprachidentität eine zentrale Rolle spielt. Sie zeigt sich auch in den Metaphern „zwilling", „gespenster" und „schatten". Mit dieser poetischen Gestaltung hält Wolf dem Sprachpurismus ihre „doppelgeherrede" entgegen. Das Konzept des Doppelten spiegelt sich auch in der Gattung des Prosagedichts und in den unterschiedlichen Strategien, das Deutsche und das Englische zu kombinieren. Betrachtet man die sprachliche Gestalt der „doppelgeher-

12 John Ashbery (geboren 1927 in New York; gestorben 2017 in New York) war einer der einflussreichsten amerikanischen Dichter des Postmodernismus.

13 Gertrude Stein (geboren 1874 in Pennsylvania; gestorben 1946 in Paris) war eine amerikanische Schriftstellerin, Verlegerin und Kunstsammlerin des Modernismus.

14 Von Ashbery übersetzte Wolf vier Gedichte, die sich in dem Band *Ein weltabgewandtes Land* aus dem Jahr 2010 finden.

rede“, so lässt sich feststellen, dass Wolf einerseits auf „Die schönste Lengevitch“ Steins rekurriert, aber andererseits eine individuelle poetische Sprache entwirft.

Besonders auffällig ist der Neologismus „zirkumstanzen“, der mit dem englischen *circumstance* (‚Umstand‘) korrespondiert, das wiederum vom lateinischen Wort *circumstare* (‚umherstehen‘, ‚umringen‘) abgeleitet ist. Hauptsächlich wird auf die deutschen Wörter „Zirkus“, was sich in die Motivik vom Tingeltangel fügt, „Stanze“[15], die als Gedichtform die Poetologie des Textes ergänzt und auf das englische Wort *stanza* (‚Strophe‘) referiert, und „tanzen“ verwiesen. Daneben lässt sich ein Bezug zum lateinischen Adverb *circum* (‚ringsrum‘) erkennen. „zirkumstanzen“ kann folglich als ein verspieltes Tanzen im Kreis verstanden werden, das die Motivik des Doppelten und des Tingeltangels ergänzt.

Außerdem finden sich Wendungen wie „köpfchen kaffee“, das nicht semantisch, aber phonetisch auf *cup of coffee* hindeutet. In eine ähnliche Richtung weisen die letzten Zeilen mit dem Wortspiel aus „schatten“ und *Schaden* sowie „spott“ und „spots“: „wer schatten / hat, muss für die spots nicht sorgen, sagte mrs. stein, packte / ihre knöpfe ein.“ Hier liegt das deutsche Sprichwort ‚Wer den Schaden hat, muss für den Spott nicht sorgen‘ zugrunde. Bei diesen Verfahren der Mehrsprachigkeit, die auf gleichem oder ähnlichem Klang beruhen, handelt es sich um sprachübergreifende Paronomasien.[16]

Einige der aufgezeigten translingualen Wortspiele übernimmt Wolf von Kurt M. Stein, wie ein Blick auf die ersten Verszeilen seines Gedichtes „KAFFEKLATSCH“ zeigt:

> KAFFEKLATSCH.
>
> „Mache’ Sie kei Zircumstances,
> Missis Schultz, ich kann nicht stayhn.“
> „Ach a minute nur, Frau Schneider.
> Hab so lange Sie net gesehn.
> Ich fix just a Köpfchen Kaffee
> [...].“
>
> (Stein 1925, 48 [V. 1–5])

Während sich inhaltlich und formal kaum Parallelen finden lassen, sieht es in Bezug auf die sprachliche und damit textliche Gestaltung anders aus.

15 Eine Stanze ist eine Strophe aus acht elfsilbigen jambischen Versen mit dem Reimschema abababcc; sie wird auch als Oktave bezeichnet.

16 Als eine Art des Wortspiels verbindet die Paronomasie Wörter miteinander, welche semantisch oder etymologisch nicht zusammengehören, sich jedoch im Klang ähneln. Oft haben die sich ähnelnden Wörter gegensätzliche – zumindest unterschiedliche – Bedeutung.

Betrachtet man den translingualen Neologismus und die Paronomasien, so lässt sich eine direkte Bezugnahme konstatieren, die in eine individuelle Kreativität übergeht. Es gibt allerdings auch zentrale sowohl poetische als auch poetologische Unterschiede: Beide Lyriker verwenden eine Mischsprache, bei Wolf kommt sie jedoch nur an bestimmten Stellen zum Vorschein, wodurch sie in einem sonst deutschen Text stärker in Szene gesetzt werden. Bei Kurt M. Stein findet sich zudem der hessische Dialekt in der verwendeten direkten Rede. Auch stehen seine Texte in der Tradition der Makkaronischen Poesie und dementsprechend kennzeichnet sie ein satirischer Charakter, der sich bei Wolf unterschwelliger findet. Translinguale sowie -kulturelle Wortspiele und Verweise greifen ineinander und bilden die Grundlage ihrer poetischen Kreativität. Eine satirische Abwendung lässt sich gegenüber einem Sprach-, Kultur- und Gattungspurismus erkennen.

Wolfs Zugriff auf transkulturelle und translinguale Prozesse in ihrer Poesie zeigt eine Distanz zu konventionellen Assoziationen, die Sprache und Kultur als homogen und klar abgrenzbar betrachten. Das Moment des Transitiven zeigt sich ebenso in ihrem Leben und in ihrer Tätigkeit als Übersetzerin. Das Prägnante an mehrsprachiger Gegenwartslyrik wie der von Uljana Wolf ist nicht nur die bemerkenswerte Anzahl der Texte als Ausdruck eines globalen Phänomens, sondern auch der methodische Anspruch an das literarische Verfahren der Mehrsprachigkeit, mit dem systematische Reflexionen über literaturwissenschaftliche und -theoretische Diskurse einhergehen. In diesem Sinne ist die Literatur weniger ein „in sich geschlossener und gültig vermessbarer ‚Gegenstand' der Literaturwissenschaft", sondern ein „Dialogpartner im Nachdenken über literarische Mehrsprachigkeit" (Kilchmann 2012b, 112) und deren Erforschung.

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Jèssica Pujol Duran

Italo Calvino, Julio Cortázar, and the *Nouveau Roman*

Abstract: Julio Cortázar and Italo Calvino, friends and foreign writers living in Paris in the 1960s and 1970s, performed a number of literary experiments throughout their time in the city that share a deep connection with the writers of the *nouveau roman*. Its most representative author, Alain Robbe-Grillet, dedicated a series of essays to defining the poetics of this new writing, such as "À quoi servent les théories" (1955) and "Nouveau roman, homme nouveau" (1961), which lie at the centre of my analysis. Calvino and Cortázar read the *nouveau roman* writers and reflected upon Robbe-Grillet's stylistic principles, as I will explain by performing a close reading of Cortázar's *Historias de cronopios y famas* (1962) and *62: Modelo para armar* (1968) as well as Calvino's *Le cosmicomiche* (1968). I will also, however, argue that, at the same time, they both chose to disassociate themselves from Robbe-Grillet's ideas in favour of a more subjective and anthropological conception of literature. A comparative study of their reactions to the *nouveau roman* movement will thus provide an understanding of their wider practices, and we will see how their writing moved away from the rubrics of the *nouveau roman* with which they both have been frequently associated.

Keywords: anthropomorphism, Italo Calvino, Julio Cortázar, *nouveau roman*, Paris

Cortázar moved to Paris in 1951. From 1962, Calvino began commuting to the French capital from Rome, San Remo, and Turin, spending time there with Esther Judith Singer (also known as Chichita), with whom Cortázar and his first wife, Aurora Bernárdez, worked as translators at the UNESCO headquarters. In 1965, Calvino married Chichita and decided to settle in Paris, where he would be based for the next fifteen years, during which time the two couples developed a close professional and personal relationship. Calvino, for instance, assisted with the publication of Cortázar's work in Italy by the Einaudi publishing house (for which he worked as an editor from 1949 to 1984), and he even wrote the cover blurb for the Italian edition of Cortázar's *Historias de cronopios y de famas*, published in Italy in 1971. While in Paris, Calvino and Cortázar both performed a number of literary experiments that shared a deep connection with the French writers of the *nouveau roman*, as I will explain in this article by performing a close reading of Cortázar's *Historias de cronopios y famas* [Cronopios and Famas] (first published in

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1962) and *62: Modelo para armar* [62: A Model Kit] (first published in (1968) as well as Calvino's *Le cosmicomiche* [Cosmicomics] (first published in 1968). I will also, however, argue that, at the same time, they both chose to disassociate themselves from the ideas of Alain Robbe-Grillet, the most representative author of the movement, in favour of a more subjective and anthropological conception of literature.

In the 1950s and 1960s, a reinvigorated ambition for exploring new narratives appeared among many Parisian writers. Some of these writers presented themselves as the authors of the *nouveau roman*, a group that wanted to revive the historical avant-garde and, according to the critic Niilo Kauppi, "attempted to create a new literature on the ruins of the old" (Kauppi 2010, 13).[1] Among its members were the novelists Michel Butor, George Perec, Nathalie Sarraute, Claude Simon, and its most pre-eminent member, Robbe-Grillet, who undertook the task of theorizing the movement, devoting a series of essays to building up the principles of the group, later gathered together in *Pour un nouveau roman* [Towards a New Novel] in 1963.[2] It was important for these writers, for instance, not to be thought of as an organization adhering to a manifesto in the mode of Bretonian surrealism or Marinettian Futurism. Their stylistic ideas should instead be understood as a "current" (Robbe-Grillet 1965, 45). Robbe-Grillet expressly states that the term *nouveau roman* "is merely a useful epithet that can be used to include all those writers who are trying to find new forms for the novel" (1965, 45). Nevertheless, he modelled and determined the extent of this stylistic modernization in his essays, and recent studies like Galia Yanoshevsky's "The Significance of Rewriting, or *Pour un nouveau roman* as the Manifesto of the *Nouveau Roman*" agree that his essays shaped a manifesto of the same magnitude as that of their predecessors (Yanoshevsky 2003, 44). Moreover, in many ways, Robbe-Grillet's principal claims are similar to those expressed by the previous European avant-gardists of the 1910s to the 1930s: he argues that being avant-garde means "that [the artist] is somewhat ahead of his time, and that tomorrow the common herd will be writing like he does" (1965, 55). Robbe-Grillet privileges an authorship driven by the investigation of unknown territories that adjusts better to modern times because "if we shut our eyes to our real situation in the present-day world," as he warns, "that situation will in the end prevent our constructing the world and the man of tomorrow" (1965, 45). But that man of tomorrow cannot be built

1 The term *nouveau roman* was coined by Émile Henriot in 1957 in order to stress the novelty of the contemporary French novel.

2 Calder Press published a translation by Richard Howard, cited here as Robbe-Grillet (1965), which also includes texts written between 1963 and 1965. I quote from this and other works in English in the course of the article.

out of nothing, as he/she is part of a determinate history, and that involves carrying a cultural baggage. However, in contrast to the high modernists' methods of inclusion in encyclopaedic works such as James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Robbe-Grillet suggests that the writers of the *nouveau roman* should follow the principle of exclusion; as he explains, a true revolution must involve a constant renewal of literary form, which may force the author to leave learnt history and its representations in the background (1965, 154). Robbe-Grillet insists on avoiding, for instance, the figure of the lonely, weather-beaten literary genius about whom we read repeatedly in the self-representations of the Romantics and who, according to Robbe-Grillet, was still present amongst the first avant-gardes. The writers of the *nouveau roman*, he believed, must reject authorial intrusion as well as sentimental depth in their characters, and look at the world and its objects with new eyes, working towards a creation of presence, a narrative detached from deeper meanings and conclusive interpretations: "In the construction of future novels, gestures and objects will be *there*, before they are *something*" (Robbe-Grillet 1965, 54; emphasis in original). These ideas recall the kino-eye technique used in the *cinéma-vérité* of the 1960s, since they also suggest a narrative that focuses on objects and actions developed in a specific setting rather than on the biography of the characters.[3] The technique takes the omniscient narrator further from the position that he/she had in the naturalist novel and leaves him/her with the sole function of describing, without any particular "subjective" interest, what he/she sees. The author, then, assumes the role of a camera/machine, reproducing in detail what the narrator sees, whereas the narrative and its recipient take paramount importance.

In Robbe-Grillet's novel *La Jalousie* [Jealousy] (first published in 1957), for instance, we can find the dictums that he defends in his essays. In *Jealousy*, the events are related by an omniscient third-person narrator, and it takes an interpretative effort on the part of the reader to realize that the narrator is perhaps, in fact, the jealous husband of the wife referred to only as "A … ." The husband's descriptions of what he sees intermingle with what he speculates, creating a complexity impossible to solve. The following is a good example of this highly descriptive and impersonal narrative seen through the eyes of A …'s husband:

> The shadow of the column, though it is already very long, would have to be nearly a yard longer to reach the little round spot on the flagstones. From the latter runs a thin vertical thread which increases in size as it rises from the concrete substructure. It then climbs up the wooden surface, from lath to lath, growing gradually larger until it reaches the window sill. But its progression is not constant: the imbricated arrangement of the boards intercepts

3 The kino-eye movement was initiated by the Russian documentary-maker Dziga Vertov in the 1930s and developed by various directors of *cinéma-vérité* such as Jean Rouch and Chris Marker.

> its route by a series of equidistant projections where the liquid spreads out more widely before continuing its ascent. On the sill itself, the paint has largely flaked off after the streak occurred, eliminating about three-quarters of the red trace. (Robbe-Grillet 2008, 3)

This novel is the best example of Robbe-Grillet's articulated reflections on writing, where he illustrates what he means by objective narrative and eradication of depth. The results are exceptionally close to the kino-eye that I mentioned above: for the author, things do not have "a beyond"; they are as they appear to us, to our eyes, because reality "just *is*, and that's all there is to it" (Robbe-Grillet 1965, 158; emphasis in original).

Calvino's *Cosmicomics* is a collection of stories that reflects upon the reasoning of the *nouveau roman* writers, the French structuralists, and the studies of semiologists who believed that all the elements of human culture are interconnected through signs that constitute systems or structures. The stories all have as a protagonist Qfwfq, a polymorphous entity that changes shape from story to story. It acts as a metadiegetic narrator that relates its experiences by taking the shape of an amphibian, a dinosaur, a light particle, or another creature or form that Calvino imagined in order to support a story. All the stories of Calvino's *Cosmicomics* start with a paragraph in italics, which often presents the factual discovery of a physical law narrated in scientific style. In the first story, entitled "The Distance of the Moon," for instance, we find the following introduction:

> *At one time, according to Sir Georges H. Darwin, the Moon was very close to the Earth. Then the tides gradually pushed her far away; the tides that the Moon herself causes on the Earth's waters, where the Earth slowly loses energy.* (Calvino 2009, 3; italics in original)

Premises such as these give a rigorous opening to the stories led by Qfwfq. It is almost as if the stories that follow were meant to be illustrations of the scientific veracity of their introductions. Only "as if," though, because when we start reading we quickly realize that we are being transported to quite a different reality. Instead of scientific truth, Calvino unfolds a rather fantastic setting that will leave both the fictionality of the story and the veracity of the introduction suspended. Indeed, due to this scientific language, the *Cosmicomics* have frequently been approached in terms of the genre of science fiction (Cowley 2014). And I would add that the stories are also comparable to Cortázar's *Cronopios and Famas*, in which Cortázar had already depicted strange anthropomorphic characters. The cronopios are, according to Cortázar, "those green prickly humid things" (Cortázar 1999, 113) that develop very humane emotions, as in the short text "A Cronopio's Sadness," where a cronopio feels terribly sad because its watch is slow. The cronopio knows it is late, but less late than the famas (other anthropomorphized creatures), because according to its watch it is 11:15 and on the famas' it is already 11:20. The cronopio then reflects that it has somehow lost a portion of its life, and

feels unhappy and starts crying. Calvino, responsible for the publication of these microstories in Italy, wrote about the Italian edition as follows, praising and defining the book's anthropomorphic and indeterminate characters:

> To say that the *cronopios* are intuition, poetry, the reversal of rules, and that the *famas* are order, rationality, efficiency, would be to impoverish and imprison the psychological complexity and moral autonomy of their universe within theoretical definitions. *Cronopios and Famas* could only be defined by their behaviours. [...] Moreover, thinking about it, you will see that it is with a resolution worthy of the *famas* that *cronopios* are regarded as *cronopios*, and that when *famas* stop being *famas* there are pervaded by a madness no less bewildering than cronopiesque. (Calvino 1997; my translation, italics in original)

Calvino's Qfwfq bears a certain resemblance to the anthropomorphic cronopios. Even the style of Calvino's narrative is similar to that of Cortázar's: precise and clear, avoiding metaphors and lethargic introspections, all seeming to echo the objective writing laid out by Robbe-Grillet. But these echoes do not necessarily mean that Calvino and Cortázar are following Robbe-Grillet's kino-eye technique. On the contrary, Qfwfq and the cronopios depict specific concerns that turn their scientific writing into a parody of both the determinism of science and the dubious objectivity practised by Robbe-Grillet. In the cosmicomic "A Sign in Space," for example, Qfwfq is a light particle whose function is to travel across the empty space of the universe for eternity. This particle, worn-out by its repetitive routine, one day ventures to leave a sign of its existence at a particular point on its familiar orbit. Qfwfq suddenly has the urge to leave this mark because it realizes that a sign is the only way of proving its own existence: "I felt I was going to conquer the only thing that mattered to me, sign and dominion and name" (Calvino 2009, 34). This sign will change everything for Qfwfq, for from then on it will not only travel through space for eternity, but will also achieve "dominion and name." Therefore, from then on its only worry is waiting, impatiently, for the moment it spots the sign again. The problem comes when Qfwfq, having longed to see its sign again, is not quite sure whether the one it sees is the exact one it left. Qfwfq cannot be certain, and concludes that something else, perhaps another light particle, had the same idea and left its own sign too. This realization generates an unbearable anguish similar to that experienced by the cronopio who was wasting its life because its watch was five minutes slow. Qfwfq, despite being a light particle, experiences a comparable human preoccupation regarding issues of identity, something that the characters of Robbe-Grillet's novels would never do.

Many critics have drawn parallels between Cortázar's writing and that of the French *nouveau roman*, especially in regard to his novel *62: A Model Kit*. Steven Boldy, for instance, argues that *62: A Model Kit* "generates a net of episodes in a manner similar to the construction of Robbe-Grillet's novels" (1980, 196). Jaime Alazraki agrees that the novel is "an impersonal drama" (1994, 235; my transla-

tion) that recalls the stylistic precepts of the writers of the *nouveau roman*. In "Mirrors and Labyrinths: Some Comparisons between Cortázar and the *Nouveau Roman*," J. Ann Duncan states that in *62: A Model Kit* Cortázar followed the precepts of the *nouveau roman* to the extent that he became "the most reminiscent [of Latin American writers] of the *nouveau roman* in techniques" (1976, 2). These influences need to be unpacked, however, for they might not be as straightforward as these critics suggest. In an interview, Cortázar claimed that the authors of the *nouveau roman* did not influence him: "the *nouveau roman* as such has not influenced me because, I suppose, neither Robbe-Grillet's nor Butor's techniques have truly important elements for me" (Alazraki 1994, 202; my translation). He read a wide variety of the French *nouveau roman* writers: in his library, we find books like *Les Demoiselles d'Hamilton* (1972), which includes a text by Robbe-Grillet; *Les Fruits d'or* (1963) by Sarraute; *L'Espace littéraire* (1955) by Maurice Blanchot; as well as works by Philippe Sollers and Claude Ollier, to name only a few examples.[4] Moreover, Cortázar begins *62: A Model Kit* by mentioning an author associated with the *nouveau roman*. During the opening pages, where the narrator, Juan, oscillates between first- and third- person narrative, Cortázar includes a reflection upon Juan's decision to have a meal at the famous French restaurant Polidor[5] after buying a book from the local bookshop. Only a few pages later, Juan informs the reader that the author of the mysterious book is Butor, a pillar among the new novelists (Cortázar 2000, 13). The acquisition is *6,810,000 litres d'eau par seconde* (1965), a book that expands upon some observations of Chateaubriand on the Niagara Falls. The word "Chateaubriand" suddenly, and humorously, connects in Juan's mind with the order made by another diner of *château saignant*. What is more, when Juan starts reading Butor's book, the narrator becomes omniscient and extremely descriptive, recalling the accuracy and kino-eye objectivity of the authors of the *nouveau roman*. Cortázar writes that "if Juan hadn't distractedly opened the book by Michel Butor a fraction of time before the customer had given his orders, the components of the thing that tightened his stomach would have remained scattered" (Cortázar 2000, 18). This passage provides a *mise en scène* of the descriptive, *nouveau roman* style. Cortázar adjusts the style of his narrative to the style depicted in Juan's reading, creating a mirroring – and typically ironic – effect. The narrator continues to comment on the reading disinterestedly – "for Juan to open the book and discover without great interest that in 1791 the author of *Atala* and *René* had deigned to contemplate Niagara

4 Books from the "Biblioteca Julio Cortázar," consulted at the Fundación Joan March in Madrid.
5 This restaurant is where Pataphysicians used to schedule their gatherings. Noël Arnaud recounts that "the Collège de 'Pataphysique made the Polidor the special venue for its feasts" (see Hugill 2012, 117).

Falls" (Cortázar 2000, 18) – surely to emphasize a reticence towards the interests and highly descriptive style of the French novelists.

Thus, one could say that, instead of taking in the ideas of authors such as Butor and Robbe-Grillet, in *62: A Model Kit* Cortázar addresses the new writers with scepticism and irony. To expand on this idea, I find it helpful to focus on the contributions by the characters Calac and Polanco, as I think they are of paramount importance for understanding the "impersonal drama" that Alazraki sees in *62: A Model Kit*. Calac is a writer and could sometimes be held responsible for the whole narrative of the novel (although we have seen that Juan also includes self-reflective passages). Polanco, on the other hand, is probably an inventor. In fact, these two characters are never directly described and their actions constantly mirror each other's. Their arguments are impervious to logic; this is just one example:

> "Of all the people I know, you're the biggest cronk," Calac says.
> "And you're the biggest pettifor," Polanco says. "You call me a cronk, sir, but it's obvious that you've never boneyed your face in a mirror."
> "What you're trying to do is start a fight with me, mister," Calac says. (Cortázar 2000, 55)

The rest of the characters participate in such reflections too. There are, for instance, the triangles of Hèlene, Celia, and Austin, and Juan, Marrast, and Nicole, each in unrequited love with another. But it is in the mirroring duality of Calac and Polanco that all these correspondences coincide and become apparent, because they are at the same time mirror and parody of the exchangeable characterization that Cortázar undertakes in *62: A Model Kit*. However, this "impersonal drama" is far from Robbe-Grillet's understanding of objective writing. Calac and Polanco are not describing what they see but performing an identity that is not static; they are constantly on the verge of dissolving, as illustrated in the above passage, where even language plays a part in the dissolution of meaning and common sense.

Qfwfq also has the ability to take up many shapes, and it could be regarded as all characters and none, depending on the action it is involved in. However, something similar also applies to its identity, as Qfwfq is not a character that describes in detail what is going through its senses, but a character that can become anything: a proto-character. Calvino and Cortázar, like Robbe-Grillet, propose a thoughtful, scientific writing instead of the intuitive, automatic method of the surrealists, or the false determinism of the naturalists. However, their aim is not to narrate the outside world as through a kino-eye like Robbe-Grillet, but to create alternative or fantastic scenarios that question the existence of monolithic and authentic identities, while depicting very human preoccupations. The anthropo-

morphism of Qfwfq, in fact, reminds us of fables and folk tales in which animals acquire the power of speech in order to illustrate a message. Indeed, Calvino recalls that "myth is the hidden part of every story" (Calvino 1986a, 18), and thus "it is impossible to think about the world except in terms of human figures – or, more precisely, of human grimaces and human babblings" (Calvino 1986a, 34). To a certain extent, Calvino agrees with Robbe-Grillet's anti-anthropomorphism, but he confesses that he is unable to turn down the primitive and humanist drive. In "Due interviste su scienza e letteratura" [Two Interviews on Science and Literature], for instance, he explained what differentiates his fictions from Robbe-Grillet's:

> I, on the other hand, have fully accepted and vindicated this anthropomorphism as an absolutely basic literary procedure, and one that even before being literary was mythical, linked to one of primitive man's earliest explanations of the world: animism. It is not that Robbe-Grillet's argument didn't convince me. It is just that in the course of writing I have to come to take the opposite route in stories that are a positive delirium of anthropomorphism. (Calvino 1986b, 33–34)

In his essay "Cibernetica e fantasmi" [Cybernetics and Ghosts] (first published in 1967), Calvino also states that the author is "an anachronistic personage, the bearer of messages, the director of consciences, the giver of lectures to cultural bodies" – and he kills him in a Barthean style: "The rite we are celebrating at this moment would be absurd if we were unable to give it the sense of a funeral service" (Calvino 1986a, 16). Both Calvino and Cortázar are writing from a position in which the author has died, but they both introduce this reflection on the discursive level of the narrative, communicating their own stylistic preoccupations.

Moreover, Robbe-Grillet's fictional work is subjected to his theoretical discernments about stylistic concerns, but, although he is working towards a new and depersonalized style, he is still representing someone's view, like that of the jealous husband, something that disrupts his pretended neutrality. Calvino and Cortázar, on the other hand, are aware of this impossible radical objectivity and invest their efforts in interrogating their own approaches and developing a more conscious writing. I agree with Francis Cromphout's thesis that Calvino is attempting a "literature of consciousness as opposed to an objective literature" (Cromphout 1989, 170) – the latter being a reference to the *nouveau roman*. And, as Guido Bonsaver has noted, in the *Cosmicomics*, Calvino, probably due to moving to the French capital, departs from a "zero degree" of literature, but, contrary to the poetics of the writers of the *nouveau roman*, "he does not try to create an objectified and dehumanized world. In contrast, the *Cosmicomics* are full of 'human'" (Bonsaver 1994, 165; my translation). Calvino's and Cortázar's writings reflect a conscious anxiety that falls far from Robbe-Grillet's eradication of depth

and determination to say things as "as they are." In "Il mare dell'oggettività" [The Sea of Objectivity] (first published in 1960) and "Natura e storia nel romanzo" [Nature and History in the Novel] (first published in 1958), Calvino argues in favour of a literature of consciousness in opposition to Robbe-Grillet's objectivity. He criticizes the "flux of objectivity" of the *nouveau roman* in which "the rationalizing and discriminating individual feels caught like a fly by a carnivorous plant" (Daros 1988, 305; my translation). As Calvino states, Robbe-Grillet develops "a vision of the world [...] that lacks religious vibration and suggestions of the anthropomorphic and anthropocentric" (Calvino 1995, 130–131; my translation). Cortázar also comments on humanism from a similar standpoint, although his views are strongly connected to socialism and the idea of the new man. In an account of his life and work published by the magazine *Life*, he says:

> My humanism is socialist, which for me is the highest degree, for it is universal, of humanism; [...]. I believe [...] that the ultimate end of Marxism cannot be other than bring to the human race the instruments to achieve freedom and dignity, which are consubstantial to him; this involves an optimistic view of history [...]. I believe that socialism [...] will turn man into his own self. (Cortázar 1969, 46; my translation)

In *62: A Model Kit*, there is a character that I have not yet mentioned who represents the emergence of a new socialist humanism for Cortázar. This is the mysterious figure "my paredros" – a term introduced by Calac. "My paredros" becomes a kind of semi-character, a friend or "compadre." In Athens, the *paredros* was the person who took on the role of adviser in a political institution. Both understandings seem relevant to *62: A Model Kit*. Cortázar refers to them on numerous occasions, and Juan describes their function as follows:

> my paredros was a routine in the sense that among us there was always something we called my paredros, a term introduced by Calac and which we used without the slightest feeling of a joke because the quality of paredros alluded, as can be seen, to an associated entity, a kind of buddy or substitute or babysitter for the exceptional, and, by extension, a delegating of what was one's own to that momentary alien dignity without losing anything of ours underneath it all, just as any image of the places we had walked could be a delegation of the city, or the city could delegate something of its own. (Cortázar 2000, 20)

The paredros are thus non-existent referents. The theorist of postmodernity Brian McHale suggests that they might be what Roman Jakobson calls shifters: "those elements of language, especially pronouns and other deictics, which have no determinate meaning outside of a particular instance of discourse, their meaning changing (shifting) as the discourse passes from participant to participant" (McHale 1987, 212). McHale indicates that Calac's paredros, Juan's paredros, and anyone's paredros could be referred to depending on who is speaking at the time because the paredros "has no substance; it is merely an empty slot, filled differently each time

it occurs – a long shadow cast by a pronoun" (McHale 1987, 212). Nevertheless, McHale does not venture an analysis that links this substance to the emergence of the new man, which is what I read in the dissolution of a monolithic characterization. Francesco Varanini states that "in the centre there is always the character-man" – in reference to Cortázar – and continues: "but this is a man who knows he cannot control a scenario that is too complex and contradictory, and suffers for his inability to build a better world. He, then, tries to re-elaborate that impediment with parody" (Varanini 2000, 335; my translation). These liquid and changeable characters disclose a critical consciousness that brings together these two authors. They are writers whose literary experiments are inevitably influenced by the French experimental scene, but they are not tempted to follow the stylistic precepts of the latter. The experiments of Calvino and Cortázar reflect on outdated literature with playfulness, seriousness, and ambiguity; in fact, their projects involve rethinking writing strategies and experimentalisms by way of disentangling them from the programmatic avant-garde narratives rooted in originality and authenticity.

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Haun Saussy

“My Idiolect, If I Have One”: Translation in a Single Language

Abstract: Criticism of translations is often framed in terms that derive from a normative definition of languages. “Nativization,” “foreignization,” “correctness,” and “inaccuracy” are terms that affirm the identity of, say, French with itself, and its difference from other languages. But this confidence about identity crumbles when we look more closely at languages –any language – and their speakers. A language may, of course, have an institutionalized norm supported by school systems, dictionaries, grammars, the press, and even a national academy, but the speech of any individual will be more or less discrepant from such norms; moreover, languages accumulate words, sounds, meanings, and structures from other languages over time. If we conceive of languages as never being quite identical with themselves, how are we to think of translation? Through a critique of some interpretive gestures in Heidegger’s famous essay “Das Wort” (from *Unterwegs zur Sprache*), translation and word-borrowing are proposed as two interrelated places “wo das wort gebricht” (Stefan George).

Keywords: hybridity, multilingualism, performatives, poetry, prescriptivism, translation

“My language, if I have one,” said Derrida, “is French,” but then he went on to point out that he had grown up in Algeria hearing Arabic and Berber, living with relatives who spoke Judaeo-Spanish amongst themselves, and that Parisian French was something he learned at school – so his “if I have one” was no mere flutter of modesty, but a sincere autobiographical questioning (Derrida 1998, 1). He then pointed out, in the same essay, that a language is not the sort of thing that anyone “has”; the way to “have” a means of communication is to have it in common with other people, each of whom “has” it differently from oneself; and that is how a linguistic community is assembled. *Communauté inopérante*, *communauté inavouable* (cf. Nancy 1986; Blanchot 1984).

How about this, then, as a follow-on from Derrida’s observation: a “linguistic community” is called thus not although, but because it does not really form a commons, it does not share an identity so much as it has a common outside frontier with other so-called linguistic communities, a frontier which is also porous and dissolving: both inside and outside the frontier, a community is an ongoing struggle over what the commons will be.

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You can take this in a Bakhtinian way – the word is always an answering word (Bakhtin 1981) – or in a sociological way – people compete for prestige in a linguistic field (Bourdieu 1979) – but I would like today to tug on the loose ends of the common definition of a "language," in order to make trouble for some ideas about translation that depend on an overly clear sense of what a language is and does.

A poem by Stefan George, made famous by Martin Heidegger's commentary in *On the Way to Language*, has often been taken to express the priority of language over reference. This positing power of language is held to gleam particularly brightly in its final line: "Kein ding sei wo das wort gebricht." The poem tells, in metre and vocabulary reminiscent of fairy tales, of an adventure with language and meaning. The speaker brings back "to the seam" or border of his country a "wonder from afar or a dream," and waits to learn from "the gray Norn" how it should be called. The Norn, after a long search, replies that no such thing is found "here on the deep earth," and the speaker suddenly watches the "wonder from afar" escape his hand. Thereupon he learns, "mournfully, renunciation": "no thing may be where word breaks off" ("So lernt ich traurig den verzicht: / Kein ding sei wo das wort gebricht"; quoted in Heidegger [1959, 162–163]; the translations of George are my own, but see also Heidegger, trans. Hertz [1971, 60]).

This fable, as explicated by Heidegger, is often taken as evidence of a "linguistic turn," an exhibition of the performative power of language. No longer will the speaker of the poem suppose that things pre-exist words and that words are affixed to things like indifferent labels: rather, the power of language causes a thing to be the thing that it is. The Stefan George poem called "Das Wort" and the Heidegger essay of the same name tell us, it is supposed, something about Language as such. (For exegeses of this kind, see Mehring [1992, 129–130]; Lehnen [2011]; Thomä [2013, 266–267]; Appelhans [2015, 292–297]). The failure of Language opens a gap in Being wherein the Word can dwell. "For poetry is not an expression of experience, but an experience of language" (George, quoted in Lehnen 2011, 37; my translation). What the speaker renounces is a facile, instrumental relation to language, and nothing could be more fitting in Heidegger's opinion: "this [concluding] line makes the word of language, makes language itself bring itself to language, and says something about the relation between word and thing […]. Only where the word for the thing has been found is the thing a thing. Only thus *is* it. […] The word alone gives being to the thing." Or, more closely considered, "something *is* only where the appropriate and therefore competent word [*das geeignete und also zuständige Wort*; Heidegger 1959, 165] names a thing as being, and so establishes the given being as a being" (Heidegger, trans. Hertz 1971, 63; emphasis in original). The legal and bureaucratic resonances of *geeignet* and *zuständig* are noteworthy: as if appealing to the Norn, Heidegger is making an argument from jurisdictional authority. The power to give "being to the thing" that

Heidegger ascribes to language correlates with arguments familiar from Ferdinand de Saussure, Judith Butler, and a host of other representatives of the "linguistic turn" in one form or another. What is wrong with that, as long as we are among those people who live in language, above all poets and writers?

It has always seemed to me that Heidegger and the interpreters of his interpretation advance a little too quickly to the register of Language-as-such, without pausing to ask whether something here might be being said about a particular, local, empirical language, say German. No more than Fruit-as-such does Language-as-such offer itself to our inspection: what we get is apples, oranges, French, English, Wendish, Malay, Kinyarwanda. Is it a universally recognized truth that German is the philosophical language par excellence, or is that a position open to challenge from other languages in which thinking has occurred, and where different constellations of meaning have been recorded? Certainly, local colour surfaces in the details: the whole anecdote happens on the "seam" of the speaker's country, and a – perhaps Wagnerian – Norn pronounces on the fate of the object from afar. Is the fable perhaps a story about the German language specifically, a language that has manifold historical relations with other languages, relations that run the gamut from happy hybridization to exclusion and repression? Might a poet like George, receptive to ideas and forms from France and indebted in particular to Mallarmé, who praised Poe for his power to "give a purer meaning to the words of the tribe" (Mallarmé 1945, 70; my translation), have felt disapproval from the Teutonic Norn? Some of Heidegger's comments follow just such a local pattern. Distancing himself from the view that sees in words merely a means of more or less efficient communication without deep historical roots, he pours scorn on sputnik: "Take the sputnik. This thing, if such it is, is obviously independent of that name which was later tacked on to it. But perhaps matters are different with such things as rockets, atom bombs, reactors and the like" (Heidegger, trans. Hertz 1971, 66). *Sputnik* is self-evidently not a German word. The object it refers to is so radically ungrounded that it must revolve around the planet forever without a home. For Heidegger, technological objects like this have no authenticity, but are fabricated and rashly named by the "hastiness of thoughts" (Heidegger 1959, 165; my translation) of modern technology. His scorn envelops both the artefact and the word. A language that would pick up and appropriate words from nowhere and anywhere, random assemblages of sound like *sputnik*, is the language befitting that "hastiness of thoughts."

Despite Heidegger's innuendo, *sputnik* is not actually extraterrestrial, but Russian. It is not entirely a foreign word either, even for the German speaker, because the Slavic root *put* that forms its core (*s-* "with" + *put* "path" + *-nik* "agent" = "fellow-traveller") derives from the same Indo-European root as German *Pfad*, English *path*, Latin *spatium*, and Greek *pontos*. Boundaries are relative.

The quick passage from the promotion of the German language with its deep roots and artisanal heritage of "poetically preserved" (Heidegger 1959, 172; my translation) words to disparagement of the rootless *sputnik* reminds us that we cannot leap up to the empyrean of Language-as-such before dealing with specific languages and their competition. Empirical languages do not usually have clear borders, nor do they have centres (just ask a dialectologist or diachronic linguist). Although some countries have an academy for the upkeep of the national tongue, prescription always runs far behind description. No Norn passes judgement on the words and things that are to have currency between the non-existent "seams" of German, Spanish, Russian, and so forth. Purity is a repressive ideal. Languages are macaronic.

The hybridity of languages is a consequence of the mobility of human beings. As rare as it must be for an authentic word to precede the thing, the new thing that arrives on the horizon of a linguistic community is often accompanied by an exotic word that names it, and how better to name a truly new thing than with a truly new or imported word? Sputnik may have been the first of its kind, and its kind should bear a far-fetched name in consequence; but it was not long after 1957 that *sputnik* had become an English word. The acceptance of such fellow-travellers is the norm of linguistic development, and always has been.

If we consider languages as shading into one another, historically related or bearing the traces of recent grafts and imprints, what then is translation? You cross the Rhine going eastward and you go in a fraction of a second from a zone where French is spoken, with pronunciation and grammar specified by schoolbooks, broadcasting networks, newspapers, and a French Academy, to a zone where German is spoken, with the corresponding institutions and social behaviours. At any moment, it can be stated which of the zones you are in. That is, perhaps, how it looks from an administrative point of view, where laws and other institutions have to operate uniformly across a whole national jurisdiction, and otherwise are not really performing as they are supposed to. And the national markets for media, the broadcasting entities – France Culture and the Deutsche Welle, or what have you – go along with this fiction of distinct languages spoken exclusively within clear borders.

But think about this as a dialectologist would. On the two sides of the Rhine, or of any border that can be crossed, you have not a clear division of languages but a shading of local patterns of speech, a *patois alsacien* and a *rheinische Mundart*, a German-influenced French and a French-influenced German. Similarly for the Spanish–French border, the Austrian–Italian border, and so on. You might think that it is like being between two radio stations, each emitting its own signal, and the signal getting stronger or weaker as you approach or depart from the capital city. But dialect is rarely so uniform and predictable a gradation as that. Mass media such as public schools, radio, and television have altered the linguistic land-

scape; people are more mobile than they were before; the idea that language is firmly rooted in place and can be charted on a map applies ever more loosely. My idiolect, which I might begin by thinking is the thing I absolutely possess with no possibility of alienation, turns out to be one of those conditional things about which I can only say "mine, if I have one."

My point is that the simplistic representation of languages as unbroken jurisdictions, as self-contained zones of homogeneous code, as clearly differentiated from one another, as *somebody's*, lies behind the terminology we see used in most current translation theory: nativization vs foreignization, the norm vs departure from the norm, the ethical relationship between self and other. I think such terms give us a misleading clarity about the task translators have before them. And once we reject these simplistic ideas about language, we should question the translation theories built out of them.

Let me start with the ethics of translation, since that is such a powerful term. As early as the 1980s, Antoine Berman denounced the "egocentric" mode of translation, in which whatever foreignness inheres in the text to be translated is suppressed so that the end product is maximally user-friendly (Berman 1999, 27–29). This amounts to a betrayal of the goal of translation, which for Berman is to go out and encounter strangeness and then to report on it in a way that does not deny its difference from one's own language and culture. Fair enough, I say; but "strangeness" is already an egocentric term, it makes sense only with reference to a home base, and presumably that home base in a language and culture is something one shares with others. To translate *The Tale of Genji* in a way that will make it easy for speakers of English or German to see some beauty in that novel is not necessarily a selfish thing to do. One could even play the ethical card another way, and argue that a highly scholarly translation that directly emulates as many features of the Japanese text as possible is egocentric in terms of the difference between the highly educated public able to appreciate it, and the broader public, not necessarily specializing in the institutional and social history of East Asia, that might nonetheless be tempted into reading *Genji* by a less rebarbative translation.

The avowed aim of many theorists of translation is to prevent the "violence of translation" and in particular to stand athwart the tide of Anglo-globalism. They view foreignizing translation or the dictionary of untranslatables as making

> a strategic cultural intervention in the current state of world affairs, pitched against the hegemonic English-language nations and the unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others. Foreignizing translation in English can be a form of resistance against ethnocentrism and racism, cultural narcissism and imperialism, in the interests of democratic geopolitical relations. (Venuti 1995, 20)

That is all well and good. But those of us who deal more persistently with other cultures, who are far enough inside their jurisdiction to discover their chauvinism as well as our own, or who deal with texts and translations that are older than, say, one hundred and fifty years, are apt to find this mission statement not particularly helpful. It is so prescriptive that it fails to be descriptive; it is so wary of universalizing that it is not concerned to make itself functional outside its immediate present-day context. For me, this is a serious flaw, and I invite you to return to the scene of translation, in all cultures, in all recorded pasts, in order to find out from the testimony of those who were there what translation brought about and what interests it served. In *Translation as Citation* (Saussy 2017), I present an argument about what translation has done in relatively remote times and places – to wit, China between the third century CE and the early twentieth century – and consider translations done not only to incorporate the foreign thing but to project the native thing into a foreign space. I find in these cross-linguistic borrowings a history of seventeen hundred years of sputnik-making.

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Barbara Seidl

Operations of Silence: Examining Translingual Borderlands

Abstract: In a time of geographical mobility and constant transnational border-crossings, multilingualism has become a widely discussed topic in literary theory. Usually the focus is placed on multilingual practices such as code-switching or self-translation rather than on gaps that arise from untranslatability. Taking as its starting point a TEDxRíodelaPlata talk by the writer Anna Kazumi Stahl, this article argues not only that there are countless reasons why an author might choose any language as a means for creative expression, but also that writing a monolingual text can create a conflict between a homogeneous language system and a heterogeneous cultural reality. While silence can convey distinct meanings depending on factors such as communication situation, personal experience, and cultural background, it can also be regarded as a marker for something that cannot or should not be translated. Inhabiting a borderland where monolingual boundaries are constantly being transcended, the metaphor of silence in Anna Kazumi Stahl's *Flores de un solo día* and Shirley Geok-lin Lim's *Among the White Moon Faces* may well serve both as a symbol of an identity unrestricted by notions of culture and nation, and as an invitation for readers to reflect on the limits of (mono)lingual expression.

Keywords: Anna Kazumi Stahl, border-crossings, multilingual literature, Shirley Geok-lin Lim, silence, translingual literature

In her TEDxRíodelaPlata talk of 2013, the writer Anna Kazumi Stahl emphasizes the important role of chance as a determinant in our lives. By "chance," Stahl means the paths that brought together her German father and Japanese mother, as well as those that lead to her own decision to move to Argentina and subsequently write her works of fiction in Spanish, which is her fourth language (Stahl 2013). Stahl is a prime example of a writer who migrated to a foreign language not because of any obvious political, personal, or economic reason, but because she could not choose between the languages she grew up with. Her choice of language, she claims, has helped her gain distance from her roots and has enabled her to look at things from an outsider's perspective (Stahl 2013). By purposefully choosing a language that is not connected to her personal past – a language that might also make her work widely unavailable to audiences in the non-Spanish-speaking world – the author challenges conventional theories of language as a

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marker of social identity. She also raises new questions for the study of multilingual literature, as the field's main focus still lies on speakers of various languages who write in English.

Taking this idea as its starting point, this article seeks to raise questions about challenges facing multilingual authors of monolingual texts, as well as examining the limitations imposed upon them by language itself and the possible meanings silence can convey in their texts. Juxtaposing the mute character in Anna Kazumi Stahl's *Flores de un solo día* (2002) with Shirley Geok-lin Lim's autobiographical notes in *Among the White Moon Faces* (1996), this analysis aims to explore whether silence can serve as a code when language lacks the accurate words to express what an author is trying to convey.

1 The problematic and distinct meanings of the prefix "trans-" in the terms "transcultural" and "translingual"

In his introduction to *Switching Languages: Translingual Writers Reflect on Their Craft*, Steven G. Kellman argues that writers who choose to write in a language other than their native tongue "flaunt their freedom from the constraints of the culture into which they happen to be born" (Kellman 2003, ix). While he describes the process of migrating to another language for creative expression as a rebellious act that might provide authors with more artistic freedom, Kellman's remark calls for a more critical reflection on the term "culture" and for a closer examination of the differences between the dynamics of culture and language, and the problems that might result from those differences. Although there are manifold definitions of what the notion of culture entails, it is generally understood as the shared practices, values, and meanings of a society, while cultural identity is often defined through a shared other.[1] In times of globalization, mobility, and constant transnational border-crossings, the limitations of this understanding of the concept have become less obvious because social values are subject to constant renegotiation. However, the term "transcultural" could also prove to be problematic in that it assumes an ideal condition of globally shared values, while many culturally diverse authors such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie or Yoko Tawada point out issues of misunderstanding, discrimination, and the

1 For some core concepts, see Spencer-Oatey (2012).

difficulties of expression in situations where their personal background makes them a minority.

As James Clifford suggested, "if we rethink culture and its science, anthropology, in terms of travel, then the organic, naturalizing bias of the term culture – seen as a rooted body that grows, lives, and dies, etc. – is questioned" (1997, 25). Taking this argument a step further, we could replace the term "travel" with "movement." Favouring the spatial concept of routes as the determinant for the creation of cultural identity and accepting culture in the sense of what Stuart Hall has called a "fluid" condition (2003, 224–225),[2] it seems more accurate to consider culture as a notion that undergoes constant changes resulting from the decisions individuals take rather than being a static construct which is defined by national boundaries. While the prefix "trans-" in "transcultural" advocates a globalization of values, the concept of translingualism, according to Steven G. Kellman (2000, ix–x), refers to the ability to express oneself in and across multiple verbal systems.

In times of constant transnational movement, there are countless reasons for why an author might cross national or linguistic borders. In fact, long before the rise of international virtual communities, streams of transnational labour and student migration existed, in addition to groups of people seeking refuge from war and persecution. All of these cases have resulted in close relations between people from different backgrounds who speak different languages. Although the majority of translingual writers have chosen to exchange their mother tongues for world languages such as English or French, there are also some who have opted to use less widespread languages, such as Dutch or Portuguese.[3] The increasing number of multilingual writers challenges the concepts of national literature, migrant literature, and world literature. Their works do not necessarily fit into the genre of "world literature" as many of their names are relatively unknown, and their works do not succeed in crossing many borders in order to reach readers in other parts of the world. Equally, writers who decide to write in their second, third, or fourth languages are not necessarily always migrants either. Instead, they often regard themselves – in the words of Shirley Geok-lin Lim – as "deterritorialized" (quoted in Quayum 2003, 89), composing what Ottmar Ette has described as "literature with no permanent residence" (Ette 2004, 88–96; my translation).

2 Referring to the (post-)colonial Caribbean experience, Hall describes cultural identity as "a matter of becoming," a constant transformation in the course of the "continuous 'play' of history, culture and power" (2003, 224–225).

3 Some examples to be mentioned here are the Somali Dutch-American writer Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the Chinese-Dutch writer Lulu Wang, and the Ukrainian-Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector.

Yet, despite geographical mobility being a common aspect of modern life, the idea of a necessary connection between language and cultural identity, in the sense of a sole "mother tongue" – a concept that has been promoted mainly out of nationalist interests (Yildiz 2012, 6–10) – still presents a significant obstacle to a more open approach to multilingualism. As their languages have allowed them to experience more than one culture, polyglot authors often find themselves in a borderland between places to which they feel connected to a greater or lesser degree. Within this borderland, their several languages become one unique tongue whose wide range of expressions transcends the limits of monolingual boundaries.

However, when multilingual speakers try to express themselves through monolingual speech, they often find themselves lost in a gap where one language fails to express things accurately and other languages cannot be used to express them. Thus, in order to accommodate an audience that is unfamiliar with some of their other tongues, multilingual authors of monolingual texts sacrifice a good deal of the range covered by their authentic creative voices. Yet the negotiation between the authors' multiple languages often results in the construction of their own individual systems of communication. Rather than being a stable condition, the gap that challenges the author's means of expression can appear or disappear, increase or decrease, corresponding to each specific situation. It is, above all, the conflict between a homogeneous language system and a heterogeneous cultural reality that challenges multilingual writers to innovate creatively in order to express the inexpressible.[4]

Following the Bakhtinian theory of the hybrid utterance (Bakhtin 1981, 304), the process of code-switching, often found in Chicano and African literature, juxtaposes two different languages within a single text.[5] By producing sentences that are neither entirely one language nor the other, this method not only suggests that the author's identity can be read as what Itamar Even-Zohar has defined as a polysystem – a structured whole whose pieces are both independent and hierarchically linked to each other (Even-Zohar 2012) – but also reveals the importance of the writer's other tongues.

In many contemporary works of fiction, such as novels by young African writers like Tendai Huchu, the phenomenon of translanguaging has become even more common than code-switching. The term, which represents a relatively new approach to bilingualism, was defined by Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Wallis Reid as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without

4 In order to describe alternatives to monolingual expression, a variety of terms have emerged – including "postmonolingualism" (Yildiz 2012), "plurilingualism" (Zarate, Levy, and Kramsch 2008), and "code-meshing" (Young and Martinez 2011).

5 For a more detailed study of code-switching, see Gardner-Chloros and Weston (2013).

regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (Otheguy, García, and Reid 2015, 283). Unlike code-switching, the alternating use of two or more different languages is unintentional and does not follow a hierarchical order, but rather represents the intuitive output of a multilingual mind. Other writers have felt the need to point out the necessity of self-translation by adding semantic layers. The possibilities range from the translation of cultural references, such as the Nigerian proverbs in the works of Chinua Achebe, to metatextual references, to descriptions of the physical exertion of the body when using different languages, as demonstrated in the works of Yoko Tawada. As a consequence of the constant movement between language worlds, writers pick up new aesthetic practices that can no longer be communicated through monolingual speech.

The juxtaposition of different languages offers an ideal way for multilingual authors to solve the conflicts that arise from untranslatable emotions, situations, and expressions; but, at the same time, the perception of the resultant hybrid texts could prove to be problematic for readers who are not familiar with a similar degree of cultural or linguistic mobility. While an author can provide metareferences in the form of translation to help readers interpret multilingual utterances, there always remains the problem of untranslatability. If it is indeed, as Friedrich Schleiermacher believed, the case that "not a single word in one language will correspond perfectly to a word in another" (2012, 46), translation can hardly ever be anything more than a paraphrase. Even more than that, explanations provided by an author could be read as an attempt as to shape the reader's interpretation. Ideally, multilingual writers would, as Steven Kellman proposes (2000, 16), "transcend language in general and utter everything." The only way to truly achieve this, Kellman continues, would be to find a way "to pass beyond words to silence and truth" (2000, 16).

2 Interpreting silence

Kellman's plea for a way of transcending language in order to provide writers with a wider, if not endless, range of expression refers to an ideal communication situation in which silence is interpreted by every reader in exactly the way it was intended by the author. However, while silence often arises out of the void where a term or idea cannot be accurately translated from one language into another, not speaking can also convey distinct meanings depending on factors such as a person's personal experience or cultural background. Thus, silence can be interpreted as politeness, a lack of important things to say, a means of saving face or

of intimidating, or a sign of respect. In addition, even if there are no actual words, the silence has to be pointed out by other characters or the narrator for the reader to actually become aware of it. Depending on the markers provided in the text, the reader is free to interpret the silence on the basis of their own individual expectations and experience or the guidance provided by the author.

The following analysis of Anna Kazumi Stahl's *Flores de un solo día* and Shirley Geok-lin Lim's memoir *Among the White Moon Faces* aims to compare two concepts of silence in the works of translingual authors, both of whom, although rather different in their approach, explore the possibilities of silence as an alternative to self-translation.

2.1 Anna Kazumi Stahl, *Flores de un solo día* (2002)

In *Flores de un solo día*, Anna Kazumi Stahl explores the expressive possibilities of silence through the protagonist's mother, Hanako, who has lost her ability to communicate with others as a result of a serious fever she had as a child. The fever could be read as an allegory for the trauma she suffered from being separated from her family at the age of seven during World War II. As a consequence of her experiences, she cannot find words to describe what she feels.

Repeatedly, it is mentioned that Hanako lives in her own universe. It is suggested that isolating herself from the outside world makes it easier for her to deal with her inner feelings. She is described as totally absorbed in her silence to the point of laughing without a sound. The isolation is mirrored in Hanako's reluctance to leave the house. Almost to the degree of agoraphobia, she gets extremely stressed when she has to go outside. Yet whenever she manages to build up an emotional connection with another person, her condition improves: she seems more relaxed leaving the house and also interacts more with her environment. With Hanako, Anna Kazumi Stahl not only proposes that silence helps the character to become more connected with her inner self; she also emphasizes the connection between language, mobility, and interaction. When the protagonist, Aimée, travels back to the US to relearn the language of her childhood, her mother, Hanako, isolates herself in the closed space of her home as well as under the cloak of her muteness.

Although Aimée travels from Buenos Aires to New Orleans looking for her roots, seeking to trace her family's history by questioning people who seem to know answers but are reluctant to provide them, in the end it is her mute mother who helps her find the key to her identity. Contrary to the belief of others, Hanako turns out to be capable of communicating, despite being unable to speak. Through little clues she includes in her ikebana creations, the ancient Japanese

art of flower arrangement which provides the family income, Hanako guides her daughter on her quest to find her father.

By reflecting on the character's silence from various perspectives, even to the point of uncovering Hanako's wordless voice, the author not only exposes the problematic ambiguity of possible meanings that are read into silence but also demonstrates how easily non-verbal communication can be dismissed when one is too focused on the spoken word. In addition, the fact that, throughout the novel, Hanako's muteness is repeatedly read by others as a mental disability stresses the connection that is often drawn between language skills and intellectual capacity, as is manifested amongst other things in the simplistic way some people communicate with foreigners. Despite her seeming very confident in her reclusive life, Hanako's silence feels passive, mirroring the stoic way in which she accepts her destiny, allowing her mother-in-law to send her away after the death of her husband. This silent obedience is juxtaposed with sudden fits of rage and a secret life that is eventually uncovered by her daughter. Only through her Japanese flower arrangements can Hanako finally find a means to help Aimée tell her story; this is particularly remarkable because it allows her to communicate without words and yet still in terms of her own cultural background.

2.2 Shirley Geok-lin Lim, *Among the White Moon Faces* (1996)

In her memoir *Among the White Moon Faces*, the Asian-American writer Shirley Geok-lin Lim describes how she barricaded herself as a child behind her silence. Her refusal to speak, she concludes, served her as a kind of self-protection. Growing up in a large family where two different languages were spoken, the future author felt torn between the Hokkien Chinese of her father's family – a language of exclusion, which marked her out as a foreigner in her home town – and the Malay of the assimilated Chinese, which was her mother's native tongue. When Lim was eight years old, her mother abandoned the family, and in doing so took away her daughter's mother tongue. The author soon found refuge in English, a language which was unattached to her complicated roots. The stories she read in the new language helped her escape a reality where she felt unwanted. As she could not go so far as to use the new language in her interactions with others, she found herself trapped between the language she could not speak and the other languages she did not want to speak. With her mother absent and the rest of her family speaking a language she refused to accept as her own, Lim intended to create her own parallel world in English. Yet, she concludes, "their loud quarrels and laughter isolated me in a way that silence and books could not defend me"

(Lim 1996, 292). It becomes clear that the author regards her own silence as a (not always effective) tool for self-protection.

When later, as an adult, she moved to the US, where she was able to use the language of her choice, she was constantly reminded of the fact that she was not a native speaker. Her non-native pronunciation became particularly noticeable when she started teaching classes on English literature. Again, as Lim describes in her novel *Sister Swing* (2006), silence became an alternative to "the lip-clopping sentences that couldn't be lightened with American vowels" (Lim 2006, 181). Although her accent labelled her as a foreigner, her silence left her origins unknown. "I came to exercise a discipline of self-abnegation, observing, as it were, monastic rules of silence and abstinence" (Lim 1996, 349), as she puts it in her memoir. What is remarkable is that both situations – Lim's refusal to speak Hokkien Chinese as a child as well as her hesitation to speak English as an adult – present silence as a conscious act while at the same time reflecting on it from two different perspectives. The silence of her time as a young girl in the house of her paternal grandfather isolated the author from her family, but it also protected her from choosing between the languages of her parents to which she felt attached and unattached in equal measure; whereas the silence into which she escaped during her education in the US was experienced as an act of self-abnegation.

2.3 Silence as a neutral meeting place

As Joy Kogawa puts it in her novel *Obasan*, "there is a silence that cannot speak. There is a silence that will not speak" (1981, 1). While the mute mother in Anna Kazumi Stahl's novel is physically unable to speak, she succeeds in transcending language by creating her own non-verbal means of communication through the art of flower arrangement. By transferring this tradition of her Japanese youth into her life in Argentina, Hanako has created a place for herself within a different cultural environment without having to give up her roots. However, this otherness separates her from her surroundings, and this exclusion is stressed through her uneasiness to leave the house. The physical exclusion and the barriers to communication can both be read as metaphors for her being an outsider. Hanako's isolation in Buenos Aires is juxtaposed with her secret love affair in New Orleans, which is gradually uncovered by her daughter. While her working space functions more as a refuge which allows her to blank out her environment, the house where she used to meet her lover can be considered a place where she could not only express but also exchange ideas. In the sense of a silence that cannot speak, Hanako's muteness can be interpreted as a reaction to the trauma of double displacement through separation from her family and then from her lover.

Silence can be understood as a metaphor for exclusion, but at the same time it can also be regarded as a means of resistance in the sense of refusing to use a foreign tongue in order to avoid exclusion, as is described in Shirley Geok-lin Lim's memoir. Both her father's native Hokkien Chinese in Malaysia and her accented English in the US would have highlighted her as the member of a minority, a marginalization she intended to resist. In addition, silence can also be the marker for a state of transition during which new layers of identity have to be negotiated. When, following the disappearance of her mother, Lim refrains from speaking her father's language, her silence can be regarded a liminal stage which marks not only the author's passage to adulthood but also an identity crisis which eventually leads to her choice of a whole new language for herself (English). One might even conclude that, while language can be regarded as an allegory for the negotiation of culture, silence can serve as a symbol of an identity undefined.

Both authors make use of silence in order to stress the processes of identity negotiation, particularly with regard to entering translingual borderlands, instead of attempting self-translation between the cultures and languages that are entailed by their origins as well as by the paths their lives take.

3 Conclusion

In giving space to the untranslatable, or inexpressible, by providing various layers of possible meaning, silence could be understood as an even wider playground for heteroglossia where readers have to work in order to uncover meaning in silence.[6] Throughout their interpretations of the text, not only do the layers of the author's identity come into play; readers' backgrounds also contribute to their understanding. While readers are also involved in the interpretation of different cultural codes in works that include translations, due to the fact that they have to translate the idiosyncratic symbols of multilingual texts in order to make meaning out of them, silence offers greater freedom. It serves as a marker for something that is absent rather than a guideline for interpretation. The absence of something that the writer struggles to express because of emotional ties and experiences linked to another language system, can also transmit a stronger

6 While the Bakhtinian concept of heteroglossia refers to the coexistence of different language varieties, it could be argued that there is an underlying conflict of different languages in texts written by multilingual authors – a discourse which readers will be able to assimilate according to their own experiences of distinct language systems. For Bakhtin's view of heteroglossia, see Bakhtin (1981, 269–360).

sense of the inadequacy of monolingual expression. Thus, non-speech turns into "cannot-speak": the writer fails or refuses to translate the contradiction between multilingual thinking and monolingual writing.

In the search for a fluid language which can express all the layers of a multilingual writer's identity accurately, silence can provide a space for turning points in the process of reflecting and becoming, almost like a multilingual contact zone. As Ottmar Ette has emphasized, literature per se is not bound to a permanent residence, neither in a spatial nor in a linguistic sense (Ette 2004, 184). In a time of constant national and linguistic border-crossings, there is a growing body of work by transnational authors waiting to be explored. Their movement between languages demonstrates both the freedom of geographical mobility and the price it inevitably entails.

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Miloš Zelenka

Ein tschechoslowakischer Beitrag zur Theorie der Weltliteratur

Abstract: Die tschechoslowakische Literaturwissenschaft leistete einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Theorie der Weltliteratur in Gestalt des slowakischen Theoretikers Dionýz Ďurišin (1929–1997), der die Kategorie Weltliteratur mit Hilfe von Begriffen wie „interliterarische Gemeinschaft“ oder „interliterarischer Zentrismus“ definierte. In seiner Monografie *Was ist Weltliteratur?* beschrieb er drei damit einhergehende Bedeutungen: 1. die Summe von Nationalliteraturen; 2. eine qualitativ wertende Auswahl innerhalb einzelner Literaturen; 3. ein interliterarisches Netz, das Beziehungen und Kontexte einbezieht. Ďurišins bevorzugtes Konzept der Weltliteratur als literaturtheoretischem Phänomen wurde in zahlreichen Werken der westlichen Komparatistik aufgegriffen (C. Guillén, P. Casanova; H. Bhabha; etc.) Vor allem der US-amerikanische Komparatist D. Damrosch führte diese Idee in seiner Monografie *What is World Literature?* (2003) weiter, in der er Weltliteratur nicht als Kanon, sondern als ästhetische Rezeption von Texten, zum Beispiel durch Übersetzungen, definiert.

Keywords: Czech and Slovak Comparative Studies, World Literature, Frank Wollman, Dionýz Ďurišin, Theory of Interliterariness, Structuralist Tradition

Die böhmischen Länder gehörten schon in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts zu den wirtschaftlich und kulturell am meisten entwickelten Regionen der Habsburger Monarchie und waren bemüht, auch eine entsprechende politische Macht zu gewinnen. Der Prozess der tschechischen nationalen Wiedergeburt – so sieht es auch T.G. Masaryk – wurde im Jahre 1918 mit der Entstehung der Tschechoslowakischen Republik vollendet. Der gemeinsame Staat der Tschechen und Slowaken wurde oft als eine „Bewegung der Philologen“ verstanden (es handelt sich um einen Begriff der französischen Slawistik – A. Denis 1921, A. Mazon 1933). Hier entspringt das Interesse an der Literatur, die als Kompensation für politische Aktivitäten diente. Gerade die Bemühungen, die nationale Literatur in einen breiteren interliterarischen Prozess einzugliedern und ihre wirkliche Bedeutung zu zeigen, führten am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts zur Entwicklung der Komparatistik. In diesem Kontext funktionierte die literarische Komparatistik als eine philologische Wissenschaft, die in der Epoche des Positivismus die Beziehungen der so genannten großen und kleinen (im Sinne von nicht entwickelten) Literaturen objektiv formulieren sollte, und zwar als Prozess einer gegenseitigen Beeinflussung und Koexistenz, doch nicht als einer mechanischen Unterordnung.

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Mit großer Vereinfachung sind in der Geschichte der tschechischen Komparatistik seit dem Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts zwei Entwicklungslinien zu unterscheiden. Die erste Linie hatte eine slawistische Orientierung und verstand die Komparatistik als Bestandteil der Literaturgeschichte, die in einem übernationalen Kontext realisiert wird, und in der die historische Poetik, die Untersuchung von literarischen Formen und Strukturen die Kernproblematik darstellt. Im Allgemeinen herrschte hier die einheitliche Meinung, dass die moderne vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft – abgesehen von den konkreten benutzten Arbeitsverfahren – eine autonome Disziplin darstellt, die sich mit internationalen Literaturbeziehungen beschäftigt, respektive die einzelnen Genres aus verschiedenen nationalen Literaturen vergleicht. Diese morphologische Orientierung, die im Formalismus und in der strukturalen Ästhetik ihre Inspiration findet, öffnete sich auch später den verschiedensten theoretischen Impulsen. Ihre institutionelle Verankerung fand diese Entwicklungslinie in der Brünner komparatistischen Schule, die an der Masaryk-Universität in der mährischen Metropole Brünn (tschechisch Brno) die führende Persönlichkeit der tschechischen Komparatistik Frank Wollman (1888–1969) repräsentierte. Diese Linie richtete ihre Untersuchungen von der genetisch-kontaktologischen Komparatistik zur Typologie sowie zur Ausnutzung verschiedener Impulse der Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaft – doch immer wurde die vergleichende Methode mit dem genologischen Herantreten verbunden.

Aus der russischen Komparatistik und aus der tschechischen Slawistik der Zwischenkriegszeit, vor allem aus den Reflexionen des strukturell orientierten Frank Wollmans, der unter dem Begriff Weltliteratur eine morphologische Komparation von Modellen und Syntax der literarischen Werke verstanden hat, schöpfte der slowakische Theoretiker Dionýz Ďurišin. Auch das Nachdenken von V. M. Žirmunskij bedeutete eine große Inspiration für Ďurišin. Žirmunskij unterscheidet zwei Arten von literarischen Gemeinsamkeiten: genetische Beziehungen und typologische Zusammenhänge, die von Einflüssen und Kontakten unabhängig sind. Ďurišin entwickelte diese Gliederung weiter. In das Gebiet der genetischen Beziehungen hat er Allusion, Entlehnung und Adaptation eingegliedert, wobei die Kontakte intern oder extern sein könnten. Im Gebiet der typologischen Zusammenhänge unterschied Ďurišin die gesellschaftlich-typologischen Zusammenhänge. Genetisch-kontaktartige Beziehungen und typologische Zusammenhänge verstand er als Formen des interliterarischen Prozesses. Methodologisch ging Ďurišin von der historischen Poetik aus, die er mit der Klassifikation von Richtungen und Stilen als Ausgangspunkt für eine historische Periodisierung der Weltliteratur verbunden hat. Mitte der 1980er Jahre hat Ďurišin seine Vorstellung der literarischen Komapatistik umgewertet. Nach und nach arbeitete er an der Theorie der Interliterarität. Er konzentrierte sich eindeutig auf die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Weltliteratur. Der Begriff „litera-

rische Komparatistik“ schien ihm unpassend zu sein und so begann er, ihn nur in einem begrenzten historischen Sinne zu verstehen.

In diesem Zusammenhang ist zu betonen, dass die methodologischen Fragen des komparatistischen Fachbereiches, insbesondere nach der Kategorie der Weltliteratur, sich nur die erste, slawistische Linie gestellt hat. Die erste Generation dieser Linie – Jiří Polívka, Jan Máchal, Matija Murko, Václav Tille und andere – schuf in dem Zeitraum von den 1890er Jahren bis zu den 1920er Jahren zahlreiche literaturgeschichtlichen Synthesen. Die Autoren trugen zu einer vergleichenden Auffassung der slawischen Literaturen bei – diese Literaturen verstanden sie als Bestandteil der Weltliteratur, wo die gegenseitigen Ost-West-Beziehungen eine Grundlage bilden sollten. Die Betonung der folkloristischen Studien führte zur Festlegung einer neuen komparativen Disziplin – der Thematologie (Stoffgeschichte). Diese Bemühungen fanden ihren Ausdruck in ausführlichen internationalen Katalogen von Sujets und Motiven (J. Polívka). Die für diese Bemühungen oft benutzte Bezeichnung „Positivismus“ scheint nicht korrekt zu sein – es handelte sich eher um kulturgeschichtlich orientierte Forschungen, die in der Textinterpretation ein solides Studium von Quellen zum Ausgangspunkt hatten. Zu den schwachen Seiten dieser Linie gehörten auf der einen Seite die Unterschätzung methodologischer Fragen der Komparatistik, auf der anderen Seite die Reduktion des ästhetischen Aspekts der literarischen Texte.

Die zweite Generation der Komparatisten reifte in den 1930er Jahren heran (J. Horák, O. Fischer, M. Szyjkowski). In ihren bedeutendsten Persönlichkeiten (René Wellek und Frank Wollmann) synthetisierte diese Generation zahlreiche Erkenntnisse der älteren kulturgeschichtlichen Schule mit einem strukturell funktionalistischen Standpunkt des Prager linguistischen Kreises. Der amerikanische Komparatist tschechischen Ursprungs René Wellek verkörperte in seinem berühmten Werk *Theory of Literature* (1949, gemeinsam mit A. Warren) und in seinem monumentalen Projekt *A History of Modern Criticism 1750–1950 I–VIII* (1955–1992) auf eine ideale Art und Weise den Prager Strukturalismus, den deutschen Neoidealismus Diltheys und die Phänomenologie Ingardens. Die Analyse der philosophischen Ausgangspunkte Welleks problematisiert die These von einem Widerspruch zwischen der psychologisierenden Linie der tschechischen Literaturwissenschaft und dem strukturell technologischen Herantreten.

Frank Wollman, der auch Mitglied des Prager linguistischen Kreises war, ging ähnlich wie Wellek aus dem Funktionalismus und aus einer phänomenologischen Auffassung der Form hervor. Wollmans Konzept der sogenannten Eidologie bedeutete eine morphologische Untersuchung der Genres mit Berücksichtigung genetischer Einflüsse und typologischer Analogien. Schon in der Zwischenkriegszeit schuf Wollman ein spezifisches Modell der slawischen Literaturen, das auf dem morpho-

logischen Prinzip basiert. Wollman hat sich die Frage gestellt, ob die slawischen Literaturen eine autonome Einheit im Rahmen der Weltliteratur bilden oder ob sie isoliert existieren. Damit polemisierte Wollman gegen die deutsche nationalsozialistische Literaturwissenschaft (K. Bitner und J. Pfitzner), die versuchte, eine biologische Auffassung der Weltliteratur durchzusetzen, nach der in einem lebenden Organismus der Weltliteratur einzelne, verschieden wichtige Nationalliteraturen kreisen. Wollman behauptete dagegen, dass die Nationalliteraturen keine natürliche Grundlage der Weltliteratur bilden. In die Weltliteratur sollten also nicht die Nationalliteraturen als Ganzheiten eintreten, sondern „einzelne Formen in ihren strukturellen Beziehungen". So gelangte Wollman zu der morphologischen Auffassung der Weltliteratur als Komplex von Formen und Strukturen überregionaler und überzeitlicher Bedeutung. Wellek und Wollman – im Unterschied zu J. Mukařovský – rehabilitierten das Prinzip der strukturellen Ästhetik für die vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft. Beide repräsentierten im Prager linguistischen Kreis die Strukturalisten mit einem stärkeren Interesse an Literaturgeschichte.

Die moderne slowakische Komparatistik entsteht in der Zwischenkriegszeit und wurzelt im tschechischen Milieu, weil Literaturwissenschaftler wie Frank Wollman und Jan Mukařovský nach 1918 an der Komenský-Universität in Bratislava tätig waren. Trotzdem entfernte sich die slowakische Komparatistik nach und nach von den tschechischen Inspirationsquellen und suchte programmatisch nach neuen Ausgangspunkten, nach Zusammenhängen mit modernen theoretischen Trends. Insbesondere die Arbeiten von Mikuláš Bakoš (1914–1972), dem Bewunderer des Prager linguistischen Kreises, fanden ihre Inspiration im russischen Formalismus, in der Phänomenologie und auch im Wiener Neopositivismus.

In der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts bildete die slowakische Komparatistik – neben den morphologischen Aspekten – eine spezifische Beziehung zu kommunikativen und hermeneutischen Modellen, die sie in einer Reihe von Themenbereichen wie vergleichende Stilistik (F. Miko), vergleichende Versologie (V. Turčány) oder vergleichende Genologie (J. Hvišč) schöpferisch entwickelte. Diese Linie mündete in die Methodologie der so genannten Nitraner Schule, die sich auf der Achse Genologie – Kommunikationstheorie – Translatologie bewegt. Dieser Problematik widmete sich Anton Popovič, ursprünglich der wissenschaftliche Aspirant von F. Wollman. Man kann hier auch das ästhetisch-anthropologische Konzept des Wahrnehmens der Kunst von dem Slavisten aus Nitra Andrej Červeňák anführen, der das semiotische Modell der Literatur als Synthese von Aktivitäten eines schöpferischen Individuums unter den Aspekten der Natursphäre (Genotyp), der sozialen Sphäre (Fenotyp) und der geistigen Sphäre (Nootyp) konstituierte.

Die andere Linie der modernen slowakischen Komparatistik stellen die Bemühungen des weltbekannten Literaturwissenschaftlers Dionýz Ďurišin (1929–1997) dar. Er hatte sich von der traditionellen Komparatistik verabschiedet

und schuf – auf Grund der neuen Terminologie – die sogenannte Theorie der Interliterarität. Ďurišin wurde sich der Tatsache bewusst, dass unter dem Begriff Weltliteratur einerseits die Literaturen aus der ganzen Welt verstanden werden, also ein Komplex der Nationalliteraturen, andererseits die großen Werke, die Grenzen einzelner Nationen oder Sprachgruppen passierten und zum universalen Erbe der Menschheit werden (J. W. Goethe). Im ersten Fall spricht Ďurišin von einem additiven Konzept der Weltliteratur, im zweiten Fall von einem Auswahl- oder Kanonkonzept. Da ihm die Begrenzungen beider Konzepte für die Zwecke der Geschichte der Weltliteratur bewusst waren, kam er mit einer neuen Lösung – die Weltliteratur funktionsmäßig als interliterarisches Netz zu verstehen, als ein dynamisches System mit einzelnen Werken und Literaturen als Elementen, die sich in verschiedenen Beziehungen zueinander befinden. Diese Beziehungen bilden den Inhalt des Terminus Interliterarität. Die Weltliteratur sei die höchste Einheit, eine finale Kategorie der Entwicklungsbewegung der Literatur. Die Zugehörigkeit zu dieser Kategorie sollte die Fähigkeit bestimmen, Beziehungen mit anderen Elementen des Systems anzuknüpfen.

Die Weltliteratur verfügt – Ďurišin zufolge – über eine ideelle Dimension: Sie entstehe im Prozess der Interpretation und existiere in der Form einer historischen Entwicklungsstruktur, die in jedem literarischen Phänomen vorauszusetzen sei. Ďurišins semiotische Verwandlung der historischen Struktur in den Code auf der Ebene der Kommunikation, die Konstituierung dieser Verwandlung durch das Subjekt der Rezeption bedeutet eine originale Entfaltung des tschechoslowakischen Strukturalismus der 1960er Jahre. Methodologisch ist diese Bemühung in Kontext zu den Texten von J. M. Lotman, U. Eco, A. J. Greimas, C. Bremond, J. Derrida und E. Miner zu setzen.

In seinen Projekten *Osobitné medziliterárne spoločenstvá I–VI* (Besondere interliterarische Gemeinschaften, Bratislava 1987–1993), in den monographischen Studien *Čo je svetová literatúra?* (Was ist Weltliteratur?, Bratislava 1992) und *Teória medziliterárneho procesu I* (Theorie des interliterarischen Prozesses, Bratislava 1995) gelangte er zur Definition der Weltliteratur. Meiner Meinung nach ging hier Ďurišin von der Ansicht Frank Wollmans aus, der diesen Begriff auf drei Bedeutungsebenen benutzt: 1) als Komplex aller nationalen Literaturen; 2) als axiologische Auswahl für das Beste, was in den Nationalliteraturen entstanden sei; 3) als interliterarisches Netz von einzelnen Werken und Literaturen, das eine ideelle Dimension habe, weil es im Prozess der Interpretation entstehe und weil es in Form einer historischen Entwicklungsstruktur existiere.

In Übereinstimmung mit Wollman findet Ďurišin die dritte Bestimmung für das Hauptobjekt des vergleichenden Studiums. Doch Ďurišin konzipiert auf eine neue Art und Weise die Struktur und Funktionalität dieser Auffassung – er gelangt zu der Ansicht, dass die Weltliteratur das literarische Schlussphänomen auf der synchronen

und diachronen Achse der Entwicklung der Wortkunst darstelle. Es ist interessant, dass Ďurišins Begriff „interliterarische Gemeinschaft“ in einer gewissen Opposition zur Terminologie von I. G. Neupokojeva entstanden ist – die russische Literaturwissenschaftlerin betonte den Begriff „Region“ als einen durch verschiedene Kriterien vereinigten umfangreichen Komplex mehrerer Nationalliteraturen und den untergeordneten Begriff „Zone“ (zum Beispiel eine gemeinsame literarische Richtung in mehreren nationalen Literaturen). Die Weltliteratur wird bei Ďurišin zu einem virtuellen Symbol der menschlichen Existenz, weil sie Erfahrungen und Ergebnisse zusammenfasse, die die Literatur als Wortkunst in ihrer historischen Entwicklung erworben habe. Das Maß der „Weltlichkeit“ der Literatur hängt – Ďurišin zufolge – an einer zusätzlichen Eingliederung der vollendeten literarischen Werke in das Gesamtsystem der Literatur.

Die Begriffe „interliterarisch“ und „Interliterarität“, die heutzutage zu einer terminologischen Ausstattung der komparatistischen Debatte weltweit gehören, benutzte Ďurišin bahnbrechend schon in den 1970er Jahren. Im Konzept von D. Ďurišin stellt der interliterarische Zentrismus einen Typ der literarischen Kommunikation dar, der auf Grund einer langfristigen Nachbarschaft aus einer spezifischen Form des Zusammenlebens (Prinzip der Metonymie) entstanden sei, während die interliterarische Gemeinschaft eher auf der Basis von Einheit, Ähnlichkeit und Analogien in der Form (Prinzip der Metapher) funktioniere. Ďurišins Gliederung der großen interliterarischen Prozesse in Gemeinschaften einerseits und Zentrismen andererseits differenziert gleichzeitig zwischen dem metaphorisch Intrakulturellen und dem metonymisch Interkulturellen. Diese Differenz bildet zwei gegensätzliche, doch komplementäre Modelle der Weltliteratur. Im ersten Modell wird die auf den interliterarischen Gemeinschaften basierende Weltliteratur zu einer monokulturellen Einheit reduziert. Im zweiten Modell der interliterarischen Zentrismen wird die Weltliteratur als „Netz“ oder polyzentrische Menge postuliert, die das Individuelle der einzelnen Bestandteile zu bewahren versucht. Zum Beispiel hat der amerikanische Theoretiker der vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft David Damrosch in der Monographie *What is World Literature?* (2003), die mit ihrem Titel an die Studie *Čo je svetová literatúra* von Dionýz Ďurišin erinnert, das Phänomen der Weltliteratur als spezifische Kategorie belebt. Damrosch erwähnt die Weltliteratur nicht als Kanon, sondern als Zirkulation und Rezeption von literarischen Werken. Er behauptet, dass die literarischen Werke den Status der Weltliteratur durch die Übersetzung in eine andere Sprache gewinnen sollten – deswegen versteht er die Weltliteratur als eine neue Art und Weise des Lesens. Die Initiative Ďurišins und Damroschs bringt die altmodische Vorstellung der Literaturtheorie, die zu einer „Universalsprache“ wird, zu einem neuen Ausdruck.

Ďurišins Terminologie der Interliterarität zielt auf der einen Seite auf Konstruktion, respektive auf abstrakte Modelle. Auf der anderen Seite hat die Vorstel-

lung des interliterarischen Prozesses als eines mehrstufigen Netzes ihre verhüllte hermeneutische Bedeutung. Diese Bedeutung besteht in der Fähigkeit der zirkulierenden Texte zu einer offenen Rezeption und Kommunikation. Deswegen ist die Weltliteratur bei Ďurišin eher „Prozess" als feste Kategorie mit festgelegten Dimensionen. Die Vorstellung des interliterarischen Netzes weist auf einen ungezwungenen Dialog der Welten und Kulturen hin, der im Kontrast zu der massenhaft verbreiteten Globalisierung steht. Der italienische Komparatist A. Gnisci, der mit Ďurišin zusammengearbeitet hat, demonstriert diesen Prozess am literarischen Schaffen im Mittelmeerraum – im polyzentrischen Modell der Weltliteratur muss das Verschiedene nicht auf das Identische reduziert werden. Ähnlich ist bei E. Miner (1990) und M. Juvan (2019) die „Weltlichkeit" ein Phänomen der Interkulturalität – im Unterschied zur Intrakulturalität, die die Literaturen der Welt auf einen gemeinsamen Nenner bringt. Die „Weltlichkeit" entsteht zwar als Ergebnis einer subjektiven Interpretationsaktivität, doch gleichzeitig geht es um eine Fähigkeit der literarischen Erscheinung, einen Rezeptionsstimulus positiv anzunehmen. In einer konkreten Form kommt die „Weltlichkeit" eines Textes darin zum Ausdruck, dass dieser Text in ein kulturell sowie poetologisch andersartiges oder geografisch abgelegenes Gebiet eingegriffen hat.

Dem Konzept der Weltliteratur von Dionýz Ďurišin wird vorgeworfen, dass es von der traditionellen Poetik und von der Untersuchung des ästhetischen Wertes des literarischen Textes abstrahiere. Meiner Meinung nach stellt gerade die Transformierung der Komparation in die theoretische Ebene einen spezifischen Beitrag dar – es geht hier um die Anwendung der These, dass das Studium eines individuellen Textes nicht ausreichend sein könne. Das literarische Kunstwerk sei als Schnittpunkt von interliterarischen Kräften und kulturellen Zusammenhängen zu sehen. Ďurišin bezeichnet sein Konzept der Weltliteratur als „reales Ideal" – eine solche Utopie stehe im Streit mit der eingelebten „Technologie" des klassischen vergleichenden Denkens.

Am Übergang der 1980er und 1990er Jahre erlebten die tschechische und slowakische Komparatistik paradoxerweise eine Krise. Dazu trug der Akzent auf Bohemistik bei – die Entdeckung der neuen „verbotenen" Werke sowie die Expansion der Essayistik, die kein Interesse an theoretischen Fragen hatte. Gleichzeitig nahm die ältere Generation Abschied (Dionýz Ďurišin starb im Jahre 1997). Politische Veränderungen am Ende der 1980er Jahre konnten den Weg für neue Impulse öffnen, auch auf dem Gebiet der vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft. Die institutionelle Transformation in der akademischen Sphäre (meistens nur eine Umbenennung) sowie der konzeptionslose Umbau der philologischen Studienfächer haben die erwartete Veränderung jedoch nicht mit sich gebracht.

In den 1990er Jahren haben die tschechischen und slowakischen Literaturwissenschaftler aufgehört, an den komparatistischen Weltkongressen (AILC/ICLA) teilzunehmen (der erste Kongress hat auf Initiative des amerikanischen Wissenschaftlers tschechischen Ursprungs René Wellek im Jahre 1955 in Venedig stattgefunden). Einen traurigen Zustand illustriert auch die Tatsache, dass die Staaten, die aus der ehemaligen Tschechoslowakei im Jahre 1993 entstanden sind – die Tschechische Republik und die Slowakische Republik –, in den vergangen Jahrzehnten keine Vertretung in den Gipfelorganen der AICL hatten. Die letzten Teilnehmer waren der tschechische Polonist Karel Krejčí und der slowakische Literaturtheoretiker Anton Popovič in den 1970er Jahren. Nach 1990 waren die tschechischen und slowakischen Komparatisten bemüht, neue Kontakte aufzubauen. Aus diesen Bemühungen resultierte die Idee, eine gemeinsame tschecho-slowakische Assoziation zu gründen, die neue Entwicklungen des komparatistischen Denkens in diesem kulturell-geographischen Raum auch institutionell unterstützen könnte – es kam gleichzeitig zur Aufforderung zum Beitritt der neuen tschecho-slowakischen Assoziation zur AICL.

In der gegenwärtigen tschechischen und slowakischen Komparatistik ist eine markante Abkehr von den Methoden der historischen Poetik sowie der Theorie der Interliterarität zu sehen – die neuen Arbeiten gehen in Richtung Identitätsforschung, postkoloniale und Areal-Studien. Mit dem Paradigma-Wechsel, der eine größere thematische und methodologische Offenheit bedeutet, beginnen die tschechische und slowakische Komparatistik den toten Punkt zu überwinden. Es erscheinen Übersetzungen der Titel der europäischen Komparatistik (C. Guillén, A. Courbine-Hoffmann und andere). Es entstehen Anthologien der nationalen sowie der vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, wie zum Beispiel *Komparatistika a národní literatura* (2009, Komparatistik und Nationalliteratur) oder von M. Zelenka *Vybrané kapitoly z dějin česko-slovenské literární komparatistiky* (2015, Ausgewählte Kapitel aus der Geschichte der tschecho-slowakischen literarischen Komparatistik).

Als gemeinsames Projekt der tschechischen und slowakischen Literaturwissenschaftler ist unter der Leitung von Pavol Koprda die umfangreiche zweiteilige Anthologie *Teórie medziliterárnosti I–II* (2009–2010, Theorien der Interliterarität) zu nennen, die Texte von 63 führenden Komparatisten der Welt in einer thematischen Gliederung anbietet. Die Bedeutung dieser Anthologie besteht in der Anwendung der These, dass die Theorien der Interliterarität überwiegend auf der Grundlage des slawischen Materials entstanden sind, obwohl die Entwicklung dieser Theorien – vom Standpunkt des Gegenstandes sowie der Suche nach neuen Methoden aus – parallel zu der westlichen vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft war. Neben diesen Handbüchern sind auch neue theoretische Werke der tschechischen und slowakischen Komparatistik zu erwähnen – insbesondere die Monographie von R. Gáfrik *Od významu k emóciám* (2012, Von der Bedeutung

zu Emotionen), die in interkulturellen Zusammenhängen die sanskritische Literaturtheorie in Beziehung zur abendländischen aristotelischen Tradition untersucht. In der Anknüpfung an Dionýz Ďurišin erforschen den räumlichen Aspekt in der vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft die Monographien von I. Pospíšil *Areál a filologická studia* (2013, Areal und philologische Studien) und *Literární věda a teritoriální studia* (2014, Literaturwissenschaft und territoriale Studien). Auch die monographischen Studien von M. Zelenka *Komparatistika v kulturních souvislostech* (2012, Komparatistik in kulturellen Zusammenhängen) und *Comparative Literature and Area Studies* (2012) prognostizieren eine neue Prägung der Komparatistik, die Aspekte der Transkulturalität, Interdisziplinarität und Hybridisierung verbinden.

Die tschechische und slowakische Komparatistik der Gegenwart orientierte sich von der genetisch-kontaktologischen Komparatistik hin zur Typologie sowie zur Ausnutzung von philosophischen Impulsen (Phänomenologie, Hermeneutik), doch immer verknüpfte sie die vergleichende Methode mit der Orientierung auf Kunstrichtungen und Genologie. Die bedeutendsten Vertreter der gegenwärtigen tschechischen und slowakischen Komparatistik sind direkte Schüler und Mitarbeiter von Frank Wollman (1888–1969) und Dionýz Ďurišin (1929–1997). Am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts entwickelten sich in der tschechischen und slowakischen Komparatistik die Theorie der Weltliteratur sowie die Theorie der interliterarischen Beziehungen, die D. Ďurišin von den strukturalistischen Ausgangspunkten zur Semiotik als universeller Methodologie der Kultur, aber auch zur Rezeptionstheorie sowie Intertextualität orientierte.

Der Antritt und die Durchsetzung einer neuen Generation von Literaturwissenschaftlern zu Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts bedeutete eine intensivere methodologische Öffnung und interdisziplinäre Inspiration (Imagologie, historisch-geographische Topologie, postkoloniale und interkulturelle Studien, Arealtheorie, Ost-West-Studien, Medienwissenschaft u. a.), die sich in der Suche nach neuen Konzepten der Weltliteratur widerspiegeln. Zur gegenwärtigen Debatte über Weltliteratur (Bhabha, Damrosch, Gnisci, Jameson, Said etc.), die auf den Prinzipien der Multikulturalität der Welt, einer Kanonkritik sowie der Auflösung von Grenzen der Nationalliteratur beruht, hat die tschechisch-slowakische Komparatistik einen Beitrag mit der Auffassung der Weltliteratur als historisch entwickelter Struktur geleistet. Diese vom Rezeptionssubjekt konstituierte Struktur ist in jedem Phänomen des literarischen Prozesses zu antizipieren. Die Weltliteratur als interkulturelles Phänomen hat in diesem Konzept ein ideales Ausmaß und wird zum Symbol der Integrität des menschlichen Daseins, weil sie Ergebnisse umfasst, die Literatur als Kunstart in ihrer historischen Entwicklung erworben hat. Gleichzeitig hängt der Grad der „Weltlichkeit" der Literatur von einer „zusätzlichen Eingliederung" der vollendeten Kunstwerke in ein „interliterari-

sches Netz“ ab, in dem Partizipation und gegenseitiger Kontakt, aber auch Negation und Ablehnung zum Ausdruck kommen.

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8 Short Contributions on the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

Lothar Jordan

How Can Comparative Literature and the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme Cooperate?

An Introduction

During the XXI. Congress of the ICLA a joint workshop of the ICLA and the Sub-Committee on Education and Research (SCEaR) of the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme (MoW) took place on the 26 of July 2016 in the Audimax of the University of Vienna. The title of this paper takes up the title of the workshop that was chaired by the then-President of the ICLA, Hans Bertens, and myself as chair of the SCEaR.[1]

The aim of the workshop was to start exploring the possibilities and perspectives of cooperation between the ICLA, Comparative Literature, and scholars of Comparative Literature on the one hand and on the other the UNESCO Memory of the World Programme, especially its Sub-Committee on Education and Research. This is a completely pioneering effort and will remain such at least for some years: UNESCO is, beyond the fame of its acronym, less known in the academic world than one would expect. Like the United Nations or the European Union it may seem to be a remote and obscure institution of international politics and administration. With the exception of Political Sciences and International Law, most of the academic disciplines neither approach the organization nor its single activities systematically. And the Memory of the World Programme only started to work systematically on education and research in 2013 with the creation of the specific sub-committee (SCEaR). In 2015 the General Conference of UNESCO created a normative instrument of international law: *Safeguarding the Memory of the World – UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage including in Digital Form.* Its paragraph 4.4

1 My thanks go to Hans Bertens and Achim Hölter for the good cooperation. – Connected to the workshop were two key note speeches, the first during the Opening Ceremony of the Congress by UNESCO Assistant Director General Frank La Rue on “Art and Intercultural Dialogue”, the second by Abdulla El Reyes (Abu Dhabi), Chair of the International Advisory Committee of the Memory of the World Programme, on “Perspectives of Cooperation”. Dietrich Schüller (Austrian National Commission for UNESCO) gave an “Address of Welcome”. Besides five presentations and their discussions the workshop included a panel discussion “How to cooperate?” (Hans Bertens, Achim Hölter [ICLA]; Abdulla El Reyes, Jan Bos, and myself [Memory of the World]).

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asks member states to encourage "the development of new forms and tools of education and research on documentary heritage and their presence in the public domain." This task can be applied to the cooperation between MoW and the ICLA. And there is another instrument of international law that is significant for our matters and especially for Comparative Literature, namely the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (2005) as it provides a legal and ethical frame for the diversity of cultural expressions, including literatures and languages.

It is worth mentioning that the first wide-ranging academic book on Memory of the World was published in 2020.[2] My contribution has two parts: the first part gives a short introduction to the MoW programme; and here I have chosen examples which seem apt to give some insight into the use of MoW and documentary heritage for Comparative Literature. The second part makes some proposals concerning concrete cooperation between MoW and the ICLA and its members.

1 The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is an autonomous sub-organisation of the United Nations. UNESCO, based in Paris, works in the fields of education, science, culture, and communication and information.[3] It was created in 1945 under the impression of the Second World War with the main task to help building peace by international exchange and cooperation in education, culture, and the sciences.

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme is one of three heritage programmes of UNESCO. The most famous one is World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The third is Intangible Heritage.

The creation of MoW was in line with UNESCO's interest to safeguard valuable holdings of archives and libraries, like manuscripts and books (and later audiovisual items and digital documents) and the experience of their loss by war, civil war, natural catastrophes, negligence, or other reasons. MoW was created in 1992, but a strong movement towards this programme had already started at the end of the eighties. In 1989 the Senegalese poet and statesman Léopold Sédar Sen-

2 Edmondson et al. 2020.

3 Communication and Information is a young sector of the organization, not included in the acronym. This sector works e.g. on knowledge societies, the internet, freedom of the press, preservation of and access to information, and the MoW programme.

ghor – along with others – had pleaded that UNESCO should start formal activities to safeguard "The written word".[4] MoW's aims are:

- To facilitate preservation, by the most appropriate techniques, of the world's documentary heritage.
- To assist universal access to documentary heritage.
- To increase awareness worldwide of the existence and significance of documentary heritage.

MoW's most prominent feature is a World Register of documents and collections of international ('global') significance, currently numbering 427 (November 2022). The MoW Register mirrors the real diversity and richness of the documentary heritage, be they religious, political, or technological and scientific documents – as well as documents of all materials, from papyrus and paper to films and digital documents (http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/).[5] Of the inscribed literary documents I want to mention just a selection, such as the Rigveda, or the interdisciplinary Ancient Naxi Dongba literature manuscripts (China), La Galigo (Indonesia), the Song of the Nibelungs (Germany), Shota Rustaveli: *The Knight in the Panthers's Skin* (Georgian national epic), the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Collections, the literary estate of Goethe, Ibsen's *The Doll-house*, Leo Tolstoy's personal library and manuscripts, the photo and film collection, the Christopher Okigbo collection, and the Derek Walcott collection (kept in Trinidad and Tobago).

In addition to the World Register there are Regional (in Asia/Pacific and in Latin America/Caribbean; none in Europe) and some National Registers, too. Beyond its registers the MoW programme carries out or cooperates with conferences, workshops, meetings, publications, etc.[6]

As education and research became more important for the MoW programme, a Sub-Committee on Education and Research (SCEaR)[7] was created in 2013. It holds an official network of Cooperating Institutions and Corresponding Members, visible on the website of UNESCO. Cooperating institutions can be single institutes, departments, archives, libraries, etc. or whole associations like the ICLA

4 That was the title of his article in the *UNESCO Courier*. Senghor 1989.

5 See also: UNESCO 2012.

6 There is a UNESCO/Jikji Memory of the World Prize since 2004 (30,000 US-$), sponsored by the Republic of Korea. The purpose of this prize is to commemorate the inscription of the „Buljo jikji simche yojeol", the oldest existing book of movable metal print in the world, on the Memory of the World Register, and to reward efforts contributing to the preservation and accessibility of documentary heritage as a common heritage of humanity.

7 UNESCO. *International Advisory Committee.*

(International Comparative Literature Association). The Department of Comparative Literature of the University of Vienna was one of the first Cooperating Institutions. Corresponding Members can come from the academic world or from memory institutions.

One of the first Memory of the World Knowledge Centres – which is a specialized archive or library with educational and research activities around it – was created in Macau at the library of the City University in November 2016, and a second one in Beijing at Renmin University in July 2017. Currently (November 2022) there are seven such centres in the world, four in China, three more in South Korea, Ivory Coast and Mexico. These are the first steps towards a network of MoW Knowledge Centres around the world.[8]

Until recently the MoW Programme cooperated – due to its history and tasks – nearly exclusively with memory institutions (archives, libraries, museums) and their international organisations – ICA (International Council on Archives), IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), and ICOM (International Council of Museums). The creation of the SCEaR changed that. The programme gained the conviction that to provide better access to documents included to provide better access to their content. That requires cooperation with different disciplines of the Humanities. This new approach becomes visible in the list of Cooperating Institutions and Corresponding Members, and in the *SCEaR Newsletter* which is open, too, for articles from academic disciplines, e.g. History or Literature.[9]

2 Cooperation between Memory of the World and Comparative Literature

Let us take into account the Mission Statement of MoW SCEaR of UNESCO as well as that of the ICLA. The ICLA Statutes determine the "Objectives of the Association: The International Comparative Literature Association seeks to foster the study of literature undertaken from an international point of view. It attempts to realize this objective through international cooperation."[10] The "ICLA encourages ex-

8 See as a kind of Work Report: *The Memory of the World Knowledge Centres. An Overview* in: *SCEaR Newsletter, Special Issue 2022*. – In Comparative Literature the term 'knowledge' was highlighted by Revathi Krishnaswamy: Krishnaswamy 2010.

9 See my report on this workshop in the *SCEaR Newsletter* 2016, 6–8.

10 International Comparative Literature Association. *Statutes*. http://www.ailc-icla.org/statutes/. (23 January 2023).

change and cooperation among comparatists, both individually and through the collaboration of various national comparative literature associations. To that end the Association promotes literary studies beyond the boundaries of languages and national literary traditions, between cultures and world regions, among disciplines and theoretical orientations, and across genres, historical periods, and media."[11]

"The mission of the MoW EaR-SC is: 1) to work out strategies and concepts for institutionalizing education and research on Memory of the World, its registers and the world documentary heritage in a sustainable manner, as well in all forms of institutions of higher learning as in schools, 2) to help developing innovative curricula and research on Memory of the World and/or on documents, especially in an interdisciplinary and international manner and related to the internet [...]."[12] And we should take UNESCO's 'language politics' into account which is integral for MoW, too: "There is a need to both preserve global linguistic diversity as a prerequisite for cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism and translation in order to foster intercultural dialogue."[13]

So MoW and Comparative Literature have overlaps, namely between the MoW programme itself and/or memory institutions (archives, libraries, museums) and the academic world, as far as literary documents (or documents ['original sources'] with other content, e.g. photos and films, which is significant for Comparative Literature) are concerned. But there are more commonalities: Both, MoW and Comparative Literature have a global approach, or better yet: a global telos (Memory of the World/World Literature).

2.1 The MoW Registers

The MoW registers (Jan Bos reported about them in our workshop, see his article in this volume), especially its International Register (World Register), offer a variety of possibilities for Comparative Literature: ICLA and its members may help to objectify the nomination and assessment process. This was identified as one field of possible cooperation.

Another aspect is to analyze critically e.g. the criteria – like authenticity – mechanisms, regional, gender etc. distribution of inscribed items. If one sees the MoW Register as a proto-canon (UNESCO's *official* line is not to see it that way), one touches the complex of World Literature, especially if one understands it as a

11 International Comparative Literature Association. *Mission Statement.* http://www.ailc-icla.org/mission-statement/. (23 January 2023).
12 UNESCO. *SCEaR: Mission Statement.*
13 UNESCO 2009.

kind of canon, too. How far are aesthetic values and criteria of significance universal or global?[14] One could reflect the relation between the global, the regional and the local. One can ask: What is the World in Memory of the World, what is the World in World Literature?

2.2 Access to literary documents: MoW, Comparative Literature, scholarly editing

If we want to improve the international use of documents, we have to come to a new understanding of 'access'. Access is more than a legal or technical question.[15] One has to open the door not only to the carrier, mostly by means of the internet, but as well to the content. What we really need are best-practice examples of websites that mediate items of the MoW Register to an international audience. The exact range of the target audience depends on the contents. As a general orientation I do not think of the top experts, but of an educated audience like university students, teachers, journalists. For the vast majority of potential users of foreign languages and cultures this means: At least a good selection of inscribed items has to be translated. English will be the main language for international mediation, but depending on the political and cultural situation and specific traditions it could be other languages as well like French, or the languages of neighbouring countries. But to translate well chosen documents is not enough. One has to add more information on the context, depending on the contents of documents. The literary, political, religious, social, etc. context has to be commented upon. Links should lead to more information. The short commentaries of the *World Digital Library* can give a first idea of what we need. But that has to be elaborated profoundly. If made for an audience of other regions it is a daring task to reflect what kind of contextual information such users may need (historical, political, social, religious, etc.). Many things in our own culture seem self-evident, while they are unknown or unclear to others. Mediating items of the MoW Register is a challenging variant of intercultural dialogue. If these items are from literature, the competence of Comparative Literature can be a great help. And the other way around: It will be a challenging task for Comparative Literature to help mediate

14 See my article: Jordan 2019.

15 Sandra Bermann speaks about "linguistic accessibility" and "semantic accessibility" in her article: Bermann 2012 (here: p. 175.)

literary texts and documents through the Internet[16] to a worldwide audience. Stakeholders of the work on this new field (Comparative Literature, Digital Humanities, MoW, and Scholarly Editing) could and should come together.[17]

2.3 Translations

As we saw in the citation about UNESCO 'language politics', the organization gives great attention to translations. The Index Translationum of UNESCO is a well-known database of translations, which aims to provide information, mainly statistical, on the state of current translations in the world. It had a precursor as early as 1932 in the frame of the League of Nations. After World War II the newly created UNESCO took over the project. Aside from the World Cultural and Natural Heritage Convention (and the other heritage programmes of UNESCO like MoW) the Index Translationum is one of the globally well-known activities of the organization. And for many years UNESCO, together with FIT (Fédération internationale des traducteurs), supports translators and their issues. MoW is following this position, but should be more active in this matter: Improving access to documents for an international audience requires more, and better translations (see above 2.2.).

During the Workshop in Vienna all parties agreed that translation would be a promising field of cooperation. As a result there was a meeting in the museum estate Yasnaya Polyana, the former estate of Leo Tolstoy, in August 2017 between the then-President of the ICLA, Zhang Longxi, the then-President of the ICLCM (International Committee of Literary and Composers' Museums), Galina Alexeeva, and myself as the Chair of the MoW SCEaR.[18] An important result was that we, with other partners yet to be won over, would work on a "Manifesto for Safeguarding the Memory of Translators and Translations".[19] Alongside other positive results, we expect in the long run a substantially improved basis for research on translators and translations.

16 Beebee 2011 comes close to UNESCO's and MoW's endeavours to care for safeguard informations in the internet sustainably. But he ends with 2007. See now the PERSIST project of UNESCO/MoW: https://unescopersist.org/about. (23 January 2023).

17 Jordan 2011.

18 See our Report on the meeting in: *SCEaR Newsletter September* 2017/3, 26.

19 Jordan 2018, 15, on the planned *Manifesto*. See also: Longxi 2018.

2.4 Lost Memory – Dispersed Memory

Based on the sad experience of destructions of libraries and archives during the Second World War, in other wars and civil wars and by manmade and natural disasters, MoW developed a special feature that reminds of such losses, and looks for ways to describe what has been lost, or even to reconstruct it: Lost Memory.[20] Achim Hölter introduces a project by which Comparative Literature could tackle this issue: "Lost Memory: Reconstructing Writers' Libraries". Such projects fit very well into and can be inspiring for the activities and projects UNESCO and MoW have started in the very recent years following the tasks given by the *Sendai Framework*. This framework was developed by the United Nations in 2015 for global Disaster Risk Reduction and Management.[21]

Important variants of Lost Memory are e.g. Dispersed Memory, Archives at Risk, and Archival Safe Havens. They are the subjects of David Sutton ("Diasporic Literary Archives").

2.5 Further

In this Workshop we had time to discuss just a few more matters of joint interest, such as:

- Research on documents, archives, libraries, museums as subjects of literary texts.
- Metaphors of memory.

However, there are many more. Let me take one last example. The title of Liliana Weinberg's article: "The Oblivion We Will Be […]"[22] follows Columbian writer Héctor Abad Faciolince's novel: *El olvido que seremos* (2006) – echoing a poem of Borges. The writer's father had been killed by "Colombian repression" (p. 67), militia or paramilitaries. Weinberg puts this in the frame of literature and human rights. She sees this novel as an endeavour to write against the loss of memory of the victims of violence. When I read her article, I thought of a most impressive

20 See e.g. the inventory: UNESCO. *Lost Memory – Library and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century*, 1996.

21 UNESCO and MoW organized two Political Fora on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management for Sustainable Preservation of Documentary Heritage (Paris 2018 and 2021). Their presentations were collected in the *SCEaR Newsletter* 2020, *Special Issues 2020/1* and *2020/2*. In the first issue (34–38), I made "A Proposal to Use Documents of Literature for Disaster Sensitization."

22 Helgesson, Stefan/Vermeulen, Pieter (ed.), 2016, 67.

Colombian initiative, the Archivo de los derechos humanos, memoria histórica y conflicto (del Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica) ("The Archive of human rights, historical memory and conflict", a part of the National Centre of Historical Memory, Bogota, Colombia). Currently, this digital repository has about 160,000 archival and documentary records available for the consultation of the victims and general society, a public institution specialized in working for victims' rights as part of a comprehensive process to redress victims and to work for the right to know the truth. Obviously Faciolince's novel and this archive share the same goals, remembering the victims of violence in Colombia. In a research project one could easily bring together: the novel, the egodocuments of the writer and his family, and the documents of the archive of human rights, historical memory and conflict in Bogota. MoW is especially strong in Latin America in work for the safeguarding of documents and memory of the violation of human rights. Therefore cooperation between Comparative Literature, local or national memory institutions, and Memory of the World would make sense for all these possible partners. And, of course, this Colombian case can be taken as an inspiring example for other countries and parts of the world.

3 Conclusion

One of the main challenges for Comparative Literature is to find concepts that join the idea of World Literature[23] as a unit with the intention to respect the diversity of literatures and languages, and with the equality of significance of literatures from different parts of the world. UNESCO and Memory of the World offer standards, experiences – and problems! – which could be helpful. Jing Tsu: "The revitalization project of world literature comes to the fore, not coincidentally, when an expressed desire for joint humanity appears all the more urgent because of its fading possibility."[24] In general, I see an overlap of the principles, basic idea and ethics of UNESCO and its Memory of the World Programme and those of Comparative Literature. We have tried to show fields of possible cooperation, and possible objects for Comparative Literature education and research on the MoW Programme and documentary heritage. More can be developed, be it in the institutional form of Cooperating Institutions and Corresponding Members, or just in teaching and research, e.g. by Ph.D. and Master theses: These will be pioneering efforts.

23 See e.g. Damrosch 2003.
24 Jing 2011, (here: p. 161).

Such a link of academic education and research to UNESCO and one of its heritage programmes does not restrict the freedom of the scholar. A critical approach is best apt to help with remediating inconsistencies and weaknesses. On the other hand: A relation to an institution of (hopefully) long endurance can reinforce continuity to a discipline of the Humanities – in addition to the plurality and change of methodologies and matters. Ethical standards like cultural and linguistic diversity and fair regional representation, democratic principles like gender equality and the frame of a clearly defined global network are good preconditions to join respect for diversity with a global perspective. The work on, or the cooperation with, a global heritage programme open new paths and possibilities to scholars and students. Why should global long-term perspectives for education and research show up only on the fields of climate change or other ecological questions?

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Jan Bos

The UNESCO Memory of the World International Register

Introduction

UNESCO launched the Memory of the World programme in 1992. It is one of the three major UNESCO heritage programmes, together with the World Heritage Convention and the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Impetus for the Memory of the World programme came originally from a growing awareness of the critical state of preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage in various parts of the world. This perilous situation was caused by war and social upheaval, by neglect and natural disasters, as well as by severe lack of resources. Much had already vanished forever; much was – and is – in danger. The vision of the Memory of the World programme is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to all, that it should be fully preserved and protected for all and be permanently accessible to all. A major step for the programme was taken in 2015 with the adoption by UNESCO's General Conference of the *Recommendation concerning the preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage including in digital form*.[1] All UNESCO member states are encouraged to implement this recommendation in their national policies and practices.

One of the means to increase awareness worldwide of the existence and significance of documentary heritage is the Memory of the World International Register. There are many more: establishing national and regional Memory of the World committees and national and regional registers; publicizing books, newsletters, articles and brochures; creating websites; organizing conferences and workshops; exchanging best practices; building knowledge centres; awarding prizes. But there is no doubt that the most visible and the most noticed element of the programme is the International Register. It is the showcase, the shop-window of the Memory of the World programme. By selecting and presenting

1 http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49358&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (23 January 2023).

Note: This is an updated and adapted version of my presentation at the 2016 ICLA congress in Vienna, Austria. Substantial parts of the text have been taken from the Memory of the World webpages (https://en.unesco.org/programme/mow (23 January 2023)).

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documents whose deterioration or loss would be a harmful impoverishment for mankind worldwide, it demonstrates the general importance of documentary heritage.

The International Register is a list of documents with world significance and outstanding universal value. At present (November 2022) it contains over 430 documents or collections of documents. New inscriptions will be added in the course of 2023. They come from all over the world. Apart from the International Register, there are regional registers for the Asian and Pacific region and for the Latin American Region and many countries have national registers. Essentially there is no hierarchy between the registers, the only difference is the wideness of the impact that the documents on these lists have had. If they merely have had impact on a national scale, they are fit for a national register; if their influence transcends national and regional boundaries, they may qualify for the International Register. But their need to be preserved and to be accessible to everybody is the same. In the following I will focus on the International Register, but much applies to the other registers as well.

Documents

It is important to emphasize that the Memory of the World programme and its registers are not about texts, but about documents: the unity of a carrier and its content. Carrier and content are equally important. Therefore, all items on the International Register are specific copies. If a text is available in more than one copy (as is usually the case with printed books), there has always been a reason to select a certain copy, for example because of its age, decorations or provenance.

The concept of a document within the framework of the Memory of the World is a very broad one, both by its material form and by its content. Documents reach from clay tablets to manuscripts, printed books, audio-visual recordings and digital databases. They reach from religious scriptures to travelogues, music scores, slave registers and industrial inventions. They reach from atlases to postcards, archival records and movies. And from very small single items to coherent collections of many thousands of books and archival files. The items on the registers are by no means limited to literary products, although several literary works and personal archives of literary authors have been inscribed. A full list and descriptions of all inscribed items on the International Register can be found at the Memory of the World website.[2]

2 https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world.

Criteria

Every two years the Memory of the World Secretariat at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris issues a call for new nominations for the International Register.[3] Submissions usually come from owners or custodian institutions, but also from individuals without any formal relation to the concerned documents are welcome to draft a nomination, provided that they have consent from the owners. The concerned national Commission for UNESCO must support and formally deliver the nomination. There is a maximum of two nominations per country per nomination cycle, but there is no limitation for nominations jointly submitted by more than one country. The *General Guidelines*[4] of the programme provide extensive information on the nomination procedure and on the criteria for inscription.

The criteria are applied to all nominations. They are a prompt for describing how and why the item or collection is significant. Due to the many different kinds of documentary heritage, they will have different shades of meaning depending on the type of item or collection under consideration.

The first criterion is *authenticity and integrity*: are the documents what they claim to be? Are they real: no forgeries? Are they original: no later copies? (Or, for example in the case of early manuscripts: are they as close to the origin as can be?) Is the history of the documents clear, including the history of the collection that they belong to? Are they complete and uncorrupted, both as individual documents and – if applicable – as collections?

The next question is about the world significance of the documentary heritage, in the first place because of its *historic significance*. The document(s) may deal with very important political, economic, social or spiritual developments; or with events, times and places of world-changing importance; or with eminent personalities in world history; or with unique phenomena or critical innovations; or with examples of excellence in the arts, literature, science, technology, sport or other parts of life and culture.

World significance may also lie in the physical nature of the documentary heritage, in its *form and style*. The documentary heritage may be a particularly fine exemplar of its type. It may have outstanding qualities of beauty and craftsmanship. It may be a new or unusual type of carrier. It may also be an example of a type of document that is now obsolete or superseded.

3 From November 2017 up to April 2021 the nomination cycle for the International Register was on hold because of a comprehensive review of the Memory of the World programme.

4 https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/mow_general_guidelines_en.pdf (23 January 2023).

Thirdly, world significance may be derived from the *social, community or spiritual significance* of the documents. For example, a community may be strongly attached to the heritage of a beloved leader or a saint, or to the documentary evidence related to a specific incident, event or site with particular associations.

The final criterion for inscription is the *uniqueness or rarity* of the document(s). Is it the only one of its kind ever created, or one of a few survivors from a larger number? Are there other documents which may be similar, though not identical?

Selection for inscription results from assessing the documentary heritage, on its own merits, against these selection criteria. This assessment is done by an international group of experts in the field of book history, library and archival sciences and heritage studies. They provide reasoned recommendations to the Memory of the World International Advisory Committee, which, at its turn, makes a final recommendation for approval by the Executive Board of UNESCO.

Nominations and inscriptions are free of costs. They don't bring in revenues from UNESCO either, but they often strengthen the position of an institution when looking for funding for security, restauration, preservation or digitization.

Variety

The enormous variety of documents makes the International Register very attractive and appealing – as a shop window should be. Rock engravings from Lebanon can be found next to the world's first narrative feature film from Australia, the *Tabula Peutingeriana* map from Austria alongside Che Guevara's personal papers from Bolivia and Cuba, archival records from the Tuol Sleng genocide museum in Cambodia besides the French Bayeux Tapestry or the Irish *Book of Kells*. Documents take many forms and come from all over the world.

Nevertheless, there is a clear overrepresentation of European countries and European documentary heritage on the International Register, even if we take into account that in the course of history Europe may have had a stronger written culture (and consequently more documentary heritage) compared to the oral traditions in some other parts of the world. Moreover, documentary heritage that has been submitted by non-European countries often has to do with European 'discoveries', European colonialism or resistance against such colonialism, with European slave trade etcetera, and less with local culture (for example the Colonial archives in Benin or the Archives on the French occupation in Mauritius). In recent years, however, non-European countries have successfully submitted more nominations, in particular on indigenous documentary heritage.

Old, rare and extremely beautiful documentary heritage has been inscribed from the start of the International Register in 1997, together with documents relating to important historic developments, events and people. More recent is the tendency towards documents which deal with human rights, such as the slave registries from several Caribbean countries and the 'Archives of Terror' from Paraguay. The same goes for documents on rather recent history, for example the Criminal Court Case by the State of South Africa against Nelson Mandela. Such topics are not always free from political sensitivities and controversies. Perspectives on recent history can be quite divergent. The inscription of documents on the Nanjing Massacre (1937) was seriously disputed. The debate on the nomination of documents related to the so called 'Comfort Women' has not yet been solved. In this context it should be remarked that the Memory of the World programme and its registers are not about selecting or defining 'good' and 'bad' documents, but about safeguarding and giving access to *all* significant documentary heritage. Attaching historical interpretations or a moral perspectives is the task of others. At the same time, both the nominated documentary heritage and the nominations themselves are supposed to contribute to UNESCO's mission: 'building peace in the minds of men and women'.

Linguistic and literary documentary heritage

Not surprisingly the International Register holds quite a lot of literary and linguistic documents from all over the world. They may be of special interest for the ICLA.

The Bleek collection from South Africa provides a fine example of an exceptional linguistic source. W.H. Bleek (1825–1875) and some of his family members carried out extensive research into the San (Bushman) language and folklore. Bleek developed a phonetic script for transcribing the characteristic clicks and sounds of the Xam language which is used by linguists to this day. A great deal of the collected material has still remained unpublished.

In 2015 selected data collections from The Language Archive at the Max Planck Institute in Nijmegen, The Netherlands, were inscribed. This holding consists of 64 digital collections with audio-visual and textual resources, documenting 102 languages and cultures around the world. They have been recorded, annotated and digitized for providing high-quality representative samples of the respective languages in their natural context. This was the first inscription of digital documentary heritage on the International Register.

Other highly interesting linguistic sources include the collection of books in and on indigenous languages from Mexico, the invention of the Phoenician alpha-

bet, submitted by Lebanon, and the Myazedi-quadrilingual-stone-inscription from Myanmar. Many of them are still waiting for further research.

The same goes for literary sources. Works and personal papers of several famous and influential authors have been inscribed. To name just a few: Hans Christian Andersen, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Astrid Lindgren, Martin Luther, Christopher Okigbo, George Orwell, Leo Tolstoy, Derek Walcott. Their personal archives often hold abundant and unpublished correspondences, notes and sketches. The International Register also lists anonymous works of world significance: the Derveni papyrus, the Grimm fairy tales, La Galigo, Latvian folksongs, the Nibelungenlied, Rigveda, Shahname, a slave song from Barbados and many more.

One of the literary inscriptions which deserves to be highlighted is the Schools' Manuscript Fond, which is part of the collection of folktales from the Irish Folklore Commission. In 1937/1938 primary school children (aged 10–14 years) collected 750,000 pages of oral tradition from elders in their communities, an exceptional method of collecting such materials and unprecedented in this quantity.

The archives of Père Castor hold complete records of the activities of this French publishing house of innovative children's books. Composed by Russian, German, Polish, Czech, Dutch, Swedish, Belgian and French authors and designers, these books are now considered to be classics of children's literature, and they have been translated into twenty languages. The archives clearly show the impact of modern educational thinking on books and albums for young people.

Tales about the thirteenth-century Javanese hero *Panji* became popular throughout all Southeast Asia. Panji-manuscripts held in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have been inscribed on the International Register. Thanks to this inscription Leiden University Library started a successful crowd funding to finance the digitization of their collection of more than 250 Panji-manuscripts.[5] The inscription was also reason for a scholarly symposium on these tales.

Memory of the World and ICLA

These few examples may again demonstrate the variety of the documentary heritage on the Memory of the World International Register, and also the chances for new and further literary research. One should be aware that only nominated documentary heritage can be inscribed. So if important names or works are missing, they have probably never been nominated. Scholars of comparative literature may

5 https://digitalcollections.universiteitleiden.nl/panjitalesmanuscripts (23 January 2023).

well undertake a critical survey in this area, identify lacunas, point at 'hidden' collections and possibly submit new nominations.

In the assessment process much value is attributed to translations. If literary works have been translated into many languages, this is a clear indication of their global impact and significance. Translation studies is another area where ICLA and Memory of the World may benefit from each other.

Although the purpose of the International Register is nothing more than being a showcase for the need of preserving, raising awareness and giving access to documentary heritage, it is clear that inscriptions often add prestige to an institution or a country that holds such heritage. Apart from research into individual inscribed items or collections, it would also be very interesting to study the impact of inscriptions on literary scholarship in general.

David C. Sutton

Diasporic Literary Archives: A New Approach

Abstract: This essay describes the work of the Diasporic Literary Archives Network since 2012, some of the key ideas raised in the Network's meetings, and some of the projects completed and in prospect. The Network was conceived and planned by a team of archivists, researchers and scholars in the University of Reading, UK, and began work in 2012, funded by a major grant from the Leverhulme Trust. Its core membership was drawn from archivists in France, Italy, Namibia, Trinidad & Tobago and the USA, with support from UNESCO, the International Council on Archives, the British Library and others. Subjects covered in the essay include: the politics of archival location; futures for Caribbean and African literary archives; archives at risk; the ethics of archival collecting; and reasons for the typically diasporic nature of literary archives.

Keywords: Literary Archives, Diaspora, Networking, Safe Havens, Diasporic Archives, Archival Ethics, Nigeria, Namibia

The Diasporic Literary Archives Network was conceived and planned by a team of archivists, researchers and scholars in the University of Reading during 2010–2011, and came into existence on 1 January 2012, funded by a major grant from the Leverhulme Trust, with a core network membership in France, Italy, Namibia, Trinidad & Tobago and the USA, and support from UNESCO, the International Council on Archives, the British Library and many others. Although the Leverhulme Trust's financial support came to an end in 2015, the Network has continued many of its projects and programmes in the subsequent years and retains a clear identity through ongoing cooperation between its members and through regular updating of its website at https://research.reading.ac.uk/diasporicarchives.

From the beginning, the Network proposed to take a comparative, transnational and internationalist approach to studying literary manuscripts, their uses and their significance. It took as its prime starting-point the notion that literary archives differ from most other types of archival papers in that their locations are more diverse and difficult to predict; they may have a higher financial value which will lead to their more frequently being purchased – as opposed to being

Note: This essay is abridged and updated from the Introduction to *The future of literary archives: diasporic and dispersed archives at risk*, ed. by David C. Sutton, with Ann Livingstone. Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2018.

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deposited or donated; and acquiring institutions for literary papers have historically had very little in the way of collecting policies. Collecting of literary papers has often been opportunistic, unexplained and serendipitous.

The choice of the dramatic term "diasporic" was a defining moment in the history of the Network. The established literature of racial, tribal and national diasporas provided a philosophical framework which gave a highly original set of points of reference for the study of literary archives. Concepts such as the natural home, the appropriate location, exile, dissidence, fugitive existence, cultural hegemony, patrimony, heritage and economic migration were deployed to provide new perspectives. The essential nature of literary manuscripts was scrutinised and certain key features proposed and reviewed; early conclusions stressed the difference of literary papers, and the vital importance of form as well as content:

> Literary manuscripts are not like other archives. Their importance lies in who made them and how they were made, the unique relationship between author and evolving text, the insights they give into the act of creation. The supreme example of this magical combination of form and content is provided by the manuscripts of Marcel Proust, lovingly preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 171 volumes of cross-hatched text, with later additions on small pieces of paper – the famous *paperoles* – glued onto almost every page: a wonderfully dreadful conservation challenge.
>
> Literary archives often have a higher financial value than other archives. They are more likely to be found in libraries than in archives offices. In many countries of the world literary archives are housed in private foundations (such as the Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa in Rio de Janeiro), in literary museums (such as the Museum of Japanese Modern Literature in Meguro-ku, Tokyo), or in literary houses (such as the Maison de Balzac in Paris). In countries such as the USA, Canada and the UK, university libraries play a leading role, but this is by no means true in all countries. In France, for example, public libraries (often in the author's home town) are the principal repositories, together with the Bibliothèque Nationale. In contrast with most other types of archives — business archives, medical archives, architectural archives, religious archives or municipal archives — literary archives are often scattered in diverse locations without any sense of appropriateness or 'spirit of place'. (Sutton 2014, 295–296)

In the course of the Network's discussions, some remarkable examples of diasporic literary archives emerged. A particular favourite was the literary archive developed by the Australian Defence Force Academy, one of the most important literary collections in Australia, which was created in order to help to broaden the outlooks of young people undergoing military training. A 1988 article by Graham Rowlands with the captivating title *'On selling literary papers to the Australian Defence Force Academy: I'd just be perfect'* is now easily found online.

The papers of J. R. R. Tolkien, including the manuscripts of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, represent one of the best early examples of North American curators who were able to take advantage of their strong financial position,

their freedom to acquire and their literary knowledge. William B. Ready, Director of Libraries at the Marquette University in Milwaukee from 1956 to 1963, was an admirer of Tolkien and an important figure in a rising generation of US librarians and archivists who were prepared and permitted to follow their hunches and to purchase the papers of authors who were still alive, who were fairly young and who were out of fashion. Tolkien himself was naturally delighted to be feted by an American university librarian who had substantial funds to back up his praise of the author's literary output. Although a major Tolkien collection has subsequently been developed by the Bodleian Library in Oxford, all serious Tolkien scholars know that they will have to spend a considerable amount of research time in Milwaukee.

Another example of the careful cultivation of an author, with the greatest respect for their circumstances, is presented by the papers of Chinua Achebe held by Harvard University. Regrettably, it has been and remains the case that, despite its extraordinarily rich literary culture, Nigeria has no history at all of collecting literary manuscripts (Sutton 2016). The authorities at Harvard, seeing a great opportunity in this lacuna, were able to establish an excellent working relationship with Achebe himself, inviting him and (importantly) his family to Harvard, according him appropriate honour and respect, and in due course acquiring the whole of his personal archive. Whilst some of his professional papers and correspondence are to be found in other institutions, notably his papers in connection with the Heinemann African Writers series, which are in the University of Reading Library in England, anyone who wishes to study the man described by his fellow Nigerian Ezenwa-Ohaeto as "the father of modern African writing" will expect to conduct much of their primary research in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The case of Carlos Fuentes and his literary papers in the Firestone Library at Princeton University is more complex and more controversial. Mexico does have a strong tradition of collecting literary papers and respecting its own literary culture. It does not, however, have institutions which are well funded or well placed to make these sorts of high-profile acquisition. As a writer who saw himself as a citizen of the world as well as a citizen of Mexico, Fuentes had no problem about selling his archive to an institution which would pay him very well for it and which had a strong reputation for its custodianship of the archives of Latin American authors. In Mexico, however, this particular acquisition by Princeton was widely seen as an imperialist outrage, and phrases such as "cultural theft" were used (Leovy 2001).

A more neutral diasporic example is the story of how the papers of Ernest Hemingway arrived in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. On Hemingway's death in 1961, most of his papers remained in his house in Cuba. With the improbable combined assistance of President Kennedy and the Cuban

Prime Minister (later President) Fidel Castro, Mary Hemingway was enabled to travel to Cuba and to retrieve the papers. In exchange, she donated the Hemingway family home, the Finca Vigia, to the people of Cuba. In 1962 Mrs Hemingway was deeply moved by the honour paid to her late husband at a dinner at the White House and by the continuing attention of President and Mrs Kennedy. After the President's assassination, it was an understanding reached between the two widows, Mrs Hemingway and Mrs Kennedy, which brought the Ernest Hemingway Collection to the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library.

In general, as would have been expected, the movement of diasporic literary archives was found to be from poorer countries to richer countries, but with this general truth being modified in ways that were highly dependent on the language used by individual writers. Whilst literary manuscripts in English by authors from countries such as Nigeria, Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica would be actively collected by well-funded institutions in the USA, Canada and (rather later) Britain, literary manuscripts in other languages might be virtually ignored. The major market in the USA was, and remains, for manuscripts in the two principal languages of that country, English and Spanish. The archives of Nobel Prize winning authors such as José Saramago (mostly in Portuguese), Orhan Pamuk (mostly in Turkish) or Elfriede Jelinek (mostly in German) had much less market attraction in North America than the papers of authors who had written in English or Spanish. As a result Saramago's papers are almost all, appropriately, in Lisbon and Jelinek's papers are almost all in Vienna. A country like Brazil, with a proud literary culture and a wide range of institutions collecting literary papers, had experienced very little competition in the acquisition of literary archives, principally because the papers were almost all in the Portuguese language.

One surprising example of what might be regarded as "reverse diasporism" – an English-language author whose papers have ended up in Spain – is provided by the satirical comic author Tom Sharpe, whose archive arrived in the Universitat de Girona in 2015. Sharpe had lived in Catalonia for many years, although he notoriously refused to learn either Spanish or Catalan. In his will he left all his literary archive to Doctor Montserrat Verdaguer and she in turn passed them on to the university in Girona, which has a very strong and varied collection of literary papers, but is not the first place where one would expect to look for the manuscripts of the *Porterhouse Blue* and *Wilt* novels.

A final example brings us closer to the primary meaning of "diaspora", and forms part of the expanding work on "archival safe havens" in which the Network has fully participated. The archive of the Syrian poet Ali Ahmad Saïd Esber, known by the splendid cognomen of Adonis, has been acquired and housed at the Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine (IMEC) in Caen, where it has a place of honour alongside the archives of Jean Genet, Louis Althusser, Irène Némirov-

sky, Michel Foucault and Erik Satie. Whilst the exact terms of the deposit are not in the public domain, it has been widely reported that the acquisition was a form of safeguarding of literary heritage and left open the possibility of a return of the archive to Syria at a time when its safety and the safety of its rights-owners there could be assured.

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In establishing the Diasporic Literary Archives Network our idea was to explore the implications of improbable and unpredictable locations such as these: the power of the market, the power of serendipity and the magical attractiveness and collectability of literary manuscripts themselves. The intention was not to indulge in lamentations, in the style of Philip Larkin and others, about the loss of UK heritage materials to wealthy North American institutions with no apparent ethical collecting policy, but rather to formulate a set of definitions and truths about literary manuscripts and literary correspondence and then to look at desirable actions, activities and acts of solidarity.

It was important for the emerging Network to engage with other languages and other continents. The recruitment of partners from France, Italy, Namibia, Trinidad & Tobago and the United States made possible a much wider and more varied set of perspectives than had been usual in previous literary and archival research partnerships, and the Caribbean and African perspectives within the Network were to prove particularly original and enriching.

Whilst the "hub" of the Network was scholarly and archival work on the diasporic nature of literary manuscripts, a number of "spoke" projects developed as the Network's wide-ranging workshops explored related issues. As the Network brought in a rich variety of experts from around the world, a number of unforeseen work-programmes evolved, notably joint work with UNESCO and PEN International on "archives at risk"; joint work with swisspeace and UNESCO on "archival safe havens"; and joint work with the Society of Authors and The National Archives on creating guidance for authors considering disposing of their personal archives.

The work on archives at risk began in a francophone context, from the work already begun by the Network's IMEC and ITEM partners (Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine and Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes), but also drew upon good working relations with the Endangered Archives Programme, based at the British Library. It quickly became clear that there were numerous projects, actual and proposed, mostly based in Europe, working devotedly and altruistically on ways of saving endangered archives and the archives of dissident authors and developing proposals on archival safe havens. Some of these proposals were presented in 2014 on behalf of the Network to the governance bodies of the International Council on Archives, where they caused some controversy and concern. It was clear to the core members of the Network that all of this

work needed to be brought together under a single validating umbrella organisation (the obvious candidate being UNESCO), probably with another organisation providing the office support and driving the project forward. This model finally began to take shape in 2017, with UNESCO in the validating role; swisspeace (a "practice oriented peace research institute", based in Bern) in the dynamic organising role; and the Diasporic Literary Archives Network playing a facilitating role.

The Network's commitment to working with professional colleagues in the Caribbean region and in eastern and southern Africa has been sustained. From the acquisition of the Monique Roffey Archive by the University of the West Indies (St Augustine) in 2014 to the acquisition of the Anthony C. Winkler Archive by the National Library of Jamaica in 2017, the Network played another facilitating role which has been generously acknowledged by our Caribbean partners.

The work with colleagues in the National Archives of Namibia on Namibian literary archives (beginning in 2015) was very consciously designed as a template which could be adopted and adapted by other colleagues and partners in the region, and it led naturally to a second mini-project (beginning in 2018) on Cameroonian literary archives in the National Archives of Cameroon. The working assumption has been that every country with a strong literary tradition owes it to itself to develop a programme of collecting literary manuscripts as well. Best-practice models have been publicised by the Network, and range as widely as Brazil, Uruguay, Finland, Austria, France, South Korea and Hong Kong.

A significant output from work begun by the Network was a document entitled *Authors and their papers*, jointly created with representatives of the Society of Authors, the National Archives and the Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts (GLAM). The document assumes that many literary authors are interested in the eventual disposal of their personal archive, but have little idea of the practicalities which might be involved. It provides a step-by-step guide for authors, under headings such as 'Rationale'; 'What to keep'; 'How to keep it'; 'Transferring papers to an archives service: gift, bequest, permanent loan or deposit'; 'Sale of papers and archives'; 'Valuation'; 'Offsetting value'; 'Terms of transfer: storage'; 'Terms of transfer: copyright'; 'Terms of transfer: digitisation'; and so on.

The identification of the characteristic problem of split collections was a fascinating exercise, full of delightful anecdotes and strange puzzles and mysteries, but the Network is determined that it should lead on to work on best-practice protocols for sharing and cooperating with collections in the best interests of archival researchers. Clearly, in the digital era there are already more options for cooperation than there were in the past, and the likely development of collecting born-digital literary archives at some future time and storing them in "the cloud" opens up the intriguing possibility of a literary archive having two permanent homes, not following the Bodleian-Marbach Kafka model of an archive regularly

in transit, but rather a stored and searchable digital archive which could be simultaneously fully available in two countries (say, Mexico-USA; Namibia-South Africa; or Jamaica-UK).

Discussion about digital futures in respect of literary archives has formed an important, if not necessarily thus far inconclusive, part of the Network's deliberations. An early shock, at the very first workshop in 2012, was to receive the clearest possible expert opinion that in the present decade the valuation of digital literary collections is largely based on guesswork and hoping for the best. In the case of hybrid paper and born-digital archives, the paper component would be carefully valued and then a notional sum added on for the digital part. The absence of valuation criteria derives from an absence of precedents; an absence of information about likely users; an absence of a private market for archives in this format; and a certain lack of trust in the verifiability of the digital archive. If an author deposits a copy of a hard disk, rather than the hard disk itself, as seems to be happening in the majority of cases, how will the purchaser be able to assess what has been removed before deposit? Thus whilst the future value of email collections is absolutely certain (and from a biographer's perspective the two-way nature of email threads can make them much more useful than traditional correspondence collections), the future value of born-digital literary manuscripts remains a matter of speculation and uncertainty.

At the conclusion of the fifth workshop of the Diasporic Literary Archives Network, at the Beinecke Library, Yale University, in November 2014, there was agreement by general acclaim that the Network should seek to continue its work and its partnerships into the future.

Examples of future work-programmes for the Network (say from 2018 to 2025) would potentially include:

- "Archives at risk": new protocols for collaboration on endangered collections worldwide (working with UNESCO and swisspeace).
- "Archival safe havens", a subset of archives at risk: cases of archives in extreme danger which may, as a last resort, be physically moved to a safe location or be digitally copied and the copies transferred to a trusted repository.
- The dispersal of literary papers through publishing and business archives.
- Protocols for collaboration between repositories with "split collections".
- Mapping split collections: a cartographic approach.
- The diaspora of digital literary archives: best practice and digital solutions.
- The literary archives of Namibia: a case study and model for other African countries.
- Caribbean archives in Caribbean institutions: a new future.
- "Hidden archives": the uncatalogued troves: locating uncatalogued collections and finding shared solutions.

- Further work with the Society of Authors, the National Archives and the Group for Literary Archives and Manuscripts (GLAM) on guidance and encouragement for literary authors in respect of their personal archives.
- Locations of literary collections: creation of a world-wide list (joint work with ICA's Section for Literary Archives).
- Examples of diasporic literary collections: maintenance of an online database.

This exciting and diverse range of ongoing and future projects will keep the Diasporic Literary Archives Network itself active into the 2020s, and it is hoped that a good number of them will be adopted by other funders or consortia, by some or all of the existing six partners, or by the Section for Archives of Literature and Art (SLA) within the International Council on Archives.

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Achim Hölter

Lost Memory: Reconstructing Writers' Libraries

Introduction

A library is "a collection of books, which usually has been put together for non-commercial purposes."[1] One may associate the word with a place of learning, work, or one of leisure. It may be a home, some sort of family, or a group of mentors both stern and gentle. It may be stylised as a serene paradise, or, if we think of Peter Kien in Canetti's *Die Blendung*, a prison, even an asylum. In the multitude of all these roles,[2] the library functions as a container for worlds without end, so it may seem. But the myth of the *Universalbibliothek*, the all-encompassing library of the world, has, from its inception, always contained the threat of its destruction, as embodied by the fate of the library of Alexandria. It therefore does not come as a surprise that comparative literature as a discipline pivots towards the idea of the library when contemplating the UNESCO Memory of World Programme, which was established out of "a growing awareness of the parlous state of preservation of, and access to, documentary heritage in various parts of the world."[3] The dangers to that heritage, as outlined by the Programme's website, are manifold and easily applied to libraries: "Looting and dispersal, illegal trading, destruction, inadequate housing and funding have all played a part."[4]

The library as such does not just fascinate as a collection, a reservoir, but also as a foundational structure to build on, as a starting point towards the creation of something novel, of innovative poetry or fiction. The library of an author's choice – as a regular visitor, or, even more so, as its creator and, possibly, owner – forms the material basis for that author's writing and reading practices, and thus for his/her understanding by posterity. Consequently, the investigation of poets' and scholars' libraries[5] is of great relevance to all research on the creation of knowledge, especially in a specific biographical context. More than often, the professional writer needs be a professional reader, and in consequence a library grows and diminishes in connection with its owner. It documents not

1 Lohse. (My translation).
2 Cf. the contributions in: Alker and Hölter 2015.
3 UNESCO Memory of the World.
4 UNESCO Memory of the World.
5 Cf. Knoche 2015.

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merely his/her reading, but the potential of his interests and wishes beyond the capability to actually incorporate tens of thousands of volumes, hedged in only by availability of rare works and space to store them, the financial means necessary, and the will to collect. As with all worldly possessions, the library mirrors the fortunes of its proprietor, changing in times of success or inheritance, but also under financial strain, persecution, exile, and even death – for only few private libraries are not dispersed upon the passing of their owner. It is therefore quite understandable that historians, biographers, or literary scholars may be fascinated by the fragile but tangible possibility to rebuild a life, an intellectual period or setting, or an individual's creative climate by reconstructing the libraries they accumulated, and upon which they depended. The material character of a library satisfies the positivist mind of the scholar who inadvertently becomes a librarian of some sort in this undertaking, as he/she counts, assesses, evaluates, and catalogues another person's books. And at the same time, the seriality of printed books, and the stable genealogy of world literature in all its incarnations in various editions through the centuries, furthers an empathetic connectivity between owners of libraries, who may realise the extent of their intellectual family relationship with any given human by assessing the catalogue of their library to see to what degree their respective holdings will overlap. In a republic of scholars, all persons are related, for they all share the 'universal library', mirrored in that fragment, which is the personal library. From such a private collection, one may endeavor to reconstruct a whole biography, or a certain moment in time, and even though the undertaking may only be an approximation, the triangulation of an intellectual position through books brings surprisingly clear and vivid results. Imagine the voyages of the HMS Beagle, a self-contained world traveling through the vastness of the Pacific Ocean, carrying Charles Darwin to important early steps towards the formation of his scientific theories on evolution and natural selection. If one longs to understand the world of the HMS Beagle, the knowledge that sent it on survey expeditions to the far side of the world, and the foundations of Charles Darwin's work, one may study the library the ship carried along, which has been reconstructed online for our interest and perusal,[6] fascinating like Captain Nemo's fictitious book collection on board Jules Verne's submarine "Nautilus". Catalogues, as a result of constant recording or in the form of one-shot documentation, are our most important tools in this venture; correspondence, notes, documents, and other records are often indispensable for the painstakingly detailed efforts required to re-imagine and document a library that has been dispersed long ago.

6 http://darwin-online.org.uk/BeagleLibrary/Beagle_Library_Introduction.htm.

Reconstructing Writers' Libraries: The Case of Ludwig Tieck

The investigation of the genesis, form, and further history of writers' libraries has already created its own tradition, especially in the German-speaking countries, where the bibliography by Roland Folter (1975) is considered authoritative. Scholars' libraries have also been and are the focus of intense research. In Germany, the research field is particularly active, as is exemplified by the reconstruction of Christoph Martin Wieland's book collection[7] or the renewed, this time computer-assisted, recording of Goethe's Weimar library.[8] It may suffice to hint to parallel projects here, also, because several research libraries are running a cooperative platform on the investigation of poets' libraries.[9]

Moreover, a special working section has been announced for 2025 at the IVG Conference.[10] Projects have elucidated the history of libraries of early modern scholars, or of those belonging to such essential writers and thinkers as Friedrich Schiller, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Thomas Mann, Paul Celan etc. Princeton University's processing of Jacques Derrida's library may be cited as an example from beyond the German-speaking world.[11]

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7 https://wvb.ub.uni-freiburg.de/ — for general information see also: https://www.germanistik-im-netz.de/informieren/detail/ressource/wielands-virtuelle-bibliothek/.

8 https://www.klassik-stiftung.de/herzogin-anna-amalia-bibliothek/projekte/sammlungsraeume-digital/ — Cf. https://haab.weimar-klassik.de/Goethe/about.html — Access to the Goethe catalogue under: https://lhwei.gbv.de/DB=2.5/.

9 https://www.mww-forschung.de/autorenbibliotheken.

10 https://static.uni-graz.at/fileadmin/veranstaltungen/ivg-kongress-2025/unigrazform/Jaspers_van_Hulle_Autorenbibliotheken.pdf.

11 For an example of early modern libraries, see the reconstruction of the library of Benedikt Bahnsen (?-1669; https://bibliotheksrekonstruktion.hab.de/bahnsen/bahnsen-catSubjectFormat.html?); regarding examples of the reconstruction of famous writers' libraries, see Paul Celan's library (https://www.dla-marbach.de/bibliothek/spezialsammlungen/bestandsliste/bibliothek-paul-celan/?no_cache=1); the Freud Museum London website (https://www.freud.org.uk); Ludwig Denecke and Irmgard Teitge, *Die Bibliothek der Brüder Grimm. Annotiertes Verzeichnis des festgestellten Bestandes*. Ed. by Friedhilde Krause (Böhlau: Weimar 1989); "Goethe's libraries in Weimar" (https://www.klassik-stiftung.de/forschung/forschungsaktivitaeten/forschungsprojekte/goethes-bibliotheken-in-weimar/); Thomas Mann's library (https://tma.ethz.ch/archiv/bibliotheksbestaende-und-nachlassbibliothek.html); Friedrich Menzel, *Schillers Bibliothek: Versuch einer Rekonstruktion*. Bearb. von Konrad Kratzsch (Klassik-Stiftung Weimar 2009); For a detailed account of Christoph Martin Wieland's estate, see Dieter Martin, *Wielands Nachlass. Kapitalien, Hausrat, Bücher* (Winter: Heidelberg 2020). Stephan Höppner, *Goethes Bibliothek. Eine Sammlung und ihre Geschichte* Frankfurt/M: Klostermann 2022.

Since 2014, I have been directing a research team at the University of Vienna with the goal of the virtual reconstruction of German romanticist Ludwig Tieck's (1773–1853) famous library which contained about 17.000 volumes, with numerous rare and precious prints from the sixteenth century through to his own era, which was sold at a Berlin auction in 1849/50. Such an appreciation of Tieck's library is a pioneer work for studies in European Romanticism, an important contribution to the systematic exploration of scholarly multilingual book collections – and an unparalleled opportunity to explore the international book trade in the nineteenth century. Our goal consists in listing Tieck's complete library, following modern standards of cataloguing, i.e. to assign comprehensive data on Tieck's purchase or use as well as to locate and evaluate all copies, as far as possible. The project has examined thousands of volumes in Berlin, Bonn, Bruxelles, Göttingen, Halle, Jena, Krakow, Łódź, London, Moscow, Munich, Saint Petersburg, Stuttgart, Vienna, Wrocław, and in private ownership. The results have already been processed in a database developed specifically for this purpose[12] and will be presented both in a monograph and a printed catalogue.

Ludwig Tieck's Library: A History

At the end of his life, Ludwig Tieck was one of the most famous bibliophiles of the nineteenth century,[13] which is the more remarkable as he neither inherited a book collection nor possessed a fortune of any importance. If Tieck's father owned a small number of books, only a few titles and no exact descriptions have come down to us. Moreover, what books a rope maker may have owned was certainly not comparable with tradesman Johann Caspar Goethe's private library, which is physically being recollected in Frankfurt/Main because of its supposed effect on the upbringing of his son. Young Tieck's intertextual archive, however, must be sought rather in the collections of his teachers and friends and in those Berlin libraries that were in the 1790s open to the public. One cannot know when exactly Tieck started to buy and classify books and complete his collection systematically. Presumably, his growing interest for medieval poetry around 1800 made the possession of manuscripts or early prints imperative for the first time. Possibly, the friendship with Clemens Brentano animated him to become a book hunter, along with the sudden flood of ancient books as a consequence of the secularisation of church patrimony.

12 https://tieck-bibliothek.univie.ac.at — My gratitude to my many co-workers, currently to Theresa Mallmann and Clara Kollmann, and for this paper special thanks to Paul Ferstl.
13 Cf. Hölter 1989, 94–110, and 397–424; Hölter 2011.

His study years in 1792–1794, in particular with the benefits from Göttingen university library as well as a visit paid to Wolfenbüttel, must have given Tieck ideal images of libraries that bore a considerable influence on the philological side of his life achievement. There can be no doubt that his journeys (Bibliotheca Vaticana, St. Gallen in 1804–1806; Munich and Vienna in 1808–1810; Paris, London, Oxford, Stratford in 1817) may be considered as *Bibliotheksreisen*,[14] which were also useful for the purchase of books difficult to obtain in Germany. Thus the foundation of his collection had presumably yet been laid before his poetic vein grew temporarily weaker and he took to living mainly in Ziebingen near Frankfurt/Oder. By that time his erudition had widened to a real European horizon. In 1819 he moved his home to Dresden where he had declined the post of head librarian as early as 1812. The generous domicile on the Altmarkt must have comprised several rooms for the bookshelves, because at that time allusions become frequent to regular and important acquisitions at book auctions. Therefore, one can assume that the main body of his collection consisted of books bought in the 1820s and 1830s, one financial source being the substantial revenues from his novellas, another the private capital of his companion Henriette von Finckenstein. In addition, Tieck had his editors send him books instead of royalties, asking for extra gifts from their newest publications. Even dedicatory copies and items swapped with the Dresden library contributed to an ever-growing collection. But despite all of the testimonies from letters, book orders or other references, the provenance of his books has until now only been clarified in relatively few cases, prominent though the former proprietor may have been: in 1823, Tieck was the highest bidder for some books from J. J. Eschenburg's famous collection; in 1824, he acquired nearly 100 volumes from E. v.d. Malsburg's library. After the death of his daughter Dorothea and his wife Amalie, Tieck moved along with his books to Amalienstr. 15 in Dresden (with the book transport taking six days), then on to Berlin. There, the historical auction took place at the end of 1849.

The Auction of 1849/50 and the Structure of the Library

Many libraries of poets and scholars have come down to us at least indirectly via normally posthumous auction catalogues. Tieck was 76 years old when he released his books for a sale at bay. We can assume a number of motives for this decision:

14 Cf. Becker, 1980.

his landlord in Friedrichstraße 208, Berlin, may have objected to the massive weight of the paper, his brother was in urgent want of money, but the main reason for parting with his books in the year after the March revolution most likely pertains to bad health and/or late life depression. Thus, on 25 February 1849, Tieck sold his library to the Berlin auctioneer Adolf Asher for the comprehensive price of 7000 Taler. The question remains unsolved why he undertook the legal risk of this transaction at a time when the library was no longer in his possession: because on 8 June 1839, Tieck had already sold his library to the publisher Heinrich Brockhaus for 6000 Taler, to be paid as an annual pension of 300 Taler, and under the condition that Tieck would be guaranteed the usufruct during his lifetime! When Brockhaus, informed by a third party, found the sale confirmed by the auctioneer, a public scandal could only be avoided by the intervention of Tieck's friend Friedrich von Raumer, who convinced Brockhaus to officially sell the library back to Tieck on 14 April 1849. Thus the auction could take place as announced in the *Börsenblatt* on 30 November 1849, and elsewhere. The antiquarian Albert Cohn had already begun in 1848 with an examination of the library to prepare an auction catalogue, *Catalogue de la bibliothèque célèbre de M. Ludwig Tieck …* This rare and important source was reprinted with a short preface by Erich Carlson as early as 1970. The catalogue, lacking detailed description, was conceived for the standards of that time, i.e., no longer dividing the books according to their size, but is still difficult to use as Asher's main concern was not to present the library as an organic unity of books, but to meet the demand of potential customers. The catalogue contains the categories: A. "Langue et litérature" [sic] with German, English, Asian, Spanish and Portuguese, French, Greek, Dutch, Italian, Latin, Scandinavian, Slavic literature, B. "Histoire" with general history, biographies, geography and travel literature, C. "Histoire litéraire [sic] et bibliographie" and D. literature concerning theatre. The categorie E. "Miscallenées" contains all other publications. All in all, the catalogue lists 7930 items, many of them consisting of works with more than one volume. The auction terminated on 10 January 1850. We have reports about the course of the auction from Ferdinand Joseph Wolf, agent of the Court Library in Vienna, and his superior, Hofbibliothek director Eligius Franz Joseph Frh. von Münch-Bellinghausen (known as a playwright under the pseudonym of Friedrich Halm),[15] and from Asher's letters to the librarian of the British Museum, Antonio Panizzi.[16]

15 Cf. Hölter 1989, 409–423.

16 Cf. Ferstl and Mallmann, 2022, 53–76. Asher's business policy caused a scandal because he had already sold parts of the library en bloc. The curate of the British Museum's library, Antonio Panizzi, had gained a right of preemption especially for German literature and for precious English and Spanish books, so that about one eighth of the offered items went to London before the auc-

Tieck's library was thus dispersed all over Europe – with London and Vienna as main buyers in the auction, and, strangely enough, Ludwig Tieck himself, a bizarre fact, which could only be ascertained as a result of accidentally finding an auctioneer's copy of the sales catalogue.[17] He regretted the dispersion of his collection,[18] which was even more lamentable (also for the present time) as Heinrich Brockhaus had written in 1844: "I do not know yet what to do with Tieck's library, which will come into my possession sooner or later. It is likely I will donate it to a public institution."[19] Had Brockhaus kept the property at Tieck's books, they would today, as a whole, be part of an important public library or a museum of romanticism. So Tieck partook in the auction on his own account and bought back about 1.800 volumes. It seems that he had begun to build up a second library[20] for his friend, the Silesian Count Yorck von Wartenburg, again for the sum of 6000 Taler and again under the condition that the books become Yorck's property as a complete collection only after the poet's death. During this last year of his life, Tieck had this library catalogued by his secretary Dammas (no such document found), and his servant Glaser put the seal of Yorck von Wartenburg into each book.

The Destiny of the Library

Due to the intricate story of Tieck's famous library the books are now scattered all over Europe, though not without traces. Only the list of books from the first catalogue of 1849 can be seen as a reliable source for research in the field of literary history, because Tieck scarcely wrote any literary texts after the auction. Larger numbers of books can be found in the central academic libraries of Europe. It is difficult to estimate how many books have gone into private ownership, either *en gros* or as single volumes. Some item from Tieck's possession can now

tion even started. Asher simply skipped over these numbers as "missing" and omitted German, Scandinavian and Dutch literature (up to BT 1620) altogether.

17 Cf. Hölter, et al. 2021, 171–214.

18 Tieck expressed this regret several times in his letters, e.g. in one from 25 August 1850 to Eduard Leibrock, bookseller in Braunschweig and Tieck's confidant in the rebuilding of his library. He wrote about his "Uebereilung, meine sehr beträchtliche Bibliothek zu verkaufen". Tieck, 1850.

19 Brockhaus' Diary, Berlin 13.3.1844, in: von Möllendorff 1928. My translation.

20 His numerous letters to Eduard Leibrock, 20 after June 1850, are devoted to the activities of book collecting. They are a valuable source since most of these letters contain lists of books Tieck wanted or had received.

and then be found for sale or in libraries, but the books are, all in all, even more difficult to locate because of losses due to war and the evacuation of the Berlin library to Krakow, Poland, where volumes from Tieck's library were integrated into the catalogue. It is not clear, either, how many of Tieck's books belonged to the Yorck collection, which was transferred after his death to the Silesian castle of Klein-Oels, and where Joachim Ringelnatz, later famous as a poet, attended to them as librarian in 1911. The fideicommissum library of 150.000 volumes perished when the Silesian territory was conquered near the end of World War II. Paul Graf Yorck von Wartenburg (1902–2002) managed to save 90 volumes from Tieck's possession in Western Germany. Some may have been destroyed; others could be found as parts of the collections in the university libraries of Krakow, Łódź, and Wrocław, and in holdings in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but the fate of many of Yorck's books is still to be established.

A Memory of His World: The Virtual Reconstruction of Tieck's Library

As the history of the dispersion of the "Bibliotheca Tieckiana" is extremely complex – through the dispersal across various European countries, and the possible destruction and transferal of parts of its holdings during the conflicts of the twentieth century – the only option and desideratum consists in listing Tieck's complete library, following modern standards of cataloguing, i.e., to assign comprehensive data on Tieck's purchase or use as well as to locate and evaluate all copies.

Tieck was a lover of books. And he was convinced, as he explained in a letter to Wilhelm Konrad Hallwachs on 14 August 1836, that a scholar had to own important books rather than borrow them, especially if he – like Tieck – was accustomed to marking the most important passages and to write his own marginalia. He was also particularly fascinated by auction catalogues, which he read like fine literature. The magic resulting from a large number of books is depicted in his fiction, e.g. the novellas *Der Gelehrte* ("What a mass of books, she cried, like in enchantment"[21] or the famous *Des Lebens Überfluss*, in which Heinrich talks about his early love of books and auctions: "In my early youth, book auctions were my passion; and even though I mostly failed to purchase the works I loved, I nevertheless enjoyed to hear them offered and to think about the possibility that

21 Ludwig Tieck, Schriften, Vol. 22, Berlin 1853, 13. My translation.

I might possess them. I would read the auction catalogues like my favourite poets […]".[22]

The library was apparently that of a philologist and literary historian with an interest in comparative literature. It contained, besides contemporary literature, presents from admirers and friends and specimen copies of his own works, mainly German literature from the early modern period, English literature with a focus on Shakespeare and his successors. The numbers of the collected prints show Tieck's interest in authors like Dante, Boccaccio, and Cervantes. The collection also contains a remarkable number of works of literary history, and, in addition to *belles lettres*, many books on history and art. A large section of Spanish drama of the seventeenth century in original prints shows that the philologist Tieck proceeded on the assumption that a solid understanding could only arise from examining literally hundreds of texts of the same type.

Our database is a necessary prerequisite for the monograph that will present all results of our project, while granting furthermore the sustainable use of this outcome and qualifying the project as a meeting point for the international community of researchers on Tieck, on Romanticism or on nineteenth and twentieth century book trade, who are kindly invited to contribute. Thanks to this endeavor, one of the most important libraries of a poet in literary history will, at least virtually, be restored and persevere – as a memory of Tieck's world of literature. This leads me to terminate with some general remarks:

The restoring or evaluating of authors' libraries offers a number of weighty advantages: 1. the intertextual basis for the respective literary oeuvre is secured and can be researched. 2. the books are optimally preserved and thus also kept usable as a historical book stock. 3. the aura of the original copies supports all the didactic effects intended by literary museums. 4. Authors' libraries are suitable for focusing attention on the material dispositives that condition intellectual life in general and the production of literature in particular. 5. scope, emphasis, internal order, dynamics (i.e. the internal history of the library's emergence and growth) are, case by case, essential components of a literary biography manifested in the library collected in parallel. Thus, book collections, that have already been researched do not infrequently offer surprises, as compared to prior assumptions or general knowledge about particular poets' personalities. 6. In this context, and this also emerges as a secondary theme of the Tieck reconstruction (taking into account the presence of his wife Amalie, his companion Henriette von Finckenstein, and his daughters Dorothea – the Shakespeare translator – and Agnes, in his Dresden household), the question of female book collecting is of spe-

22 Ludwig Tieck, Schriften, Vol. 26, Berlin 1854, 37–38. My translation.

cific interest, especially for older literary history.[23] Fundamentally, however, the safeguarding of cultural property, whether in concrete physical materiality or as a virtual reconstruction, is an urgent concern in the face of ever-emerging trouble spots, threats of war and real destruction of cultural institutions, which ultimately helps to preserve the information contained in an author's library not only as an ensemble, but also in the form of marginalia or traces of use, so that, as Lothar Jordan pointed out in the oral version of his talk (cf. p. 625–635), "important and celebrated special book collections, which represent distinctive monuments of the world's memory, need not be lost forever."

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9 Annex

Hannah Schroder and Achim Hölter

Round Tables (summaries)

A: The Arts as Universal Code

Chair: Gerald Gillespie
Participants: Achim Hölter, Christine Knoop, Marc Mathieu Münch, Haun Saussy

This panel explores the aesthetic debates surrounding the possible equivalencies surrounding various medial forms. It is chaired by Gerald Gillespie from Stanford University. Marc Mathieu Münch, from the University of Lorraine; Haun Saussy, from the University of Chicago; Christine Knoop, from the Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics in Frankfurt (Main); and Achim Hölter, from the University of Vienna, participate in the discussion.

Gerald Gillespie opens the panel by noting that, although this question could be applied in almost any socio-historical context, he will be focusing on the Romantic period. The Romantics, he argues, were interested in unifying the arts and examining the interactions between modes of artistic expression, rather than seeing them in opposition. He acknowledges the complexity of this area of study, noting that there are of course many methodological approaches to the interaction of different media, before turning to a presentation of two significant events in Western cultural history and how these events may provide a productive way to explore the issues raised in the panel.

The first of these events, Gillespie argues, is the evolution of an "encyclopaedic and heuristic tradition"[1] which has developed over a number of centuries in the Western novel and which has enabled the emergence of a huge range of narrative representations of culture. The second, Gillespie contends, is the presence of other forms of artistic production, from opera in the Romantic period to contemporary film and cinema. Referencing Arthur Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (1818, repr. 1844), he notes Schopenhauer's acknowledgement of the various forms of artistic pursuit and his cosmological approach to studying this range of form. Schopenhauer, according to Gillespie, saw music as incorporating this whole *cosmic range*, from the planetary bass to the high lyrical expression of the human voice. This interest in representing the entire range and production of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was then picked up by Wagner in his operas. Gillespie then turns to a consideration of several works of modernist literature

1 All quotes in this article are from transcripts of the recorded panel discussions at the ICLA 2016 (21.-27. July 2016, University of Vienna).

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from the nineteenth and twentieth century, before moving on to film from the early twentieth century. Films can also, he argues, reflect the "encyclopaedic" tradition of the novel, containing within its wide-ranging historical processes.

Haun Saussy joins the conversation by turning his attention to Vienna itself. Vienna, Saussy notes, is an ideal location for the discussion to take place, being a former multilingual empire and having a strong tradition of "hybridity" and varying languages, religions, and cultures. It is, therefore, a place which lends itself especially well to the question regarding the extent to which art can offer "universal codes". Saussy turns to the topic of digitisation in order to address the central question of the panel. The computerisation of culture, he argues, offers the potential to turn every piece of art into a singular code – a sequence of zeros and ones which can be achieved for all art forms. Saussy expresses doubt about this claim, contending that it "disregards in fact the way in which binary media is a technique of representation".

Here, Saussy calls for a return to the Baroque period for further insights. Whilst computerisation was still centuries ahead, the Baroque period did represent a time when the possibility of universal codes and languages was a matter of significant concern. Looking back to 1665, Saussy notes the example of the famous Jesuit scholar Athanasius Kircher who had a particular interest in languages and entered into a correspondence with Kaiser Rudolph of Vienna. Kaiser Rudolph, concerned about the practicalities of the diversity of the number of languages spoken in his territories, tasked Kircher with the creation of a machine which could translate languages. Kircher, Saussy explains, did in fact build a box which contained a number of codes that would point to the corresponding terms in Kircher's universal dictionary. This idea that the world was formed by a number of micro units that could be combined and recombined in an infinite number of ways, Saussy contends, was "essential to the Baroque understanding of the world".

Returning to the present, Saussy points out that we now do have number of mechanical means of cultural production. He uses a poem by Quirinus Kuhlmann – "basically a list of nouns [that] can be permuted in billions and billions of different ways" – as an example. An individual in Switzerland, Saussy explains, has embedded this into a webpage, whereby every time a person loads the page it will reshuffle the words into a different order. It will take ten thousand years of people reloading the page to exhaust the possible combinations. Saussy then turns to the contemporary Austrian composer Peter Ablinger who has deconstructed a recording of a human voice into its parts. Saussy argues that this demonstrates a continuity from the work of Hermann von Helmholtz who, in the 1850s, showed that every vowel and consonant could be reproduced in the form of a series of vibrations, occurring at the same time but at different frequencies.

Ablinger uses a computer to much the same effect, reproducing the different tonalities of the human voice. This, Saussy contends, represents "a mechanical decomposition of the forms of signification" which can be transferred to a different medial form, "so that via the computer the piano's chords take the place of human vocal chords".

Christine Knoop joins the conversation with a clarification of the term *empirical aesthetics* as this is the focal research commitment of the *Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics*, where she carries out her research. She describes this as the investigation of the human response to works of art, so in the case of literature "how actual readers respond to particular typescripts, to particular genres, to individual texts, or to individual features in literary texts". This work is carried out through collaboration and "interdisciplinary operations with psycholinguists, with empirical psychologists, and with neuroscientists". Knoop traces this interest in the affective qualities of artistic production back to classical rhetoric through to the eighteenth century, in particular the work of Kant. Knoop, however, claims that this interest waned in the nineteenth century, and believes it is still lacking today. She thinks that "the only option we have to gain back such an [...] overarching understanding of aesthetics" is to follow a comparative and interdisciplinary study which incorporates, for insights to emotional response, expertise from psychologists, biologists, and neuroscientists. This approach, Knoop argues, is offered through empirical aesthetics.

Knoop goes on to describe in more detail the work of "empirical aestheticists". Their research, she explains, attempts to bridge biologically and socioculturally influenced perceptions of works of art, with intermedial explorations being of particular interest and significance. Taking music and poetry as an example, she notes that studies have shown that the human brain processes poetry in more similar ways to music than to other literary genres. Concepts and terminologies are also of special interest, taking as an example the word "elegance", which is used in different forms of artistic production, such as "elegant terms and phrases", "elegant brushstrokes in paintings, elegant harmonies in music". Therefrom arises the question of whether "empirical readers and art-lovers experience similar aesthetic emotions and insights in different items and categories", and whether there are overarching conceptual patterns.

Whilst elegance is something that the "empirical aestheticists" are currently tackling, Knoop notes that other concepts have proved more difficult, and that future work plans to examine the "sublime", a term which has proved complex. A possible approach to this intricate term might be to take a dual approach by considering more "traditional" approaches – that is looking at how the sublime is treated in a corpus of literature – in addition to approaching people to ask them about their understanding and experience of the term. This kind of work could,

for example, rely on interview data but also incorporate "physiological studies". Knoop notes that these studies could attempt to measure people's emotional responses or levels of arousal by, for example, measuring any increase in a person's heart rate when confronted with a particular term.

Marc Mathieu Münch similarly notes the parallels between neuroscience and the humanities but argues this is not only apparent in the study of aesthetics but also in the study of ethics. He agrees upon the significance of considering the particular affective qualities of a work of art, claiming that "art cannot be defined as the collection of words or of artists or of style, but as an interacting system" which involves not only creators but receivers as well. A consideration of affect also, Münch notes, reintroduces the concept of value.

Achim Hölter joins the discussion, focusing on the title of the roundtable, "The Arts as Universal Code", which, he argues, draws on the central theme of the congress as a whole: language. Code, he remarks, is a more universal and inclusive way to consider the dialogical relationships between varying forms of artistic production. Hölter recalls a conference titled "Comparative Arts" that he participated in with the German Comparative Literature Association in 2007. The links between Comparative Literature and the arts in general, he argues, are rooted in the "American School" of Comparative Literature, as opposed to the "French School" which laid a more significant focus on the study of literature only. While these "old school ideas", Hölter notes, have changed with time, he found that even in 2007 the conference needed to justify its intermedial focus.

He turns to a historical overview of the interest in seeking commonalities and similarities between different forms of artistic production, referring to "German idealism". The "German idealists", Hölter states, sought to build a systematic approach to mapping different artistic media. Following Kant, for example, one could seek to map every aesthetic movement as an attempt to mediate "the pleasant and the disagreeable". Around 1900, a more empirical focus emerged. The American scholar George Lansing Raymond wrote seven volumes systematising the different forms of artistic expression. Similarly, the German scholar Max Dessoir founded not only a journal on general aesthetic studies, but also held a congress on the subject in Berlin. Hölter notes, however, that this area of interest fell out of popularity in the mid-twentieth century but is now coming back into focus. Drawing on his experiences teaching at the University of Vienna, Hölter gives the example of a course he is planning to teach on the "sublime". The "sublime" as a term, Hölter notes, offers an excellent example of the considerations of the panel, by raising the questions: "Is there any such thing? Is there a universal term possible? [...] Is that a Platonic idea or just a word that we have made up?"

B: Language: The Essence of World Literature?

Chair: Achim Hölter
Participants: Sandra Bermann, Hans Bertens, Adams Bodomo, Ipshita Chanda

This panel strives to combine two main aspects of *comparatism*: the universal linguistic condition of every kind of literature, oral or written, and the worldwide migration and exchange of texts. It considers the question of hegemonic world languages in a situation that is more or less adequately described with Goethe's term or its descendants. Chaired by Achim Hölter from the University of Vienna, the discussion brings together Sandra Bermann from Princeton University, Hans Bertens from Utrecht University, Adams Bodomo from Vienna University, and Ipshita Chanda from the Department of Comparative Literature at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.

Achim Hölter opens the debate mentioning some of the current problems in the field of world literature, in particular questions arising from languages (national, regional, professional, specialised) being the substance of all literary and critical activities, leading to permanent and currently growing problems of terminology, but also all kinds of usage. It seems that some languages have definitely reached the status of world languages, which may, apart from global communication and cultural hegemony, entail disrespect for numerous languages which have only recently emancipated. Translation as a market is, then, simultaneously on the rise and challenged, as it is at the same time overcoming boundaries and making them visible. World literature is not only the – developing and changing – core concept of comparatism, but also a term including a reference to the worldliness of texts.

Reflecting on literature and language, Ipshita Chanda states that "the specifically human ability to use language to create what does not exist, and the special ability that human language affords as a medium of our intersubjectivity, are arguably best exemplified by literature regardless of where and in what language it is composed". This leads Chanda to consider the pairing of "world" with "literature", as "surely we do not mean that language is the essence of world literature only, rather than of literature as a whole". She then acknowledges Dionýz Ďurišin's conceptualisation of "language as national, and world literature as a sum total of national language literatures". This leads her to consider recent developments in scholarship surrounding world literature, where some have sought to "designate some world languages into which literature must be translated in order to be made available to, or gain the status of, world literature".

The term world literature, Chanda notes, "was brought into the literary discourse of the western world as a universal to challenge the parochialism of rampant jingoistic nationalism and to subvert the powerplays of nineteenth century

Europe". While "[t]he monocultural, monolingual nineteenth century nation reduced language to territory", Goethe believed that literature "transcended" these boundaries. Thus, "literature embodied the plurality of the world in its external difference, a singular but universal phenomenon that could pose the human question and reveal the human condition from many different locations".

Chanda notes that literature reflects the diversity of languages, which poses complex questions about how to define world literature, as well as who creates this definition. A definition dependent on translatability and circulation, she argues, "serves to limit the idea of literature to what is accessible to some arbitrarily imagined world for reasons that are commercial, non-literary, and tied to the apron strings of global capital". Chanda quotes Rabindranath Tagore, in his intention to "translate Comparative Literature from English into Bengali, and call it world literature". She explains that Tagore "had already elsewhere clarified the etymology of *sahitya*, the word used for literature in many Indian languages, including Bengali, the language in which he wrote. *Sahitya* is derived from the Sanskrit *sahit*, meaning with or together. For Tagore the essence of literature was being with the other, connecting to the feelings and sympathies of those who are different from us".

Tagore problematised the notion of a "monolingual, monocultural nation derived from nineteenth century European nationalist discourse", noting that plurality invites a re-conceptualisation of ideas of the nation. "This unfinished endeavour," Chanda observes, "which we are still living and working towards in the Asian subcontinent today, prompts me to question the idea of a national literature aligned with a single language and of world literature theorised through the dynamics of translation and circulation of individual national language literatures. If you are located in a nation with twenty three official languages, in which literature and orature have been composed for centuries, it becomes obvious that literature is a universal category unlimited by territory or language". Humans, Chanda acknowledges, have a long history of "contact with other languages and cultures" and "comparison as method moves us away from collapsing languages and the literatures written in them into territorial confinement, and towards a willingness to engage with alterity and plurality as existential conditions". World literature, thus, must reflect "a world formed through contactual relations" rather than the "circulation and translation of national language literatures".

"Comparative", however, highlights difference which, Chanda argues, points to "the theoretical and ethical strength of Comparative Literature" in its "willing attempt to reach out across difference". Chanda further notes that "beyond the easy and appropriative solutions of domestication, circulation, or representation through translation, lie untranslatability, and the possible failure of understanding. Actual engagement with plurality and the alterity that characterise the world require hu-

mility and respect for difference". This is crucial in current "times of majoritarian, authoritarian, aggressive, and exclusionary laws on migration and citizenship". Chanda, therefore, argues that "we must recall that our discipline has tenaciously survived scepticism, crises, rejections, accusations of irrationality, and some obituaries from well-meaning family members, simply because it acknowledges literature's ability to embody difference across the world, and reaches out beyond a familiar language and culture, to grasp this difference". Chanda concludes that "literature which presents, and sometimes refuses to unravel, these mysteries is our companion, teacher, and guide in that quest".

Adams Bodomo states that his "main interest on the question of language as an important aspect of comparative or global literature is to chart a twenty-first century agenda that sees the development of African language literature" or "Afriphone literature", and to show how "African languages can play a role in this new conceptualisation of multilinguality as an important aspect of Comparative Literature". Bodomo turns to David Damrosch, who has "already testified to the importance of language in Comparative Literature in claiming that language is a key justifying the existence of Comparative Literature as a separate discipline".

This raises questions in the multilingual context of African and Comparative Literature as to how to deal with such a variety of languages. Bodomo notes his preferred approach is that of "parallel texting", defined "as a set of texts in which literary expressions in two or more languages are mediated in the form of translation at various levels, including the graphemic, the morphological, the syntactic, the phonological, and certainly the semantic". Bodomo notes that his own poem, which centres on the death of Nelson Mandela, is an example of such "parallel texting", in that it is written both in Dagaare (a language of northern Ghana) and in English. This allows the reader to "get the same message in two languages, which is a more inclusive approach than a monolingual text". The first and last stanzas of this poem are reproduced below:

N bakori mine woi	Friends
N mabiiri woi	Children of one Mother
Zenɛ Dizemba beraanuu bebiri	Today December 5
Te yelpaala na ba taa nimiri	News coming in bodes not well
[…]	
A zɛle tammo ne logiri	Bow, army of arrows in tow
A te kulo o yiri	He is on his way home
A kyaare sapare	Facing East
A te gɛrɛ Dapare	On the ultimate journey to Dapare

This leads Bodomo to questions of terminology as "a Comparative Literature agenda necessitates a clear language of comparatism". Bodomo, therefore, argues that "we need a certain meta-language in which to express concepts. How do we say sonnet, author, novel, poem etc in African languages; how do we express established theoretical notions in literature in less commonly taught languages?".

Hans Bertens turns to *The Evenings: A Winter's Tale* (2016) by the Dutch author Gerard Reve, which was published to much acclaim in the UK. Bertens quotes *The Guardian*, who described the novel as "not only a masterpiece but a cornerstone manqué of European literature"; the *Sunday Telegraph*, who called it "an undisputed classic"; *The Economist*, who named it "an existential masterwork"; *The Observer*, for whom it was "a dark masterpiece"; and the *TLS*, who described it as "an orphaned masterpiece". Bertens notes the significance of "orphaned" here as "its original, *De avonden: een winterverhaal*, had been published in 1947 and in 2016 Reve had been dead for ten years". Bertens points out that Reve's work only came into English translation through a subsidy from the Dutch Foundation for Literature which is funded by the Dutch government. Without this support, Bertens notes, "*The Evenings* would still be wholly unknown in the Anglophone world".

This, for Bertens, exemplifies the problems of the literary market, as "if things were completely left to the market, writers who write in one of Europe's smaller languages would have little chance of making their way into the halls of world literature". This in turn means, for Bertens, that it is "English being the *lingua franca* that makes the theory and practice of world literature possible". Bertens notes the difficulties faced by French and German authors who wish to see their work translated into English, demonstrated by the fact that only around 2% of novels published in English were translated works in the year 2014, compared to 27% in France. Bertens, however does "not expect parity – the Anglophone world is much larger than the Francophone one", but instead argues that this still reveals "a problem that faces all of us who work in world literature. Other than Comparative Literature, the term world literature – because of the scope that it suggests – demands a sort of literary justice. It does not demand a world literature canon based on this or that specific quality, but it implies a moral imperative to see all texts, from wherever they originate and whenever they were produced, as potential members of a truly global world literature family – even if one can only read them in an English translation". As English translations are produced only rarely, "world literature asks of our colleagues who are able to read languages that most of us don't understand to signal texts that they think deserve our attention. It also asks of our literary and scholarly journals – run by ourselves – to be daring and to accept perhaps risky contributions on materials that we have never heard of and that we can't really judge". While "we might fall for the occasional hoax and publish a computer-

generated piece on a putative masterpiece that never existed", Bertens believes this "surely would be worth the risk".

Sandra Bermann offers a "perspective of the Americas in Comparative Literature", although she begins by "adding two 's's' to the title of the panel, rendering it: 'Languages—the Essence of World Literatures'". Bermann notes the globality of English as a language, adding that "we know a good deal about the past and current power of English, and that its hegemony has been acquired largely through media, politics, publishing, and a colonial past. Its power clearly affects our present as well as our historical understanding of world literatures". Bermann points out the contributions of comparatists across the world who "have offered invaluable reflections on English, the global and the world". Bermann states that, building on these previous interventions, "perhaps the moment has nonetheless come to give more theoretical and practical weight to local languages and cultures, to look more carefully at non-hegemonic literatures and how they interact with one another as well as with forces of international capitalism and cultural hegemony". This would represent a "working from below, as it were, keeping our gaze on the local, the peripheral, the vernacular, as well as the dominant" so that "we might better conceptualise literatures dialogically – in their varied interrelations, and their diverse imaginings of the world". Bermann argues that "we might thereby transform our conception of the global into an idea more multiple and alive – a cluster rather than a unity, an action rather than an entity". This, Bermann concludes, would further highlight "the importance of languages within and across national borders, of translation – and of polylingual collaborations".

Bermann questions the perception of the USA as "English and monolingual", noting that over 400 languages are spoken in this USA: "some indigenous, others brought by enslaved peoples, colonists, and immigrants from around the globe". In addition, Bermann notes the presence of "creoles, dialects, and hybrid languages". She, therefore, argues that "bringing multiple languages and vernacular cultures into our teaching and scholarship produces more variegated, open, and temporally nuanced views of the American language(s)". Bermann notes that, while the USA serves as an example, "we find throughout the Americas highly complex, historically distinct, polylingual literatures and cultures".

Bermann points to the importance of studying "literatures – within and across national borders" in learning languages. She notes that, despite there being around 6500 languages, few scholars of Comparative Literature achieve a knowledge of more than five, with only a talented few reaching ten or twelve. This, for Bermann, highlights the importance of translation. Bermann quotes Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o in that "'translation between the dominant languages and marginalised languages; translation between marginalised languages; translation as the common language

of languages should go a long way towards enabling dialogues among the different world cultures, large or small.'". Here, Bermann argues, the internet opens up new possibilities: "through databases, websites, discussion groups, and online dissemination, the possibility of reading (and discussing) translations from many languages and cultures is rapidly expanding – and changing the educational landscape".

Bermann notes that a "focus on the local and vernacular as well as dominant literatures" can make "the task of sharing terminologies, dictionaries, and languages of comparatism among them [...] seem particularly daunting". She argues, however, that "to make serious headway, a global collaboration of polylingual scholars (some perhaps from the AILC/ICLA) would be especially effective. If results of their work could be translated into several local or peripheral as well as dominant languages – and disseminated online – they would," she expects, "generate innovative reflections among a rising generation of comparatists".

C: Has Comparatism Turned into Worldwide Cultural Studies?

Chair: Dorothy Figueira

Participants: Isabel Capeloa Gil, Zhang Longxi

This panel explores the way in which the discipline of Comparative Literature can be both defined and differentiated from related fields, such as Cultural Studies or world literature. It is chaired by Dorothy Figueira from the University of Georgia. Isabel Capeloa Gil from the Catholic University of Portugal and Zhang Longxi from the City University of Hong Kong participate in the discussion.

Dorothy Figueira begins the panel by offering a historical perspective on the development of the fields of Comparative Literature, world literature, and Cultural Studies. Figueira states that, before the founding of the ICLA, world literature was frequently a broad term used with the intention of expanding literary studies within the Western academy to be more inclusive of non-Western literatures, and of shifting the focus to include a more expansive study of cross-cultural reception studies. In the late twentieth century, Figueira argues, Comparative Literature has established itself with dedicated departments and publications and, in the United States in particular, the field of General Literature emerged with a special focus on reading texts in translation in order to incorporate literatures which the institution was not able to teach in the original language into study. In more recent years, Figueira explains, world literature has emerged, primarily from English language departments, in order to include non-Western literatures which, certain proponents of world literature felt, had been ignored in Comparative Literature departments. Figueira, how-

ever, disputes this assumption and asserts that, in her view, "world literature is no substitute for the more demanding field of Comparative Literature", and also questions the representativeness of various languages within the wider field. This political function of world literature – to promote inclusion that is deemed to be lacking – Figueira asserts, likens it to Cultural Studies.

Cultural Studies, Figueira explains, emerged in the UK in the 1960s and sought to critique and challenge the hierarchies and value judgements present in academic institutions and practice. This interrogation of structures of power within academic and cultural institutions was central to the founding of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. British Cultural Studies was, therefore, concerned with staging an intervention into the structuring of culture and society and exposing structural inequalities. American Cultural Studies, Figueira notes, followed the socialist predications of British Cultural Studies, but tended to lay a stronger focus on the embeddedness of cultural production within capitalist exploitation, with a particular interest in popular culture.

Figueira sees initial parallels between world literature and Cultural Studies, both fields, she believes, lack a methodological structure; take a free approach to borrowing their theories, methods, and principles from other disciplines; claim to occupy a space that Comparative Literature neglects; and both originate primarily from English Literature departments. Both, Figueira asserts, are fundamentally based on fallacies: that Comparative Literature neglects non-Western literatures and that the Humanities lack an interdisciplinary focus in the case of Cultural Studies. Figueira disputes both these foundations, arguing that an interdisciplinary focus has been central to her training in Comparative Literature. Both world literature and Cultural Studies, she pertains, claim to add things which have long been present within the discipline of Comparative Literature. Figueira asserts that, as she argued in her book *Otherwise Occupied. Theories and Pedagogies of Alterity*, world literature is that latest "in a series of pedagogies dealing with the Other in American Academia [...] [including] Postcolonial Studies, Identity Studies, Multiculturalism" which have all, she believes, followed similar trajectories within the academy of prioritising English-language studies at the expense of non-Anglophone literatures.

It is on this basis that Figueira criticises scholars of Cultural Studies who, she asserts, produce only a "simulacrum of the social sciences, enough to impress narrow-focused colleagues and students in an English department" but lacking academic rigour. This, Figueira argues, is mirrored in world literature departments "which appropriate authors and works from other languages rather than defer to the general expertise of other departments". This, Figueira argues, both perpetuates structural inequalities with the academy and simultaneously lessens the rigour and quality of the courses taught in these departments, which has the economic benefit

for university management of allowing non-specialist teaching assistants to be drafted in to teach such courses at lower staffing costs. It also places the study of literatures from across the world solely in hands of English departments.

Isabel Capeloa Gil joins the discussion to draw a distinction between British Cultural Studies and what is often in Europe termed Cultural Analysis, as it is practice, for example, at the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis. Cultural Analysis, Capeloa Gil argues, is more hermeneutic in style and less sociological in focus. She returns to the central question of the roundtable – "Has Comparatism Turned Into Worldwide Cultural Studies?"– and says she believes it has not, although acknowledges a growing concern about this question. She notes that in more recent decades there has been increased emphasis within Comparative Literature to move beyond European literatures, while also taking on the Cultural Studies commitment to socio-cultural intervention; to the interrogation of power structures based on class, gender, and race; and to a consideration of the study of popular culture. Comparative Literature's reliance on importing methods, themes, and approaches from other disciplines, Capeloa Gil notes, perhaps inevitably leads to anxieties about the place of the discipline within the wider Humanities.

The cultural turn within literary studies over the past three decades, Capeloa Gil believes, results from two key factors: a crisis of the discipline and the transformation of a socio-political agenda. This disciplinary crisis is rooted in a need to justify the discipline itself, while the socio-political agenda frequently calls for the incorporation of underrepresented perspectives. This has led to Comparative Literature – a discipline already concerned with crossing disciplinary borders – to widen its focus yet further to include fields such as law, neuroscience, and computer science. This has even led to the incorporation of big data and analytics into comparative research, something which troubles Capeloa Gil, as she believes it posits artificial intelligence above human creativity.

Capeloa Gil further points out a paradoxical tension within the field in the urge to both de-territorialise and re-territorialise the discipline. She believes the discipline has been sufficiently de-territorialised to incorporate the study of a wide range of cultural expression. She, however, points out that this may have been at the expense of the "literature" element of the discipline. If everything is to be included as literature, however, then it is to render the term literature meaningless. Therein lies the concern to re-territorialise, with a renewed emphasis on literary analysis. Clearly it is not possible, Capeloa Gil notes, to satisfy both the urge to widen the field of cultural analysis, and to narrow the field into the study of literature. Capeloa Gil argues that, while all literature is part of culture, not all culture is part of literature and, ultimately, if "we are to designate ourselves as practitioners of Comparative Literature, our mandate is to practice comparisons *with* literature". While Cultural Studies can be concerned with using text

to understand the functioning of culture, Comparative Literature – Capeloa Gil asserts – should be concerned with using text to understand the functioning of the text itself. The two fields – while closely related – are not, therefore, interchangeable.

Zhang Longxi joins the discussion to emphasise the strength that a position of "in- betweenness" can hold within the discipline of Comparative Literature, drawing on his own experience of working in both the USA and in Hong Kong. Comparative Literature, he argues, also occupies an "in-between" position within cultures, literatures, and languages, which looks beyond monolingualism and national borders. Zhang notes that while Figueira's insights related to the North American academy, and Capeloa Gil's to the European, he would like to offer an "in-between" perspective from his current professional position in Hong Kong. He returns to the central question of "Has Comparatism Turned Into Worldwide Cultural Studies?" by offering a definition of both comparatism and cultural studies. Comparatism, he argues, is not exclusive to the discipline of Comparative Literature but is a fundamental process in how we make sense of the world, with all of our actions, thoughts, and decisions contextual and relational.

Zhang refers back to the early years of the discipline of Comparative Literature when there was a requirement to compare at least two literatures and cultures. Comparative Literature, Zhang argues, has a tendency to be global, multilingual, and inclusive, something it shares with world literature. Zhang disagrees with Figueira in his belief that world literature is both important and necessary to Comparative Literature. This lies, firstly, in the renewed emphasis world literature has offered to the study of literature itself. Zhang draws on his own personal experience on the editorial board of a journal to note that many submissions claiming to be literary criticism did not consider literature at all. World literature, he argues, has addressed this issue by refocusing the discipline on the study of literature. The second positive development offered by world literature, Zhang argues, is a renewed focus on the "world". Zhang does not read world literature as a project which necessarily prioritises English, but can be a route to discovering new literatures. This could be a means to address the imbalance in cultural capital and increase the circulation of literatures which are less well known within the Western academy.

Zhang argues that Cultural Studies, particularly in the American context, offer a special focus on issues of class, gender, and race, which are socially and politically important for the Humanities as a whole. Zhang, however, believes that Cultural Studies have a particular aversion to the study of well-established literary works, resulting in the emergence of literary scholars who, in Zhang's opinion, do not necessarily favour literature. Zhang stresses that this gives rise to the difference between Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature, with Cul-

tural Studies using the socio-political and cultural context as its starting point while Comparative Literature foregrounds literature itself. Zhang argues that, while there is certainly a place for Cultural Studies within the academy, Comparative Literature needs to reaffirm its disciplinary foundation and, therefore, reassert its own place within the Humanities through a renewed focus on literature itself, particularly beyond the Western canon.

D: The Language of Thematics

Chair: Hendrik Birus
Participants: Achim Hölter, Takauki Yokota-Murakami, Gianna Zocco

This panel explores the study of themes and motifs within the field of Comparative Literature. It features Achim Hölter from the University of Vienna, Takauki Yokota-Murakami from Osaka University, and Gianna Zocco from the University of Vienna (now: Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung, Berlin). It is chaired by Hendrik Birus from Jacobs University Bremen.

Hendrik Birus opens the panel by identifying three German terms used in relation to the study of themes and motifs: *Stoffgeschichte*, *Motivgeschichte*, and *Thema*. He asks how we can best define these terms and identify their significance to the field of Comparative Literature and notes how complex it can be to form such definitions. Birus notes that "in the German tradition, there never was a direct connection between *Stoff-* and *Motivgeschichte* on the one hand and *Problemgeschichte* on the other". In the early twentieth century, German philosophy tended to seek to understand "the history of philosophy as a history of problems". This leads Birus to ask if *Problemgeschichte* should be an area of study within the study of thematics. Returning to the question of the importance of thematics to Comparative Literature specifically, Birus notes that the process of comparing aims not only to find similarities, but also to identify differences.

Achim Hölter joins the conversation by identifying his particular interest with the study of thematics, something that, he argues, everybody researching in the field of Comparative Literature engages with either directly, indirectly, or both. He references his postdoctoral research project which focused on disabled soldiers, war invalids, who had lost their ability to walk due to injuries sustained in warfare, as they are represented across nineteenth century European literature. In addition to writing this project, his postdoctoral position required him to prepare a lecture on a topic of choice. Hölter selected *Bücherschlachten* – or the "Battle of Books"/ "Battle with Books" – for his lecture, once again drawing him back into the study of thematics. Hölter agrees with Birus on the complexities of

attempting to define terminology. While "thematic studies" is a fairly self-explanatory way to describe research concerning themes, the German usage of *Thematologie*, borrowed from French and Italian, is more complex. This borrowing led to "lively discussions" in the 1980s and 1990s as the French and Italian usage included aspects of study which were not covered by the German term *Thema*. This, Hölter explains, "is the object of speech and has a current social or political relevance". *Motiv*, on the other hand "can be something which is only interesting within the tradition of literary texts". *Stoff*, in comparison, "is much more difficult to be expressed in English". Here, Hölter argues, dictionaries can still be of use, although there is only a very limited number of dictionaries of thematic studies in publication: in Italian, French, German, and English.

Considering the role of thematics for Comparative Literature in general, Hölter notes a certain impulse within the discipline to look for and "identify common denominators, to find rules that exist more or less in all cultures". And while it is plausible, Hölter argues, to create cross-cultural classifications on a range of motifs or even sub-motifs, the issue of linguistic differences complicates the project. Different languages express different concepts in different ways or "express the same things differently". However, Wikipedia, Hölter notes, will become a useful resource for addressing the issue, with multiple articles linking concepts across languages. Intermediality is also an important approach for Comparative Literature and thematics, alongside an investigation of themes across both literary and mass-media discourse and the "interaction of fictional texts and the facts out there in the real world". This includes not only the question of how literary texts are shaped by events in the real world, but how literary texts shape our interpretation of these events, something that is especially compelling in our current digital age.

Gianna Zocco joins the discussion, stating her interest in the study of thematics came from her recently completed PhD project. Her doctoral research explored the motif of the window, which allowed her to use the concrete starting image of the window to explore a "relatively advanced number of complex and fascinating topics, having to do with projection, visuality and imagination, surveillance, identity and gender, cultural theories of space", amongst others. This, Zocco explains, rooted her work in the study of thematics but allowed her to draw on the methodology of a broad area of studies thus making it relevant for more contemporary issues. Zocco, therefore, argues for thinking "of literary motifs and themes not – as it was done – in a positivistic tradition" but rather to consider each of these small units as having an "analytical structure of its own, that not only partakes in the larger form of the particular text, but also relates this particular text to aspects of the actual world [...] and possibly to other literary or cultural products with thematic similarities". This, Zocco argues, points to

the importance of intertextual and intermedial approaches to the study of thematics. Returning to her PhD project, Zocco notes that the practical elements were often challenging. She, for example, has been frequently asked about how she found all of the literary texts on which her research centred. She notes the possibility that her study missed certain important texts, simply because she did not uncover them in the course of her research. This is particularly challenging when looking outside of the "canon" to less well-known texts and authors which might represent "hidden diamonds" for such research.

Takauki Yakota-Murakami joins the conversation by referring to his own previous research in this area as his first book considered the *Don Juan* figure in both Eastern and Western traditions. Yakota-Murakami picks up on Zocco's intermedial focus by pointing out the potential dialogues between thematics and adaptation studies. Yakota-Murakami notes, however, that a cross-cultural approach, while revealing fascinating insights, can be complex. Taking Zocco's previous work as an example, he notes that a cross-cultural study would require the researcher to decide on what translation would be appropriate for "window" to begin with, but could also raise more complex issues surrounding architecture in different cultural contexts. These issues are even more intricate when considering more abstract concepts. The poststructuralists, Yakota-Murakami argues, have successfully demonstrated the instability of signifiers and that "we deconstruct on the same level as we construct". Yakota-Murakami praises the importance of continuing this process of deconstruction and, in terms of Comparative Literature, focusing on differences as well as similarities. Following poststructuralist argument, Yakota-Murakami argues that "we should emphasise the signifier rather than the signified". Referencing again Zocco's research, Yakota-Murakami notes that while a study of windows in literature from various cultures has clear merit, he would warn against the impulse "to find the meaning of windows in various cultures" and instead focus on how they are constructed.

E: Comparative Literature and the *Practical Turn*

Chair: Achim Hölter
Participants: Steven Sondrup [†], Cho Sung-Won

This panel explores practical aspects of comparative literary studies and covers differing yet interlinked concerns: hierarchies of language and how they can be challenging, advantages and challenges of digital tools, and the creation and maintenance of libraries as systems of knowledge. It is chaired by Achim Hölter

from the University of Vienna. Steven Sondrup from Brigham Young University and Cho Sung-Won from Seoul Women's University participate in the discussion.

Achim Hölter opens the panel by presenting "three waves" within Comparative Literature. He terms the first wave as a period of "self-description" in the 1980s which focused on producing historical accounts of particular disciplines and their developments. This, he argues, was followed by the second wave – "The Poetics of Knowledge" – which began around the turn of the millennium and still continues today, which turns away from history in favour of discussions on how we can both perceive and communicate objects of investigation. In recent years, Hölter argues, a third wave has emerged: a "practical turn" which forms the subject of the round-table's discussion. Hölter draws on his teaching experience to recount student discussions over how to define and demarcate Comparative Literature as a discipline and turns to his fellow-panellists to explore this question.

Steven Sondrup expresses his own interest in exploring digital media and how digitisation has impacted literary studies. Sondrup argues that the online search engines offer a "global library" of literatures, with the impact of digital developments of literary studies offering both opportunities and challenges for academia. In particular, the circulation and dissemination of texts has been significantly increased through digital technologies. Hölter adds that comparatist practices of using digital search engines are an interesting line of inquiry and the impact this has had on our ways of both producing and communication research.

Cho Sung-Won introducing a further discussion topic by drawing on personal experience to argue that scholars of Comparative Literature must ask themselves questions about their own motivation in practicing the discipline. For Cho, an important element in her studies was a desire to make Korean literature visible with comparative literary studies and position herself against Euro-centric tendencies within the discipline. Cho argues that while digital technologies and the increased cross-border circulation which they have enabled, do allow for greater recognition of a wider variety of literatures, they also expose their own limitations. She argues that an in-depth understanding of the language in which literature is written is crucial to its understanding and critiques monolinguist tendencies within Comparative Literature and the problematic power relations which the dominance of the English language have compounded. Technology, Cho contends, further escalated these developments, as technological tools frequently require the user to have an understanding of relevant English. She advocates for a multilingual focus in Comparatist studies.

Hölter acknowledges the importance of Cho's argument and responds with two related questions that root the discussion firmly in the practical aspects of comparative literary studies: how many languages and which languages are necessary for comparatist study? Cho argues that these decisions, although difficult,

should be rooted in research objectives: a comparatist scholar, she argues, should prepare as many languages as their research demands and the discipline as a whole should strengthen their focus on language learning. Hölter, however, asks if even in a multi-lingual academic discipline a "common" language of English can actually improve international communication by facilitating mutual dialogue and understanding and turns to Sondrup to elaborate.

Sondrup notes that most Comparative Literature programmes in the USA do require foreign-language learning, with rigorous degree pathways requiring at least three additional languages to English, often including a classical language. Hölter, however, notes that deciding which languages to offer as a department can prove problematic and acknowledges that the increasing marketisation has further impacted academia and has often required the Arts and Humanities to take a defensive position in demonstrating their practical application within contemporary job markets, something for which language acquisition makes a strong case. Following these contemporary developments, the panellists turn their focus to digital developments within the field. Digital developments, Sondrup notes, have had an important impact on access and engagement – making texts available to audiences that would have otherwise have difficulty accessing them. Cho acknowledges the opportunities search engines can offer in systematic studies but argues that they present only a limited perspective and cannot always be used as a substitute for physical presence. Following questions of categorising and disseminating knowledge, Hölter turns to the topic of libraries.

The creation, maintenance, and usage of libraries, in particular multi-lingual libraries, raise interesting questions regarding research in the discipline, Hölter argues. In particular, which texts are made available in a particular collection and in what language these texts are offered raises compelling questions. Cho notes that both digital and physical libraries highlight crucial questions about hierarchies of language: which knowledge of European languages often required in order to navigate collections. The lack of transparency surrounding digital algorithms is a further concern, she notes, and leaves us with a limited understanding of how the results we see are collated.

Achim Hölter

Comparative Literature in Europe

A Short Prognosis (as presented at the ACLA meeting in Utrecht on 6 July, 2017)

The first prerequisite for a prognosis regarding the future of European comparatism would logically be to give a full overview of CompLit, or, in order to avoid problems of terminology, General and/or Comparative Literature, as it is in Europe today. Now this would entail a major effort, not only because Europe is such a difficult geographical, political, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic entity and is hard to define for our purpose, but also because there is no such thing as a general European logic behind the development of sciences and scholarly work, even though the European Council and the European Union as well as other political unities would perhaps nurture expectations and develop programmes along that line. Even worse: At this moment, we are tempted to quote Chinua Achebe: Things fall apart. Which means that we can only sum up some facts as they are, and some impressions, which need not be correct in each and every detail.

Europe comprises some 47 countries – counting the very small ones like San Marino and the very distant ones (from here) like Kazakhstan, or contested ones like Cyprus or Kosovo. To make it easier, let us count 40 larger states, seven of which are successors of former Yugoslavia, with a total of ¾ billion people. Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxemburg, Macedonia, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine, the UK, and Germany together with Austria have national organisations, some quite small, some with several hundreds of members. There is also a European Network for Comparative Literary Studies (ENCLS), which is holding its biannual congress in August (23.–26.8.2017, Helsinki) on „Fear and safety“. And then there is the global ICLA, whose last two congresses took place in Europe (Paris and Vienna), showing that there is a great potential for quantity, and hopefully for quality, too.

Most of the states just mentioned are trying to keep up an autonomous system of higher education, are running between zero and more than a hundred universities each (Germany, UK, Italy), and therefore are responsible for the range of studies and study programmes existing or flourishing in these countries. Larger states like Germany or France each offer CompLit in some 30 places; smaller countries like Austria or Switzerland in three or four universities. This means that CompLit is well or very well represented within the range of academic disciplines, but is not ubiquitous. This creates a particular dilemma for our discipline in most academic

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surroundings; that is, wherever it is part of the official canon of eligible subjects. As president of the German CompLit association (DGAVL), I had the opportunity to describe our situation in a newspaper as being caught in the middle: We are too small to be unsinkable, but too large to benefit from a political guarantee of existence, we are not English or German or French studies, nor are we Egyptian studies or some other small unit with high renown and an almost 1:1 ratio of professors and students. Whenever academia booms, we are well off, and even during a crisis we will not go down, but we are not in for any minority protection. As long as we do not train school teachers, which is not likely, I do not believe this will ever change. Furthermore, the conflict with the respective leading national philologies silently increases whenever the latter are accused of not doing enough for national education. This will remain the case as long as we do not explain publicly that what we are doing has, after all, in the meantime become the ordinary, average way of dealing with literature! Let us also note that colleagues often strive to obtain double qualifications; i.e. CompLit plus a national philology, in order to improve their chances to get tenure. CompLit is present and active in most countries, albeit to differing extents; sometimes in the form of departments with full professorships and with a complete line of qualification steps, but sometimes also only as particular points of interest pursued by scholars who officially bear other denominations or serve different functions at the same time.

In the meantime, European study programmes of CompLit come as BA, MA, or PhD tracks. The accumulation of degrees as originally designed by the creators of the universal European study model is currently becoming a reality with an increasing number of students taking degrees not only from different universities, but also in different disciplines. As CompLit is constantly turning into one *amongst* several subjects, it can profit more than other specialisations from its amalgamated nature; CompLit can be studied along with single languages, in addition to a national philology, or as a summary of knowledge and skill acquired in diverse BAs whose combination engenders, so to speak, the ideal condition for a comparatist MA. This applies, perhaps with a higher probability, also to the PhD, which is now the case in most of Europe. All of this appears to be a substantial advantage, freeing students of the necessity to choose between the practical and the ideal, even more so, as literature „as such“ corresponds to the concept of CompLit as the study of literature „tout court“. Most readers nowadays do not select their reading according to the country of origin, nor the original language, let alone the authors‘ passports. In countries like the Netherlands or the Scandinavian countries, living and reading with an eye towards the UK has been a reality for some decades and is an increasing phenomenon in other countries, too. This means that CompLit tends to, in a growing degree, factor in the actual way of handling literature, a change, which is more dramatic in Europe, because the national

culture policies simultaneously continue nurturing their national heritage and an intensified translation activity.

When I wrote a handbook on comparatism together with Rüdiger Zymner four years ago (2013), we tried to treat Europe according to regions defined by their idioms – and language and language families are, strangely enough, still the most important denominator when it comes to subdividing our continent, because this mirrors the logic that prevailed at the time when many European universities were established; still, it is of no importance for the place of comparatism. And yet, in most countries, CompLit is located near or within the respective national philology.

Europe is a continent of about 30 languages and many more varieties (about 200). The overall linguistic situation will be, in the future, more paradoxical than ever. After Brexit, English will merely be a minority language within the European Union (except Ireland), but we can be sure that this will change nothing about the ever-growing predominance of the English language in teaching and publishing. CompLit is particularly concerned with this development, inasmuch as it is one of the genuine interests and tasks of our discipline to investigate the epiphenomena of linguistic diversity, which is one of the features of European identity – whilst it is a demand of modernisation and globalisation to be visible within a scientific community and, which is equally important, to communicate in a high-level, standardised, scientifically adaptable idiom, that is not necessarily, but effectively English. Neither Brexit nor the dissatisfaction of native speakers of German, French, Spanish and so on, nor the still heterogeneous position of English in diverse cultures will stop that tendency. Although this phenomenon is far from being typical of Europe, the coexistence of a necessarily strong native language and culture with the growing average proficiency in English will be a significant quality of European comparatists, even if their origin is in the East of the continent. What will derive from that situation will perhaps not be the superfluity of translation. Nor, for that matter, the loss of translation studies, but rather a new perspective on translation as an option available everywhere. I'm thinking of highly professionalised scholars with native or next to native proficiency in three or more modern languages plus possibly the standard ancient ones.

In an increasingly globalised world, it would be naive to expect a particular European development concerning interests or methods of our discipline. What one can foresee, without being a prophet, is that being European will remain a major issue, more rarely in the key of self-affirmative reflexions, more frequently as a critical examination of former or current European positions as factors or results of colonialism. Europeans often blame themselves of being Eurocentric: but even the trial to get rid of Eurocentric attitudes will not be able to free itself of compromising gestures – the patronising pat on the shoulders of the formerly

colonised. Still, a sceptical view towards the Western canon will paradoxically dismantle this canon and help it to persist. This is why I personally believe that the investigation of all forms of literary historiography and of the techniques of canonisation is an important task.

One thing we have to mention is that CompLit in the West, in the South, and in the North of Europe as well as in the German speaking countries is in close contact to the US CompLit, which creates a growing similarity. And this might be a problem, too. We have to state that our continent is currently, or still, divided in a way, linguistically, between those who practice English and those who are thereby hampered or excluded; however, the division is also ideological. There is a dividing line according to approaches and themes, or rather: There are blurred fields of disagreement. Topics like diversity, gender, or queer studies are becoming more and more important and commonplace in the Western part of Europe, whilst other colleagues have to put up with difficulties, but – this has to be acknowledged, too – often do not see a necessity to work their way into this field. Some mutual respect is a minimal demand. This immense issue is certainly nothing that comparatism could solve, but we have to state that there is disagreement, in part not expressed verbally, but rather by the tacit absence of scholars. And, to keep talking about sore points: When it comes to the future of the broad field of sensitive language, I would state a certain backlog, or in any case expect a tendency to make up for a non-discussion, e.g. concerning the designation of traditional motifs or ethnic types. A further complication of language will unavoidably be involved; imagology or the investigation of cultural stereotypes as well as up-to-date thematics are a promising minefield.

The origin of CompLit lies in the investigation of constant factors, thematic and formal. Therefore, we are a perfect mirror of the world's or of Europe's problems. Whatever happens, or is a current topic, in society and in the media, ecology or human rights or whatever, is also discussed immediately in CompLit, or in publications with a certain, ever dwindling delay.

Our problem has always been the lack of a unique selling point. But when it comes to publishing, this may even be an advantage. Many European publishers have dedicated themselves to CompLit, or rather, *also* to CompLit. We still have a stronghold here, which applies, as formerly, to numerous European journals, too. Yet there is a noticeable shift towards digital journals. At the moment, these prove fertile ground, which implies faster and better dissemination, but also a quality problem ahead.

One important prediction would refer to digital humanities. There are huge possibilities for thematic research, for the definition of genres, for dealing with metaphors and symbols, in distant reading and big data processing. Everything is developing fast there, but to be honest, there is nothing particularly European in

it. Personally, I would advocate for, and am expecting, a turn towards the history of our discipline, particularly with two twists: towards an epistemological self-enlightenment, and towards a praxeological self-description. The library situation will change and perhaps improve dramatically by abandoning the restriction to physical space. For the book lovers among us, this is, in the long run, of course, bad news (but no *news* at all). At the same time, it is obvious that no discipline in the humanities can profit as much as CompLit from the universal availability of documents. I would like to name three fields from my personal experience: 1. We are missing typically comparative collections of translations into third languages (no library in the world is systematically collecting translations other than from the respective languages of origin into the language or languages of the respective country). 2. There is no international collection of literary histories. I should add here that there are some books trying to sketch a history of European literature, or a European history of the literary, which is not the same. And 3. there is no complete collection (although we are trying our best in Vienna) of all terminological dictionaries that exist – to your astonishment perhaps – in 50 languages of the world, many of which European. But let us not neglect that terminology, at least specialised terminology, is, like many other items, being taken care of by Wikipedia, which plays an important role here. Further, the keyword 'world literature' is not yet fully exploited. It is still very much alive, but there is more in it than the American East-coast version. Russia has its own tradition of *mirovaja literatura* with a completely different idea as its basis. The laboratory of theories, as I would put it, is also still going strong, alongside the Anglo-Saxon region, in France, but also in German, Italian, and Spanish. Once more, Slavonic (and neighbouring) scholars are less connected; with one clear ratio: The largest non-western languages are relatively isolated (viewed from Anglo-Saxon/European academia) or self-sufficient, whereas Lithuanian or Hungarian scholars, and, traditionally with much conviction, Swedish or Dutch scholars have turned to English without complaint.

To sum it up, CompLit can, in Europe, be the first-choice model of dealing with literature, if the large register of languages is not ignored, but rather put to use. To read, but also discuss in as many European languages as possible is, after all, our real European unique selling point.

Jakob Jung and Volker Michel

avldigital.de: A Web Portal for Comparative Literature

Abstract: *avldigital.de* is a Web portal designed specifically for scholars and institutions in the field of comparative literature. The project aims to supply researchers in the discipline with a means of finding the academic literature and information they need for their research, to support them in open-access publishing, and to establish a communication platform for the comparative literature research community, in Germany as well as worldwide. This contribution aims to give an overview of the services available, and details how scholars and institutions active in comparative literature research can benefit from and participate in using the platform for their research and for communicating their work. Additionally, some context is given on the project the portal is part of, what aims the project has, and what the future might look like.

Keywords: *avldigital.de*, comparative literature, *Fachinformationsdienste*, research communication, research infrastructure, Web portal

1 Introduction: A lone table in Vienna University's arcaded courtyard

The 2016 ICLA congress took place at the beautiful downtown campus of Vienna University. The conference participants enjoyed the lovely central European summer weather, sipping the many shades of Viennese coffee and lounging in deckchairs spread all over the arcaded courtyard at the centre of the university building. Seeking shelter from the sun, the comparatists strolled along the rows of busts of famous Viennese scholars and the tables laid with the newest publications of academic publishing houses, large and small.

One table, however, at the very back of the left-hand arcade, stood out. What was being advertised here? There was nothing more than a poster, a stack of leaflets, and a laptop displaying a *PowerPoint* presentation. Literary scholars muttered the mysterious product's name under their breath – missing vowels in critical places, was it simple proof for the weirdness of the German language, or an acronym? What was *avldigital.de*, and what did it have to do with the ICLA?

Asked for an explanation, the two people staffing the table stated that they were there advertising something that did not yet exist: an online portal for the

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comparative literature community. The acronym "AVL" stands for *Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (general and comparative literary studies), the common German-language title for the discipline of comparative literature. The remainder of the not-yet-existent platform's name referred to the digital nature of the services to be offered.

This article aims to give an overview of what *avldigital.de* is: *is* in the present tense, because by late 2019, *avldigital.de* has become real. The portal was finally released at the end of 2018 after a three-year development period. This article will give an introduction to the platform. Some context will be given on the project, of which the portal is part, what aims the project has, and what the future might look like. Then, the article will detail how scholars and institutions active in comparative literature research can benefit from and participate in our activities by using the platform for their research and for communicating their work.

2 What is *avldigital.de*?

In a nutshell, *avldigital.de* is a Web portal designed specifically for scholars and institutions in the field of comparative literature. The project aims to supply researchers in the discipline with a means of finding the academic literature and information they need for their research; to support them in open-access publishing; and to establish a communication platform for the comparative literature research community, in Germany, as well as worldwide.

The Web portal is the core service offered by the Specialized Information Service Comparative Literature (Ger.: *Fachinformationsdienst Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*, or FID AVL). The FID AVL is a non-commercial information infrastructure project for the German research community. It is funded by the German Research Foundation and is physically based at the University Library of Frankfurt, and it provides freely accessible services. An infrastructure project for the benefit of scholars based at German academic institutions, the FID AVL nevertheless invites comparatists from all countries to use the platform *avldigital.de*. The portal is available in both German (https://www.avldigital.de/) and English (https://www.avldigital.de/en/).

The infrastructural context of *avldigital.de* merits more detailed explanation. Its historical and organizational background is specific to the German academic framework. In the following sections, we will outline this background to highlight what *avldigital.de* is at its core: a service provided by specialist librarians for scholars in the field of comparative literature.

2.1 A library for comparative literature: The universal and the virtual

For a discipline such as comparative literature, the idea of a universal library is of particular appeal. Comparative literature constantly blurs the boundaries of not only methodology but also the objects of research and the definition of what counts as "literature." *Anything* could become the object of comparative literature research, so a universal library that would contain all the knowledge in the world would be the discipline's ideal instrument.

Now, anybody who has ever read a single text by Borges knows what problems this idea brings with it – and they will scoff at real-world attempts to create a universal library. Nevertheless, there do exist actual libraries that act following this very directive: "be universal." The best-known example is the Library of Congress in Washington, whose acquisition policy covers basically everything. In theory, any publication that could at any time become the object of personal interest or any kind of research – be it in the field of science, or in the field of the humanities – would be available there.

In Germany, the concept of a universal library has, for historical reasons, always been interlinked with that of a virtual library. "Virtual" in this context does not necessarily mean digital or computerized (though the emergence of online and internet-based library catalogues has helped in bringing the concept to fruition), but rather decentralized. Funded by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Foundation, or DFG),[1] the system of *Sondersammelgebiete* (Specialized Subject Collections, or SSGs) persisted from the early 1950s until 2013. Following the concept of a *verteilte Nationalbibliothek*, meaning a distributed or decentralized national library, the basic idea was to make sure that any academic publication, from anywhere in the world, which might one day become relevant to research at German universities, should exist at least once on German soil – a virtual universal library.

The organizing principle was that of identifying academic disciplines and assigning the duty of collecting as many publications as possible to various university and other specialized libraries all over Germany. Since these acquisitions were an added workload, and were only indirectly benefiting the researchers and

1 The DFG is one of the largest public funding institutions for research in Germany. Born out of the *Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft* to rebuild academia in Germany after World War II, it consists of an association of almost all academic institutions in Germany and is an integral part of their autonomous self-organization in terms of freedom of research and teaching. Although mainly responsible for funding research projects, the DFG also funds infrastructure projects.

students of the individual universities, the libraries were granted funding by the DFG. The SSGs were an integral part of the German research infrastructure system.

All publications bought by libraries out of the funding assigned to them were to follow certain guidelines and definitions of what the subject of the SSG comprised.[2] The introduction of computerized and online catalogues in the 1980s and 1990s made this system remarkably efficient. Scholars in Germany could be relatively sure that if their home university library did not stock a specific publication needed for their research, there was at least one other library, the one with the SSG for their subject, that had it. All they needed to do was to log into the interlibrary loan portal of their local library and order the book. This system of a virtual and decentralized national library found international recognition, not only among librarians but also among academic communities.

However, times and technologies progressed. Worldwide, the output of academic publications grew exponentially. Publishing houses editing core journals in numerous academic disciplines started raising subscription fees. New forms of publication emerged: electronic books and online journals, bringing with them the necessity of new metadata and quality standards as well as new challenges in licensing and access-rights management. The SSGs' principle of *vorsorgender Bestandsaufbau* (best translated as the "proactive acquisition of literature") was seen ever more critically. Its merits for research and education were at odds with the (not only financial) reality. The goal of building a virtual universal library grew more unattainable than ever: not only did the number of publications that were to be acquired become more unwieldy, but the new forms of publication – those that were *sui generis* virtual, this time meaning digital – were not covered and could not be included satisfactorily in the existing systems.

After several attempts to adapt the SSG system (such as the introduction of specialized online portals dubbed *Virtuelle Fachbibliotheken* [Virtual Subject Libraries]), in 2013 the DFG decided to abolish it completely and to replace it with a new program the *Fachinformationsdienste für die Wissenschaft* (Specialized Information Services for Scholarship). This step – which was not without its share of criticism from the German librarian and academic communities – transformed the nationwide information infrastructure in Germany into a more service-oriented, demand-driven system.

2 Some guidelines were purely practical, but some were the result of a somewhat dated definition of the field. Publications bought for the SSG for Comparative Literature, for example, had to compare literary texts from at least three languages. Otherwise, they were not deemed comparative.

Fachinformationsdienste (FIDs) develop their service and content profiles based on continual exchange with their respective scholarly communities. This is true both for the acquisition of research literature – if the research community in a particular field is content with the overall situation, no additional acquisition by the FID is required – and for supplementary services which the community might need. Whereas SSGs were funded almost automatically, with funding renewed each year, FIDs need to apply for new funding every three years, presenting concepts for new services and content based on feedback from their respective communities.

2.2 The Specialized Information Service Comparative Literature: Background and profile

The FID AVL is an example of one of these. It is situated at the University Library Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt am Main, where the *SSG Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* had been situated for sixty years, having built up an extensive collection of comparative literature research publications. For the first application within the new framework in 2015, extensive efforts were undertaken to include the German comparative literature community in the development of the service. Focus-group meetings took place and letters of intent from renowned institutions were obtained. A survey was sent to all members of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* (German General and Comparative Literary Studies Association, or DGAVL), asking for their opinion on what content and services an FID should include.

One of the results was a clear identification of the basic services, of which the FID was to be comprised. These were services for finding research publications and information needed for comparative research; services and information concerning open-access publishing; as well a communication platform to facilitate networking among comparatists in Germany, but also between them and their colleagues in other countries. These services were to be offered through a centralized platform on the Internet. Similar platforms already existed for many other scholarly fields in Germany.

Establishing an online portal specifically for comparative literature not only benefits comparatists in Germany in a practical way; it also means that the discipline as such becomes more visible within the wider scholarly community. Even though comparative literature had been established at modern academic institutions in Germany by literary scholars such as Ernst Robert Curtius or Peter Szondi, it was, and still is, often seen as an adjunct of one of the larger national philologies, such as German or Romance studies. Autonomous departments or in-

stitutes of comparative literature only exist at four German universities (Berlin, Frankfurt, Mainz, and Munich); all other sites of research in, and teaching on, the subject are usually limited to single chairs or sub-departments that are considered part of a greater "parent" discipline.

This in part influences one other, very important finding from the community feedback on which the FID's services are based, namely what the content profile of an information infrastructure service that aims to benefit all comparatists should be comprised of. It needs to take into consideration not only what comparatists are currently working on, but also what publications, information, and material they *might* require for their research. These considerations not only inform what media, publications, and bibliographical references should be included in an information portal, but also whether additional publications (and of what kind) should be acquired, and how the information, as well as the portal, should be structured.

Addressing these considerations needs to take three factors into account. Firstly, that comparative literature is a discipline with a very disparate community. Secondly, that, even if trends in research can be identified, research interests and methodology are similarly varied. Thirdly, that objects of research in the discipline can be genuinely comparative, but can also pertain to those of national philologies, of art, of media and cultural studies, or of similar fields.

The disparity of the community, methodology, and research areas is inherent to the field, but in Germany it is also caused by the same structures as those described above: location and institutional situation influence comparatists' research interests, methods, or even organizational affiliations. The third factor, that of the interdisciplinary approach and requirements of comparatists, needs no further explanation. An information service for comparatists needs to take all these factors into account. As a profile for the FID AVL, a twofold definition of comparative literature has been derived: a "narrow" and a "broad" definition.

The "narrow" definition tries to respect the discipline's distinct identity. It is highly specialized, with an emphasis on comparison and theory. Within the FID AVL's services, it is the basis both for a continued specialized acquisition of research publications and for making available information resources that are of special interest to the comparative literature community.

The "broad" definition takes into consideration the wide array of comparative literature research interests. This is of key importance for the definition of the target group of the FID AVL. This can include researchers that are affiliated with an institute or chair of comparative literature, as well as a scholar in media or cultural studies whose work is of a particularly comparative nature or whose methodology is characterized by concepts of inter- or transrelationality, be it between languages, media, cultures, genres, or times (to name but a few). Of course,

the "broad" definition is the basis for the selection of information and data made available in the catalogue module of the FID AVL's portal, *avldigital.de*: the selection aims to cover all philologies, art, media and cultural studies, aesthetics, and neighbouring disciplines. Furthermore, the platform's "Networking" module invites the input of information relevant to research in all fields of this "broad" definition.[3]

3 Finding literature, publishing, and networking: The three modules of *avldigital.de*

The service portfolio of the FID AVL emerged from the requirements comparatists have with regards to an information service that caters to their research needs. Frankfurt University Library successfully applied for funding from the DFG in 2015. The project, supported by a board of advisers representing various fields of research in comparative literature, started in mid-2016. Aiming to establish an online platform where all services are available, *avldigital.de* was officially launched in December 2018 (a beta version had previously been published in 2017). By then, a new application had been made for three more years of funding. This application, too, was successful, resulting in an additional funding period until mid-2022, in which the existing portal will be optimized, new data sources integrated, and the services opened to the international community.

The platform *avldigital.de* is designed to provide services that have been identified as desiderata by the comparative literature community. These are represented in *avldigital.de*'s three modules: "Finding literature," "Publishing," and "Networking."

3.1 Finding literature

The "Finding literature" module is basically a specialized catalogue of digital and printed research literature and information resources relevant to the field. The catalogue comprises references to books, articles, journals, e-books, and current

3 The idea of a universal library has been mentioned earlier. A "broad" definition in terms of content profiles for a comparative literature library catalogue could simply stop here and "just make everything available." But the idea of a juxtaposed "narrow" definition that describes comparative literature as a distinct, autonomous discipline – as well as purely practical reasons – does not allow for this.

news. The content profile covers what has been described above as the "broad" definition of comparative literature. The "narrow" definition is catered for as well: the FID AVL's funding includes a budget for the acquisition of publications in the field of literary studies with a specifically comparative focus; these are included in the "Finding literature" catalogue.

The "Finding literature" module's aim is to provide researchers with a comprehensive selection of bibliographical references that are relevant to their work. The advantage in comparison to a "regular" library catalogue is evident: "Finding literature" comprises a carefully curated selection of specialist publications and information that no other platform – at least in Germany – can provide. Even though all catalogues of academic libraries are searchable by (standardized) keywords and classifications, often assigned with meticulous care and by librarians with a degree in a relevant discipline, a selection covering the requirements of comparatists is usually difficult to find. Too often, existing classifications are either too exclusive (e.g. classifying literary theory and general literary studies, but not taking the comparative view into account) or too broad (such as the very common, broadly philological pairing "language and literary studies," which could encompass anything from post-structural poetics to neurolinguistics – to nobody's benefit). Therefore, a catalogue that provides comparatists specifically with the information and resources they need has been identified as a desideratum.

The *avldigital.de* catalogue includes, among other things, references to the specialized literature collected at Frankfurt University Library during the sixty-year SSG period and to open-access publications, and a bibliographical database of tables of contents from two hundred scholarly journals in the field of literary studies. Furthermore, an exclusive selection of e-books is available to a group of eight hundred scholars who are affiliated with institutes, departments, and research institutions in Germany, or with the DGAVL (thus not limiting access to affiliates of German institutions).

3.2 Publishing

Open-access publishing, originating in the sciences, is becoming increasingly significant in the humanities. "Open access" means free digital access to scholarly literature and other material such as research data. Recently, academic and political institutions have begun to promote open-access publishing with strategy papers and legislative proposals.

By now, the transition to open-access publishing is widely recognized as a question, not of if, but of when. Depending on the needs and wishes of the target group in question, FIDs provide an infrastructure for subject-related open-access

endeavours. The FID AVL, via *avldigital.de*'s "Publishing" module, supports the open-access transformation as a subject-specific and free-of-charge service provider for open access publishing in comparative literature.

The core of this service is the open access repository dubbed "CompaRe" (*Compa*rative Literature *Re*pository). "CompaRe" is available to scholars, research institutions, and publishers. It serves primarily as a platform for what is known as the "green road" to open access – the freely accessible republication of material which has already been published. However, first publications on "CompaRe" are possible as well.

Documents published on "CompaRe" are catalogued according to librarians' and subject-specific standards, and are archived on a freely accessible publication repository. They are included in the "Finding literature" module's catalogue, but also find their way into national and international catalogues and bibliographies. All documents are assigned a URN – a persistent identifier that, similarly to a DOI or HANDLE, allows the document to be cited and accessed continually.

The service is available to individual scholars, to research institutions, and to publishing houses alike. Scholars who would like to make more of their work freely accessible online (thus increasing its citation rate) can do so on "CompaRe." "CompaRe" is available to research institutions as a partner for systematically making their publication outputs available through open access. Journals, series, or other publications can be archived on the repository if permitted by the publishing houses, where they were first published. A good example of a collaboration between the FID AVL and a research institution is the *Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung* (ZfL) in Berlin, whose edited volumes are successively archived on "CompaRe." A so-called "moving wall" has been negotiated with the two publishing houses of the ZfL's edited volumes, allowing for republication after a period of three years has expired since the original publication.

A number of further collaborations with publishing houses have been established. The FID AVL offers a number of collaboration options according to the publishing house's needs: apart from the "moving wall" principle, a publication can appear in print and simultaneously on "CompaRe," or the repository can be used to publish supplemental material to a publication, or to publish part of it, such as a chapter or a single contribution to an edited volume as a "teaser" for the print or closed-access publication.

The collaboration partners of "CompaRe" are mentioned by name on *avldigital.de*. Research institutions and their work are thus made more visible, and publishing houses are presented as experts in the field whose content is foremost in a subject-specific environment – and who are actively supporting the transition to open-access.

Furthermore, the "Publishing module" contains a hosting service for open-access journals and other regular digital publications such as papers or monograph series. The hosting service uses "Open Journal Systems" (OJS), a Web-based platform for online journals. OJS is developed by the Public Knowledge Project as open-source software. More than 10,000 journals worldwide are published using this software.

This e-journal hosting service is aimed at the editorial boards of existing e-journals, as well as universities and research institutes, research groups, and projects that would like to start a new journal. With OJS, it is even possible to create a browser-based version of the entire editorial review and publication process of an electronic journal, including the peer-review process, proofreading, and correction loops. Editorial boards who do not want to abandon their tried and tested routines and workflows can simply use it to give their journal a makeover. The service is, again, free of charge, and journals published through OJS are eligible for inclusion in *avldigital.de*'s catalogue and other library catalogues.

3.3 Networking

The "Networking" module is the most dynamic part of *avldigital.de*: it is a community-driven communication platform for comparative literature. The idea is to offer a central platform for announcements and notifications concerning research in the field. Particularly in Germany, comparatists are used to browsing numerous sources of information, such as mailing lists, message boards, blogs, and social media, to find news and announcements relevant to their work. *avldigital.de*, thanks to the "Networking" module, now offers a place where these communication channels can be aggregated and communication can take place in an environment specific to the discipline.

The "Networking" module consists of six categories:

- "Calls for papers," including both calls for contributions to conferences and publications.
- "Events," including all sorts of academic gatherings, from conferences to summer schools.
- "Vacancies and scholarships," including professorships, academic and administrative positions, fellowships, doctoral positions, or scholarship programmes.
- "Institutions," including university institutes and non-university public research institutions.
- "Projects and research," including any sort of currently active funded research, from single-person research projects to large, institutionalized graduate programmes.

– "Websites," meaning all sorts of scholarly Web resources that might be of interest to comparatists.

Thus, both a message board for current news and announcements as well as a database of institutions, research activities, and online resources relevant to the field is created.

Additionally, a directory – the "Index of researchers" – allows scholars to create a profile and thus announce themselves as part of the comparative literature community. The streamlined profile contains relevant information such as institutional affiliation and research interests. The directory, as well as the "Networking" module as a whole, though designed to be actively supplied with content by the community, is purposely not designed to be a full-blown academic social network, but rather a simplified message board and database that feeds into a specialist information resource, *avldigital.de*.

When one has registered for the directory of researchers, announcements can be submitted in all six categories mentioned above. These are then approved by the FID AVL team and made available as a resource on *avldigital.de*. Resources can be linked to each other: for example, the announcement of a conference can be linked to the institution where it takes place, or to the call for papers that has been issued beforehand. Persons in the directory of researchers can be linked to their institutions or to research projects they work on or are participating in, and so on. Anybody is allowed to submit announcements, scholars, for instance, who are organizing a conference or who want to communicate information regarding their newly funded research project, but also people in charge of communicating the work of research institutions to the outside world or systematically distributing calls for papers or vacancies and scholarship announcements.

The "Networking" module would not be a communication platform if it did not communicate with the outside world. Firstly, all contents of the "Networking" database can be found via the "Finding literature" search. To keep up to date, there is a subscription service that notifies subscribers of new additions to the "Networking" database. The options include an e-mail newsletter that is sent out two to three times a week, containing all of the newest submissions to the platform. The FID AVL's *Twitter* channel also posts all new announcements. Another option is the RSS Web feed for the more technically minded members of the community, which makes it possible to integrate the information stream into feed readers, Web widgets, and more.

As mentioned, the "Networking" platform is designed to be community-driven. The long-term aim is to establish it as the primary source of information that comparatists from the German-speaking world turn to in order to keep up to date on new developments in their field – and that they use to distribute their

own scholarly communications, knowing that their German and international colleagues will find them here. Currently, the content found here is still mostly gathered by the FID AVL team, but the number of submissions from the community is continually rising, as is the number of subscribers to the various subscription channels *avldigital.de* offers.[4]

4 Why we went to Macau: Services for the international community

Of course, *avldigital.de* does not cater only to the German comparative literature community: the "Networking" module in particular is open to an international community of comparatists. How they can benefit from the FID AVL's services will be illustrated in this section.

Presenting the FID's services to the community beyond Germany was the aim of its presence at the ICLA congresses in 2016 and in 2019. As shown at the beginning of this contribution, there was not yet much to show in 2016. By 2019, after establishing *avldigital.de* as a communication platform within the German comparative literature community, the next step was to make it a nexus of global communication in the field: communication from the ICLA, its research committees, and its national member associations, but of course also from scholars, research institutions, and communities all over the world, to the German comparative literature community, and vice versa.

As part of the second phase of funding that began in mid-2019, the FID AVL seeks to increase and support international exchange both between German and international scholars and in the discipline as a whole. Another goal is to render the diverse fields of research in comparative literature more visible within this scholarly community and adjacent ones. By connecting organizations, institutions, projects, and associations – and, most importantly, information and access points to their work – on a single Web portal, the many facets of the discipline are made visible, all over the world.

It was to this end that the DFG funded the FID AVL's trip to Macau in the summer of 2019. As a funding body for research in Germany, the DFG's main interest is how scholars in Germany benefit from such an international network. How-

4 By October 2019, the newsletter had 209 active subscribers, and 456 people were following *avldigital.de* on *Twitter*.

ever, the comparative literature community itself is an (if anything, increasingly) international community for which internal exchange is regular and vital.

The FID AVL's presence in Macau served as an invitation to the ICLA community to participate in and benefit from the services offered on *avldigital.de*. Apart from a central presentation in Macau University's main auditorium (made possible thanks to the then-ICLA president, Zhang Longxi, kindly offering some of the time reserved for his keynote lecture to the FID), meetings were held with a number of research committees. During the conference, the invitation to participate was extended to individual comparatists, as well as to organizations. The present paper repeats this invitation in the following sections by detailing how both individuals and institutions can participate.

4.1 How international researchers can participate in *avldigital.de*

avldigital.de is, foremost, a platform designed to be used by individual scholars as an information resource for their daily work. "Information" is defined here as not only current news and notifications, but also as research literature, databases, and other media that could be useful for comparatist research.

The catalogue search is of course available anywhere in the world. It can thus be used as a bibliographical source with a specialized content profile for comparative literature. The print media referenced is stocked at German libraries, and closed-access electronic publications may or may not be licensed for a researcher's country or home institution. Searching in the catalogue can, however, lead to the discovery of publications that can than be obtained within the regional structures of the user.

The FID AVL welcomes suggestions for publications that are not yet included in the catalogue index. These may be single books, but also journals, series, or even a research area that is under-represented in the catalogue's profile. International scholars are particularly invited to suggest these sorts of additions, helping to better cover current and emerging areas of research in global comparative literature.

Of course, scholars are free to make use of the service "CompaRe" to make their publications openly accessible worldwide. Documents are not only referenced in the "Finding literature" catalogue, but can also become instantly accessible using the services provided via the "Publishing" module. The FID AVL team offers advice on how this republication can be realized and what legal implications need to be considered (although no legally binding advice can be given).

This also extends to the e-journal hosting service for individual groups of scholars who want to start a new journal, series, or other serial publication.

Individual use of the services offered via the "Networking" module has the most immediate effect. Firstly, scholars who register for the directory of researchers can make sure that their work is considered relevant for comparative literature research. Secondly, using the "Networking" module to make announcements is a good way to promote one's own work.[5] Thirdly, subscribing to the module's communication channels (e-mail newsletter, *Twitter*, RSS feeds) helps to keep up to date with the community.

From the perspective of international comparatists, since *avldigital.de* is a German portal, this will mean staying up to date with what colleagues in Germany are doing, but also letting them know about the work being done in one's own country. Given enough time, this two-way information flow – from Germany to the international community, and from the international community to Germany – may become more generalized, creating a truly international exchange platform.

4.2 How international institutions and organizations can participate

As mentioned, the FID AVL team met with a number of ICLA research committees in Macau in order to discuss possible collaboration options. What was offered to the committees and their members also applies to all kinds of institutions, organizations, or associations with a focus on research in comparative literature. As with individual scholars, the benefit of interacting with *avldigital.de* for institutions and organizations consists of visibility and accessibility.

Although the FID AVL carefully monitors new publications in the field, a guarantee to cover all publications cannot be made. So, the input of collaborating institutions can be very valuable in terms of completing the "Finding literature" catalogue. If not yet covered in its entirety, their publication output can be systematically indexed in the catalogue, thus making sure their work can be found on *avldigital.de*. This helps to cover current fields of research and increases the visibility of the work done at the respective institutions. For collaborating institutions, this service can be expanded to more platforms than just *avldigital.de* – the FID AVL, being a library infrastructure project, will make sure that research out-

5 Both these benefits are of special interest for early career researchers.

puts such as online databases developed by an institution will be referenced in the right places.[6]

The "Publishing" module offers ways to make work not only visible but also accessible. In theory, the whole body of work edited by an institution or published by its members could be made available open access on "CompaRe," or via the e-journal hosting service. This is a particularly effective way for international research organizations and institutions to gain visibility and accessibility for their work in the German, as well as the global, communities. Of course, legal questions need to be taken into account. However, as examples such as the above-mentioned ZfL in Berlin show, research institutions and infrastructure service providers such as the FID AVL can, working hand-in-hand, achieve progress in the open-access transformation of comparative literature.

Again, the "Networking" module is the most immediate way institutions and organizations can interact with and benefit from a collaboration. In many cases, they will already be present with a profile in the "Institutions" or "Projects and research" categories. These profiles can be edited according to the institution's wishes. Then, institutions and organizations can use the "Networking module" to announce news concerning their activities, such as calls for papers or programmes for a conference, or new projects started in the context of their work. Furthermore, the institution's members can join the directory of researchers and can be linked to the institution's profile, as can all announcements made by the institution.

5 Outlook: The future of *avldigital.de*

In short, individual scholars as well as institutions and organizations from all over the world can make use of *avldigital.de* and the services offered to reach out to the German, but also the global, comparative literature community.

This internationalization was one of the central concepts proposed for the funding phase until mid-2022. The hope is that the contacts established in Macau and through future collaborations will make it possible to form a network that

6 A good example is the *Estonian Writers Online Dictionary* (*EWOD*), which is edited at the University of Tartu. Its editors, who are members of the Estonian Comparative Literature Association, mentioned this project to the FID AVL while discussing possible collaboration between *avldigital.de* and the Estonian Association. Not only was the dictionary included in the *avldigital.de* catalogue by adding a reference to it to the "Websites" section of the "Networking" module, but a recommendation was also sent to the editing board of DBIS. DBIS is a German registry of scientific databases that is widely used by scholars in Germany and is a reference point for academic libraries. The *EWOD* was subsequently added to the DBIS meta-database.

helps disseminate the information on *avldigital.de*. These "multipliers" can work in the context of a specific field of research, within the ICLA or individual universities and institutions, or within the comparative literature communities of different countries. Scholars or institutions are more than welcome to act in this role and spread the information and news from their respective contexts or directly refer their colleagues to the FID.

Apart from these internationalization efforts, the near future will see a number of changes, additions, and optimizations to *avldigital.de*. For example, the catalogue of the "Finding literature" module will be drastically increased in size and the methods and strategies for selecting research publications that are included will be refined. This – and hopefully the input of individual comparatists and international institutions eager to have their publications referenced in the catalogue, or accessible via "CompaRe" – will help to develop the information offered on *avldigital.de* so as to have the desired universality.

A new feature will also be contributed to the "Networking" module: the profiles of scholars in the directory of researchers, as well as institutions or organizations or research projects, will be upgraded with publication lists comprising all publications that have been authored or edited by the person or institution. This list will be generated dynamically from the "Finding literature" catalogue index, turning *avldigital.de* into a concise and interlinked information resource.

Another new development will be the "thematic portals" within *avldigital.de*. These will focus on important research areas in comparative literature. The portals proposed to be established in the course of the second funding period will focus on literary theory, on translation, and on the introduction of digital methods to literary studies, with additional suggestions being welcome. A number of collaboration partners from the first two research areas have already been identified that will co-edit the contents of the relevant themed portals. The aim here will be to give an overview of research and of important institutions, projects, and Web resources in both fields.

The portal on digital methods will act as a form of introduction to, and reflection on, what they might mean for comparative literature. Outlining "hardcore" digital humanities (DH) projects, their methods and outlook on literature studies, the portal aims to help comparatists decide whether, and what, digital methods can be of use for their work. The FID AVL is collaborating with another DFG-funded project called "forTEXT." Based at Hamburg University, "forTEXT" develops easy-to-use digital tools for literary scholars, as well as an interactive guide to help decide which DH-related tools might be of help for a given research project. Thus, a no-strings-attached DH sandbox will be created for comparatists to test new methods and tools and to evaluate their usefulness in their everyday work.

Additionally, the digital methods portal will give information and advice on how to work, collaborate, and publish in the digital age.

This is how the FID AVL and *avldigital.de* will grow and evolve over the next three years. Of course, all this talk about funding periods will raise the question: what happens then? Will all the platforms and services simply be switched off after the funding period has expired?

They will not. Firstly, after a second funding period, a third one will most likely come. The DFG is re-evaluating the *Fachinformationsdienste* funding programme, aiming to solidify funding for what are deemed the core tasks of the specialized infrastructure system. The general expectation is that the funding periods will be increased, providing the FIDs with a steadier framework for developing their services.

Secondly, even now, part of the funding principles is that all results of the projects will be kept available for perpetuity. That is why *avldigital.de* and its services are hosted at the University Library of Frankfurt. One of the largest academic libraries in Germany, this institution will keep the platform running and active. The selection strategies and updating procedures for the "Finding literature" catalogue will be optimized to run in an efficient and reliable automated way. Collaborations in terms of the open-access services offered in the "Publishing" module are contractually regulated, so the archiving of on-going publication series or the hosting of an e-journal will continue. Furthermore, in the coming years, the FID AVL team hopes to build up enough community support and engagement to ensure a steady flow of announcements and information in the "Networking" module.

From a lonely table, a poster, and some flyers to a working online platform powered by exchange and the ideas of the comparative literature community – it was, and still is, a long way to go for *avldigital.de*. But that way will be followed in the true spirit of comparative literature: crossing borders, finding interconnections, and making visible the literature of the world and the many languages of comparative literature.

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Achim Hölter

An Averroesian Quest: The Unfulfilled Wish for a Universal Dictionary of Literary Genres and Critical Terminology

Jorge Luis Borges dedicated one narrative of his famous anthology *El Aleph* (1949) to the medieval Arab scholar Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), who had lived and worked in Cordoba in the twelfth century and who is known to posterity as an intermediary of Aristotle under the name of "Averroes".[1] Borges puts himself into the Middle Ages with their conflict between realism (which insisted on the substantial meaning of general concepts) and nominalism (which denied any meaning beyond the "empty" words). Borges also takes on the perspective of an Arab scholar for whom the pleasure of his own culture with the confirmation of the status quo was more important than the western thirst for innovation. In *La busca de Averroes*[2] Borges begins with a peculiar fusion of historical, almost encyclopedic information on Ibn Rushd, and a sensitive, even romanticising fiction showing the philosopher at his desk one midday in Cordoba. Averroes is working on a translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, but "two doubtful words had halted him at the very portals of the Poetics. Those words were 'tragedy' and 'comedy'".[3] The dilemma can easily be explained: "He had come across them years earlier, in the third book of the Rhetoric; no one in all of Islam could hazard a guess as to their meaning."[4] At the same time, however, these terms are so frequently used in the *Poetics* that it is impossible to avoid them.[5] Completely at a loss, Averroes struggles with his translation, while outside the window, ironically, a boy sitting on the shoulders of another, is playfully imitating a muezzin.[6] In the evening, the scholar is invited to dinner with the vain, but well-travelled Abulkásim, who recounts wonderous

1 Cf. Khalil Hindawi. "An Early Arab Contribution to Comparative Literature: Averroes' "Talkhîs Kitâb Aristu fi al-Shi'r" (A Summary of Aristotle's "Poetics")." *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 41 (1993), 6–8.

2 Jorge Luis Borges. Collected Fictions. Translated by Andrew Hurley. London: Penguin, 1999. Quotations: http://posthegemony.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/borges_collected-fictions.pdf.

3 Borges 1999, 534.

4 Borges 1999, 534.

5 Borges 1999, 534.

6 Borges 1999, 535.

Note: Updated, revised and translated version of Achim Hölter. "Mit Averroes auf der Suche. Der unerfüllte Wunsch nach einem universellen Gattungslexikon." *Komparatistik* 2012, 25–35.

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things of a trip to China, among other things, how he was led to "a house of painted wood [...] with rows of cabinet-like contrivances, or balconies, one atop another".[7] People had been sitting everywhere, making music on a "raised terrace",[8] while masked men were praying, singing and talking to each other.[9] Abulkásim's listeners, however, mislead by their own vocabulary which serves their personal experiences, do not understand him and regard his stories as foolish. The traveler insists that the masked men had presented a story, but the self-conscious Arabs think their dialectics superior: To tell a story, nobody would need so many people. And Averroes, being the contorted mirror of Borges himself, heads on to his favourite idea that – whether out of Islamic orthodoxy or semiotic speculation – everything had potentially already been said in the infinite combination of a limited system of signs, and everything that could possibly be said was included in the poetic system of signs from the beginnings of poetry. When he returns in the morning, he finally believes the two enigmatic terms to be clear to him; briefly he notes: "Aristu [...] gives the name 'tragedy' to panegyrics and the name 'comedy' to satires and anathemas. There are many admirable tragedies and comedies in the Qur'an and the mu'allaqat of the mosque."[10] What editions of Borges' works generally do not explain, is that Mu'allaqas (or Arabic mu'allaqāt) is the term for the canonic texts of seven pre-Islamic, ancient Arab poets;[11] this is where the author, probably subtly teasing his readers, makes them feel like Averroes in front of the word "tragedy". But Borges would not be Borges if he left it at this single ironic case study. He had wanted, he adds, to tell "the process of failure"[12] and chosen the example of a scholar, who, "bounded within the circle of Islam",[13] could not know the meaning of the two terms. He had understood, however, that it was no less absurd to imagine such a scholar on the basis of the few existing sources. So, Borges' scepticism extends much further, and has no issue with Averroes or Islam in particular, however here it will be sufficient to have a closer look at the cultural difference (whether one takes the message of the story seriously or not).

In his short essay "Partial Magic in the Quixote" Borges presents several examples of exponentiation or logarithmation of different levels of reality within the text. What he does not name is the term given to this phenomenon by André

7 Borges 1999, 540.
8 Borges 1999, 541.
9 Borges 1999, 541.
10 Borges 1999, 547.
11 Cf. Ewald Wagner. *Grundzüge der klassischen arabischen Dichtung. Bd. I.* Darmstadt, 1987, 155–158.
12 Borges 1999, 547.
13 Borges 1999, 548.

Gide, then not yet fully accepted in worldwide terminology: "mise en abyme".[14] Instead, obviously aware of a terminological emptiness below his feet, Borges begins his text with a safeguarding clause: "It is plausible that these observations may have been set forth at some time and, perhaps, many times; a discussion of their novelty interests me less than one of their possible truth."[15]

Now Borges uses his Averroes case and the term "tragedy" and "comedy" to ironically show the intercultural dilemma of genre theory. On the one hand these facts – which from an objective point of view are a fundamental problem of a scientific discipline – have unquestionably animated comparative literature for decades precisely because of the number of apparently unsolvable differences, and for many comparatists it seems to legitimate their discipline as compared to other one-language philologies. On the other hand, it is equally evident that the situation complicates any precise and translatable exchange on genres. Comparison would be a desirable first step, logically to be followed by adaptation. The important background questions would therefore be: Are the differences generally unsolvable, and is a meta-lingual communication desirable at all? Interestingly, the elementary answers are diametrically opposed to each other,[16] as the terminology of natural sciences aims to make language more or less superfluous or to optimise it to a medium of cristalline clarity. In the humanities, however, taxonomies are subject to specific conditions, because cultural objects are in a constant state of development and the terminology of genre denies any standstill. Nevertheless, distinctions can be made even for literary discourse. On one end on a scale for transnational terminology one would find a strong terminological heterogeneity (i.e. genres originally defined by a national culture), and on the other end homogeneous, conflictless terminology which seems to be universally translatable. Between these two ends of the scale is a mixed zone of terms which are neither nationally idiosyncratic nor can be transferred without problems. This mixed zone, the one where discussion usually takes place, is of special interest for intraphilological studies of translation, not least because of the empty spaces and apparently easy vocabulary ("false friends") which inhabit this sector.

Although studies of translation deal with questions of terminology as well, cultural studies remain a difficult terrain, also because of a potential deconstructive scep-

14 The term originally is from André Gide's diary. Cf. Lucien Dällenbach. *Le récit spéculaire. Essai sur la mise en abyme.* Paris 2002.

15 Jorge Luis Borges. *Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings.* New York: New Directions, 1964, 193.

16 Cf. Harald Fricke. *Die Sprache der Literaturwissenschaft. Textanalytische und philosophische Untersuchungen.* Munich, 1977, 262 against M. H. Abrams. "What's the Use of Theorizing about Arts?" In *Search of Literary Theory.* Ed. M. W. Bloomfield. Ithaca, 1972, 1–54.

ticism that would not allow for a descriptive and therefore also self-descriptive metalanguage, which would understand the network of terms rather as rhetoric or allegory than as a reliable description of the literary status quo. A "recursus ad infinitum", leading to safe ground, is inconceivable here, and a 'terminus' in the original sense of boundary stone is conceivable only as an act of naive (stipulative) setting of limits. But this problem is not new and is mostly, if not solved, at least excluded by differentiating a completely pragmatic use of language. At the core of the problem lies the general question, as to whether universal concepts are valid in the humanities. While terms in natural sciences are nominal definitions (research errors left aside), in the humanities, strictly speaking, there are as many genres as there are single specimens – and this is exactly what fascinated Borges in his tale *Funes el memorioso*. Our actual dictionaries (and, on an abstract level, the imaginary general dictionary of literary criticism) are building a hierarchy of ideal terminological unifications: from regional and national traditions, from traditional usage and, of course, from mighty founders of discourse or creators of genres, who simply cannot be ignored, as far as the historical aspect of a definition is concerned.[17] Either way, historical and cultural terms are subject to multiple shifts. It is equally obvious that dictionaries are always representing only one specific moment. This inaccuracy, regretted by scientists, is "only" captured historiographically or instantaneously, which does not mean, however, that accuracy would a) not be desirable and b) if not achievable in total, at least partially improvable. So, what are the possibilities for optimising literary terminology of genre on an intercultural level?

Encyclopedic writing in the field of comparative literature or international literary criticism has been more closely classified and analysed by Rüdiger Zymner,[18] who drew attention to problems and desiderata of international literary terminology.[19] Encyclopedias codify the order of sciences. Here too, lies a hidden problem,

17 Cf. e.g. Heimito von Doderer's "Kürzestgeschichten", translated to French as "histoires ultra-brèves": *Histoires brèves et ultra-brèves. Traduit de l'allemand (Autriche) et présenté par Raymond Voyat*. Paris, 1998.

18 Rüdiger Zymner. "Die Fachlexikographie der Literaturwissenschaft: eine Übersicht." *Fachsprachen. Languages for special purposes. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Fachsprachenforschung und Terminologiewissenschaft. 2nd half vol.* Eds. Lothar Hoffmann, Hartwig Kalverkämper and Herbert Ernst Wiegand. Berlin/New York. 1999, 2036–2045. – Achim Hölter. "Eine erste bibliographische Handliste von Reallexika zur Literaturwissenschaft seit 1900." *Komparatistik 2005/2006*, 131–140. – Achim Hölter "Lexika". *Handbuch Komparatistik. Theorien, Arbeitsfelder, Wissenspraxis.* Ed. Rüdiger Zymner and Achim Hölter. Stuttgart/Weimar 2013, 355–361.

19 Achim Hölter. "Sprachen und Komparatistik". *Handbuch Komparatistik. Theorien, Arbeitsfelder, Wissenspraxis.* Ed. Rüdiger Zymner and Achim Hölter. Stuttgart/Weimar, 2013, 213–217; esp. 215–217.

because an encyclopedia of genres is imaginable not only in alphabetical order,[20] and the more international the public of the encyclopedia, the less the alphabet will be the first choice. That is due to the mere fact that the alphabet(s) tear the entries apart depending on the language: In relation to the German M for "Märchen", the Russian S for "skazka" trails far behind, to the German F for "Fabel" (fable) corresponds a Russian B for "basnia", opening up a completely different cycle. In order to organise the content in a non-alphabetical order, one needs an encyclopedic concept of the scientific field (according to Klaus Weimar).[21] The scientific alternative is to picture the *res* and their interrelation. This means that sometimes the consequence of logical empirism is to relate genres graphically, with the form itself being always strictly symbolic. One has to organise the field – something which was tested in the theory of genres with a famous circular graphic[22] and to add – theoretically in an incorruptible manner – an infinite number of terms from an infinite number of languages to this ideal diagramme, plus: to add an infinite number of footnotes in order to account for the minimal graphical differences within the circle or the chosen graphical form.[23] But what if one distrusted a non-verbal, although still symbolic, graphical episteme with its circles, scales, intersections and arrows?[24] What if the abstract models of a scientific order (like Dewey's decimal classification and many more) proved to be not historical or differentiated enough for literary criticism? What if we want the language of poetics to remain a linguistic artifice, as it has been to date? Dictionaries with five or more languages, some of them visual, are becoming popular, translation apps have become part of everyday life, as have formerly web applications for word processing, Google translator and its counterparts being in more frequent use than many would like to admit. All these media have to simplify radically, mostly by offering one term for exactly one other term and by giving at the most some alternative offers, from which the user has to choose for him/herself. Let us take an example from natural science: In Bernhard Grzimek's

20 Zur Episteme des Alphabets: Andreas B. Kilcher. *Mathesis und poiesis. Die Enzyklopädik der Literatur 1600 bis 2000.* Munich 2003.

21 Klaus Weimar. *Enzyklopädie der Literaturwissenschaft*. Munich, 1980.

22 Cf. Julius Petersen's circle of genres from 1925 e.g. in: Klaus Müller-Dyes. *Literarische Gattungen. Lyrik, Epik, Dramatik.* Freiburg/Basel/Wien, 1978, 57.

23 The strong priority of the "verbum" was also customary: Sulzer's *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* started from the ideal conception that homonyms from different arts could be explicated in one article, e.g. the word "figure" in visual arts, rhetorics, music, and dance: "Figur" (Zeichnende Künste, Redende Künste, Musik, Tanzkunst): Johann Georg Sulzer. *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste. 2. Tl. Neue verm. zweyte Aufl.* Leipzig, 1792, 229–235.

24 Cf. in general Achim Hölter. "Art. 'Bilder und Diagramme'". *Handbuch Komparatistik. Theorien, Arbeitsfelder, Wissenspraxis.* Ed. Rüdiger Zymner and Achim Hölter. Stuttgart/Weimar, 2013, 345–348.

Encyclopedia of *Animal Life*[25] each volume ends with a triple index: A systematic overview of the zoological species after Linné's *Systema naturae* (1758) and an alphabetical index, including German and Latin terms, accompany a third index, a dictionary of animals in the four languages German, English, French and Russian. Something like this is extremely rare in literary criticism. Some dictionaries give translations of lemmata into several main languages, but this only seems to be an attempt at retaining some flexibility, because in fact the equation of about five elements creates a much stronger inflexibility. This is the point where a certain feeling of discomfort arises on using Wolfgang Ruttkowski's dedicated *Nomenclator litterarius* from 1980,[26] because especially the "genre mineurs"[27] naturally find themselves in an awkward shadow, as well as national specialities like a Spanish "zarzuela", which can be met during a transfer on languages only by explanatory concepts, not translation.

Let us look at some items from Ruttkowski's *Nomenclator* and remember its construction: The about 350 pages of listed terms and nomenclature from A to Z without explanatory articles, treat not only genres like "short story", but also techniques like "simultaneity", stylistic terms like "vorticism" or qualities like "vivid". Ruttkowski uses German as his basis and assigns the equivalents in English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Italian and Russian (transliterated), cutting out identical words. The book offers a foreword in each of these languages. Terms from other important literary idioms are included, i.e. from the Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Indian (understood as a cultural space, not as a language), Japanese, Latin, Persian, Portuguese and Provençal. In case of a singular national term an explanatory translation is offered in brackets: "kaguar (jap.) D (old mimic ritual dances, early form of drama").[28] Controversial equivalents like "D Kurzgeschichte ED short story (E short short story) N kort verhaal F conte, nouvelle S cuento I racconto R rasskaz"[29] are of special interest within such an ambitious project. There are more difficulties to consider: The German "Küchenlied",[30] equivalent to the Spanish "canción de cocina", has to be translated to other languages not verbatim, but analogously. It is not difficult to develop the Russian form "kuchonnaya pesnya", but the term is, though comprehensible, not in general use. Ruttkowski's book contains more than 3000 terms and translations. The appended index in

25 Bernhard Grzimek. *Grzimeks Tierleben. 13 Bde*. Zürich, 1968–1972.

26 Wolfgang Ruttkowski. *Nomenclator litterarius.* Bern/München, 1980. Cf. Wolfgang Ruttkowski. *Zur semantischen Beschaffenheit literarischer Sachbegriffe*. Munich, 2007.

27 Fritz Nies (Ed.). *Genres mineurs: Texte zur Theorie und Geschichte nichtkanonischer Literatur (vom 16. Jh. bis zur Gegenwart).* Munich, 1978.

28 Ruttkowski 1980, 190.

29 Ruttkowski 1980, 205.

30 Ruttkowski 1980, 202.

the book's main languages (with Russian in Cyrillic) is the final proof that this book is founded on practical experience and therefore aims at practicability, not principles.

One of the paradigms of German Romanticism and therefore of German philology is the difference between "Volksmärchen" and "Kunstmärchen", for which none of the parallel languages offers any satisfying solution, failing to communicate two components and the inherent poetics. Ruttkowski's entry reads as follows: "D Kunstmärchen E art/ literary fairy tale N cultuur-/kunstprookje F conte artistique/ littéraire S cuento literario I racconto di fata letterario[31] R (rasskaz-) skazka".[32] Very few of these terms have really been successful, but at least they are helpful in translating a book on "Kunstmärchen" (tales that have been created at a given moment by a known individual) from German to other languages. Even "Märchen" is a problem in some languages, while the addition of the artificial element (something like "craftsmanship" or "mastery", activating in German two positive prefixes "Kunst-" vs. "Volks-" and not, as has been suggested before, one additional quality and its negation) makes it even more difficult. Finally, the specification "Volks-" is known to be ambiguous itself, so that any translation with "popular/populaire" definitely means a constriction. The common dictionaries for foreign languages do not usually make this binary distinction. The Italian *Enciclopedia Garzanti*[33] lists "fiaba", but omits "Kunstmärchen". On the other hand, the often-discussed pair of terms "Ballade/Romanze" can be found in numerous dictionaries, despite the fact that both were basically identified as intentional symbols during a debate taking place around 1800, as to whether or not the one genre ("romance" etc.) was a placeholder of the other ("ballata" etc.) in a different cultural context. A particularly interesting case is the so-called "Rollengedicht", not because it has no clear equivalents in other languages ("E dramatic monologue, F monologue dramatique, R dramatitscheskij monolog"),[34] but because with the linking of analogous terms, for which the lexicographer is responsible, the indisputably *lyric* construction (and examples from the canon of *lyric poetry*)[35] with its

31 And not: "fiaba letteraria."?.

32 Ruttkowski 1980, 204.

33 *Enciclopedia Garzanti della letteratura.* 3a ed. aggiornata. Milano, 1979.

34 Ruttkowski 1980, 286.

35 Otto F. Best. *Handbuch literarischer Fachbegriffe. Definitionen und Beispiele*. Revised and complemented ed. Frankfurt am Main, 1994, 462. Brentano, "Der Spinnerin Lied", Uhland, "Des Knaben Berglied", Rilke, "Lied des Bettlers" etc. and as a cited paradigm Goethe, "Schäfers Klagelied."

non-generic base noun "Gedicht" is translated with something definitely different, so that the translation is no less than a transfer from "poetry" to "drama".[36] Which leaves the mystery as to why for Spanish (and only there) the given solution is "monólogo lírico".

The current development of the special meaning of "comedy" in the German language, meaning strictly a TV format versus "Komödie" as on stage, shows very well the instability of translational relations. Even more prominent is the everlasting problem posed by "Novelle", which is in need of an internal distinction in Spanish that can hardly prevail against the powerful tradition of Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* – not to mention English, where the more precise term "novella" or "novelletta" will always have the connotation of an import. Let us have a further look at this ever-neuralgic term, for which Ruttkowski gives the equivalent "novella" for English, Italian and also Russian, "conte, nouvelle" for French, "cuento, novela" for Spanish and "povest" for Russian.[37] This shows also that the book can only in a limited sense serve as a dictionary for active use. How could a *translato*r decide whether to use "cuento" or "novela" in Spanish? And a glance at the Spanish "novela" is not helpful either. The index lists the German "Novelle" as well as "Roman", but the peculiar vague terminology of genres in hispanic philology cannot be overcome lexicographically by either side.

Other dictionaries do not focus on the problems of translation. In contrast to the pragmatic and short repertoires, dictionaries of universal aesthetic terms like the historical *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe*[38] in seven volumes can afford to focus on the documentation of the history of terminology with its debates. Heinrich Lausberg's *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*,[39] not a dictionary of terms in a strict sense, is limited to the three canonical languages of Western rhetorics: Greek, Latin and French, while Gert Ueding's German *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*[40] only paraphrases in Greek and Latin. Typologically significant for real dictionaries are Wilpert's German standard work,[41] with its vast historical explanations in dense articles, which allow for a large number of terms due to their brevity and of course

36 Cf. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Noten und Abhandlungen zu besserem Verständnis des west-östlichen Divans*. *J.W.v.G.: Werke*. Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden. Vol. 2. München, 1988, 187: "Es gibt nur drei echte Naturformen der Poesie: [...] Epos, Lyrik und Drama."

37 Ruttkowski 1980, 244.

38 Karlheinz Barck (Ed.). *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe. Studienausgabe.* 7 vols. Stuttgart/Weimar, 2010.

39 Heinrich Lausberg. *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik. Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft*. 2nd ed, 2 vols. München: Hueber, 1973.

40 Gert Ueding. *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik.* Tübingen, 1992–2012.

41 Gero von Wilpert. *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur*. 7th, improved and complemented ed. Stuttgart, 1989.

the 3rd edition of the *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*,[42] with its precise hierarchical structure of articles, though in principle not dealing with linguistic interferences.

Let us consider briefly the situation on the international market of literary dictionaries. There is a general competition at least in the Western cultures, where works are published or edited at regular intervals, but also beyond. For instance, relevant works were: in Russian Igor A. Eliseev and L.G. Poljakova: *Slovar literaturovedčeskich terminov*. (Rostov-na-Donu: Fenikus) 2002; in Spanish Demetrio Estébanez Calderón: *Diccionario de términos literarios* (1996);[43] in Japanese Rintaro Fukuhara/ Masatoshi Yoshida: *Bangahn yugo jiten* [= *Dictionary of Literary Terms*] (1978);[44] in Dutch Hendrik van Gorp/Dirk Delabastia/Rita Ghesquiere: *Lexikon van literaire termen*. Groningen 1998,[45] from which a different version (with different editors) exist for the francophone countries.[46] In markets of middle size, there exists often exactly one dictionary as a reference for many years, i.e. in Poland: Maciej Krasskowski's *Leksykon terminów literackich*. Warszawa: Twój Styl 1994, or the Czech example, Josef Brukner's *Poetický slovník*. 2nd ed. Praha: Mladá Fronta 1997. In general, a quantitative hegemony of English, and then French and German encyclopedias has to be stated. Most of the other examples are, naturally, Spanish, Russian, Italian. If it is true that the so-called "great" languages are dominating the field of publishing in the humanities, and that the "smaller" languages are usually allowing only one profitable book per language due to the limited market, the conclusion is that the spreading of philological terms can be divided in several zones: a) the anglophone zone, b) the domain of the other "world languages",[47] c) the zones of traditional single-language cultures, d) the partly post-colonial areas of mainly English and French as second languages, e) single-language cultures, which have to work with *translated* encyclopedias because of a still developing educational system or because of linguistic isolation. It is interesting to see that these works are usually (not always!) translated from English, independent from the traditional political formation of blocks. The case of an encyclopedia that does not translate terms, but is as a whole a

42 *Reallexicon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*. 3 vols. Berlin, 1997–2003.

43 Demetrio Estébanez Calderón. *Diccionario de términos literarios*. Madrid, 1996.

44 Rintaro Fukuhara and Yoshida Masatoshi. *Bangahn yugo jiten [= Dictionary of Literary Terms*]. Tokyo, 1978.

45 Hendrik van Gorp/Dirk Delabastita/ Rita Ghesquiere (Ed.). *Lexicon van literaire termen*. Groningen, 1998.

46 Hendrik van Gorp/Dirk Delabastita/ Lieven D'Hulst u.a. (Ed.): *Dictionnaire des Termes Littéraires*. Paris, 2001.

47 Cf. in Chinese: Wei Quian. 最佳心理描寫词典 (=Zui jia xin li miao xie ci dian). Beijing, 1988.

translation or adaption would be worth a special analysis. Herbert Greiner-Mai's *Kleines Wörterbuch der Weltliteratur* has been published in Spain as *Diccionario AKAL de literatura general y comparada (desde des origines hasta 1980)*,[48] and the Bulgarian *Retschnik na Svremennite Literaturni Termini* was translated from English by Tatyana Stoitcheva.[49] Related types are bilingual works like Mohammad Enani's Egyptian *Modern Literary Terms. A Study and a Dictionary: English- Arabic*[50] where we learn, by the way, that there does exist a word for "comedy" in today's Arabic: "mahzala", pl. "Ma'hazil", and of course also one for tragedy. A recognisable result from these bilingual confrontations is an awareness for the primary term and where it belongs: The affordable, therefore much-used *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory*, founded by J.A. Cuddon, prefers to integrate terms under their original, even if there exists an English equivalent. The German "Schlüsselroman" i.e. can be found under "livre à clef"[51] with a reference to the variation "key novel"; and "didactic play" is put under L ("Lehrstück") with reference to its main representative Brecht.[52]

The current literary terminology as active and creative is limited to relatively few languages.[53] How many exactly, is not easy to say, because one has to distinguish between the still quite numerous idioms in which philology is taught, the smaller number of languages in which literary criticism is published, and the even smaller number of those in which sustainable scientific lexicography is done. This is even more striking from a comparative point of view, as in practically all categories living literature is produced. This means that there exists a glaring disparity between the intrinsic creativity of a language and the reflection on form which is mostly controlled by respective foreign languages.

This dilemma is illustrated well by quite a small book – Gary Carey and Mary Ellen Snodgrass: *A multicultural dictionary of literary terms*.[54] The book, entirely written in English, advertises its multiculturalism. But a closer look reveals that the highly selective range of terms was only chosen under the aspect of what is "essential to a thorough, comprehensive study of world literature"[55] Therefore the "devices,

48 Trad., rev. y ampliación de la ed. española: Roberto Mansberger. *Amorós*. Madrid, 2006.

49 *Retschnik na Svremennite Literaturni Termini.* Translated by Tatjana Stoitschewa. Sofia, 1993.

50 Mohammad Enani. *Modern Literary Terms. A Study and a Dictionary: English-Arabic.* 3rd ed. Kairo, 2003.

51 J. A. Cuddon. *Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory*. Revised by C. E. Preston. London, 1998, 475.

52 Cuddon 1998, 452.

53 Hölter 2013, 216.

54 Gary Carey and Mary Ellen Snodgrass. *A multicultural dictionary of literary terms* Jefferson, NC. et al., 1999.

55 Carey/Snodgrass, 1.

modes" etc. are, in a very broad sense, only representatives of "the full span of classic world literature". In reality this means merely that a few terms from Spanish, German or Japanese have been included to the general index. The key to this approach might be "world literature" as conceived in works by David Damrosch, Theo D'haen, Emily Apter, and many others, meaning literature(s) from all over the globe, but written in or at least translated into English and thus tuned in an Anglo-Saxon key.

An interesting step, however, is indicated by the manual *Terminologie der Literaturwissenschaft* (ed. by Rudolf Beck et al. 1998), which was developed specifically for English literature studies. The terms are introduced as an English-German couple, with a minimal definition and explanatory article, i.e. "Prose Poem – Prosagedicht. Gedicht in Prosaform"[56] or "Dumb Show" – without a German equivalent – "Pantomimische Einlage im Drama der Shakespeare-Zeit".[57] While the bilateral construction is of relatively low risk, avoiding forced translations or, the other way around: setting a national term which can optionally be embedded unchanged into the environment of a foreign language, helps to keep the process in balance. To develop this method further would mean to transmit only those terms which could easily be replicated in all languages. The conditions are of a linguistic and historical nature: Firstly, the morphology of the target language has to provide a rule for transmission, which is mostly given for words of Greek and Latin origin. The second condition – and here we are back to Borges – is that historical and cultural barriers do not make the mere transmission of the term senseless. Another aspect of the development from a bilateral to a multilateral concept would be to respect the growing number of terms as fixed in their respective context of a single language and to spread them as foreign vocabulary. Of course, this is a thought which fits in extremely well with the ideas of multiculturalism and it is not difficult to predict that the result would be a quantitative explosion of literary terms, analogous to the development in international language policy. It is highly probable that a competition would arise between the national cultures to each enforce as many incommensurable terms and genres as possible. The indefinite storage space of the internet would invalidate any economic argument, by which book publishing is usually controlled, so everything would simply be put alongside each other. This applies particularly to concepts and terms from Western literary and cultural theory, when it comes to integrating them in indigenous languages.

In Wikipedia, some terms have in the meantime been documented and are discussed in many languages, e.g. "novella" and its equivalents in 84 languages,

56 Rudolf Beck/Hildegard Kuester/ Martin Kuester. *Terminologie der Literaturwissenschaft. Ein Handbuch für das Anglistikstudium*. Ismaning, 1998, 159.
57 Beck, et al. 1998, 231.

„novel“ in 144 languages, “the sublime” in 35 languages, “free indirect speech” in 15 languages, and, in 19 languages, the “unreliable narrator”, whilst it seems noteworthy that the German “equivalent” and some others are not equivalent, as the entry is “Unzuverlässiges Erzählen”, marking the aesthetic procedure (narration) instead of the voice of a fictional character (narrator). No doubt a fruitful confusion. Then again, the articles are not written and translated from one origin, but are – at least between the “larger” languages – produced separately individually. Quality, precision, dimensions and references vary accordingly, as well as the selection of given literary examples, often focusing on the respective national literature. German articles are mostly based on German literary encyclopedias, French articles on French etc. So different terminological horizons are just a mouse-click apart without communicating. All in all, Wikipedia often, especially in articles of higher quality, reproduces and duplicates the single-language knowledge and mostly the knowledge of printed lexicography, thus leaving the question open, as to whether the collaborative open-access project is able to reach the scientific level of systematically edited print (or digital) volumes.

A project in terminology which would bring together the worldwide spectrum of encylopedias physically – in a specialised national or, perhaps better, department library – as well as virtually is a real desideratum. Not so much in hope of normative definitions or in the prospect of a universal archive for translations, but because no single language or hegemonical perspective should block the view of the facts. What could result from an intensified dialogue between dictionaries? Possibly respect to the diversity of world cultures, as introduced to poetology by Earl Miner.[58] Possibly an alleged multiplication of genres. Possibly *also* further difficulties in communication. From a comparatist point of view the creation of relations, the incitement to a (lexical) comparison already has a value in itself. And: Projects in terminology are usually symptoms of a deficit, namely a problem with inner-disciplinary communication, perhaps also of an optimism which releases synthetical forces or results from such effects, aiming for an increase of knowledge by comparative methods and a “critical discussion and dynamic development of scientific terminology”.[59] In fact, a rising interest in aesthetic universal concepts is noticeable, not so much out of the confidence to standardise what has been heterogenous over thousands of years, but rather due to the impression that traditional and new media are using related methods, whose proximity has sometimes been tested only metaphorically, but not proven structurally. *Narrating*, *Describing*, but also *The*

58 Earl Miner. *Comparative Poetics. An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature.* Princeton, NJ, 1990.

59 Hölter 2013, 217.

Comic, The Return of Pathos are such current universal concepts. Collation would be the first step before weighing correspondences and distinctions in a second step.

Philology is quick, maybe too quick, with classifications. Let us think back once again to the point of Borges' projection onto a distant and past culture: To allow a literary genre to become so "foreign" that one cannot even imagine it – this cultural exercise could be a real gain for literary criticism. If one allowed oneself not to subsume a "scheme of acting with media" (S.J. Schmidt)[60] automatically under one of Goethe's "natural forms", not to classify it immediately and then put into a display case together with the other butterflies, but to perceive it with amazement, without the infinite trust in the providence of an own cultural God, this could be a prerequisite for taking the newly discovered or newly created species into view first. To find their "correct" name, there is ample time in the millennia to come.

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The following bibliography[61] cannot claim to be exhaustive. It does, however, endeavour to document that, mainly in the course of the twentieth century, in about 50 active literary languages of the world, hundreds of dictionaries were printed to convey the terminology of general literary studies within diverse linguistic cultures, but also between these linguistic domains. These publications show an enormous range in terms of their ambition and volume: from narrow repertories developed directly from the context of teaching at school or university to undertakings such as the 3rd edition of the famous German-language *Reallexikon*, which aims to introduce all central terms with a definition that is as universally acceptable as possible and then to work through the most important aspects of the lemma, namely the history of the term, the history of the concept, the history of the formal item and the history of research, together with a bibliography. It is obvious that there are several hundred different publications worldwide, some in many editions and widely used as standard works. The margins vis-à-vis other forms of literary lexicography, namely encyclopedias of authors and works, are not always sharp, especially when such mammoth works have been accompanied by a brief terminological appendix.

The notation is kept as short as possible for reasons of space. Abbreviations and city names have been standardised in English. "Authors" and "editors" have not been distinguished because of differences in indication practices. Translitera-

60 Siegfried J. Schmidt. "Diskurs und Literatursystem. Konstruktivistische Alternativen zu diskurstheoretischen Alternativen." Fohrmann, Jürgen/ Müller, Harro *Diskurstheorien und Literaturwissenschaft*. Ed. Jürgen Fohrmann and Harro Müller. Frankfurt am Main. 1988, 134–158. Quote: 148. My translation.

61 Many thanks to Katharina Widholm and Caecilia Lermer for substantial help.

tions of the original titles are given for non-European writing systems, which, due to divergent catalogue entries, may not always obey exactly the same principle; translations have been omitted – mutatis mutandis, most titles mean "Terminology of Literary Studies" or something equivalent. Some national dictionaries are originally translations, for example from English or Russian. Occasionally, the first edition of a work could not be traced; the cumulative international catalogue system is not yet up to the task of remedying all cases. For the most important publications, the printing history has been indicated to some extent; however, it is impossible to list each individual bibliographical unit separately. This applies in particular to changes of conception after several decades in the case of long-lived works or the entry of younger editors into the succession.

As far as online encyclopedias or online versions of previously printed lexica are concerned, only a small selection can be mentioned; web links are also only given as an exception, because unfortunately they still become outdated quickly. However, the twenty-first century is definitely an online age, especially as far as reference works are concerned. We can therefore assume that the print versions of tried and tested, handy dictionaries on formal literary studies will continue to exist, insofar as they can be profitably marketed by important publishers in big print runs and small or medium volumes. In addition, or parallel to this, the works will be made available online and compete as publishing products with open access ventures and above all with Wikipedia. The first years of the twenty-first century have already shown that private or university projects, which develop a – and this is of course the most important advantage – living, open and in principle unlimited (this does definitely not have to be beneficial) list of definitions and examples of terms cannot in fact win the competition with Wikipedia. The fascinating privilege of Wikipedia is its potential multilingualism. Thus, there are, as shown, many dozens of articles on the most widespread genres of literature, which are ideally maintained and, above all, related to each other. Admittedly, this is also where one of the main problems with lexicographic entries in Wikipedia becomes apparent: that precise correspondences in a 1:1 ratio are not always possible or at least not achieved as long as the cumulative and collaborative principle applies, which cannot, so far, lead to uniform solutions through all internal discussions and editorial efforts.

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Achim Hölter

Die Übersetzungen von Thomas Manns *Der Zauberberg*

Ein Beispiel für komparatistische Praxis am weltliterarischen Transfer

Als Thomas Manns *Der Zauberberg* 1924 erschien, dauerte es nicht allzu lange, bis das im zweibändigen deutschen Original 578 und 679 Seiten umfassende Buch in andere Sprachen übersetzt wurde; noch im selben Jahr erschien der große Zeitroman auf Ungarisch. Zweifellos war für das Interesse der literarischen Weltöffentlichkeit schon der Erfolg der *Buddenbrooks* (1901) verantwortlich, mit deren Titel der inzwischen beinahe fünfzigjährige Autor allgemein in Verbindung gebracht wurde. Wenn dies auch der Roman war, für den Thomas Mann offiziell 1929 der Literaturnobelpreis verliehen wurde, so ist doch ebenfalls allgemein akzeptiert, dass diese Zuerkennung wesentlich, mindestens aber als Auslöser, dem zweiten Welterfolg, eben dem *Zauberberg* zu verdanken war, von den erzählenden Texten der Zwischenzeit, namentlich *Königliche Hoheit* und *Der Tod in Venedig*, zu schweigen. Es liegt also auf der Hand, dass die ersten Übersetzungen des *Zauberberg* mit beigetragen hatten zu dem Prestige, das dann eine zweite Welle an Übersetzungen auslöste. Wenn man die Rezeptionsgeschichte des Nobelpreisträgers zu Lebzeiten und nach seinem Tod Revue passieren lässt (Hansen 1984, 140–152), ergeben sich klarerweise weitere Phasen seiner Hochschätzung, die ihn bis heute zu einer festen Größe im Kanon der deutschsprachigen Weltliteratur macht. Bis 1955 hatte Mann, insbesondere durch *Lotte in Weimar*, *Joseph und seine Brüder* sowie *Doktor Faustus* mehrere weitere große Romane publiziert, die sich als Meilensteine der Erzählliteratur im literarischen Feld und insbesondere am Übersetzungsmarkt gegenseitig stützten. Mit dem Tod des Klassikers zu Lebzeiten, der dank seiner regen publizistischen Tätigkeit in den Jahren des amerikanischen Exils weithin als Stimme des ‚guten Deutschland' wahrgenommen worden war, setzte eine nachhaltige Kanonisierung ein, die zweifellos mit der Rolle Manns als Repräsentionsfigur einer Kultur zusammenhängt, die seit den 1950er Jahren allmählich wieder in die Weltgemeinschaft aufgenommen wurde. Wo also internationale Aufmerksamkeit für neuere, aber nicht zeitgenössische deutsche Literatur bestand, da gehörte Mann zu den Klassikern der Moderne, wie etwa Brecht oder Kafka, die durch Übersetzungen in weiter wachsendem Maß verbreitet wurden, auch wenn die 1960er und besonders die 1970er Jahre kein idealer Hintergrund für einen als konservativ geltenden bürgerlichen ‚Großschriftsteller' waren. Überdies sprachen gegen eine umfassende

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Popularität des *Zauberberg* im speziellen seine Komplexität und sein Umfang, weshalb dieser Roman selten der erste Mann'sche Text gewesen sein dürfte, zu dem muttersprachliche und erst recht ausländische Leser und Leserinnen griffen. Dennoch stabilisierte sich die Position Thomas Manns im Kanon in den folgenden Jahrzehnten weiter, wobei die intensiven editorischen Bemühungen um sein fiktionales und essayistisches Werk, seine Briefe und Tagebücher sowohl Symptom als auch Basis für dieses weltweit sichtbare Nachleben sind. Diese globale Kanonizität ist natürlich auch an der umfangreichen literaturwissenschaftlichen Auseinandersetzung mit Mann in den aktiven Sprachen der internationalen Germanistik abzulesen. Genauso aussagekräftig ist aber das Faktum, dass bestimmte Texte eines Autors, diesfalls also paradigmatisch *Der Zauberberg*, kontinuierlich im Fokus der Übersetzer/innen steht, so dass die Anzahl der Übertragungen in verschiedene Sprachen und auch die der Mehrfach-Übersetzungen weder singulär noch sprunghaft, sondern eher in stetiger Linie anwächst.

Für die komparatistische Übersetzungsforschung ist der *Zauberberg* aufgrund seiner Länge keine primäre Wahl für die Lehrpraxis. Hingegen ist er erkennbar ein Prestigeprojekt sowohl für Verlage wie auch für Übersetzer/innen. Man darf also davon ausgehen, dass zumindest in alle neueren Übertragungen des Werks eine gewisse Sorgfalt bei der textuellen und materiellen Herstellung sowie bei der Vermarktung investiert wurde. Mithin handelt es sich um ein Forschungsobjekt von Dignität und Repräsentativität.

Übersetzungen sind eigentlich ein selbstverständliches Sammelgebiet für komparatistische Fachbibliotheken. Soweit die Theorie. In der Praxis sieht es – schon aus finanziellen Gründen – oft anders aus. Denn erstens lässt sich vom bibliothekarischen Standpunkt nur schwer bestimmen, ob beispielsweise eine Übersetzung der *Divina Commedia*, von der es bekanntlich allein ins Deutsche viele Dutzende gibt, in die Dante-Abteilung einer romanistischen Bibliothek gehört oder in eine übergreifende belletristische Sektion oder gar in eine translationswissenschaftliche Sonderabteilung. Das hängt auch davon ab, in welchem Land man sich befindet. Um bei dem Beispiel zu bleiben: In einem deutschsprachigen Land ist es nicht so selbstverständlich, die Übersetzungen als quasi sekundäre Produkte dem primären Autor, hier: Dante Alighieri, zuzuordnen, da manche seiner Übersetzer in einer germanistischen Bibliothek ihre eigenen markanten Systemstellen haben, Stefan George und Rudolf Borchardt etwa. Dass nun, um nicht von ‚allen' zu sprechen, viele oder die relevantesten Übersetzungen eines literarischen Texts in die jeweilige Landessprache der in Rede stehenden Bibliothek an einem Ort zusammengetragen wären, ist zumeist eher ein Wunsch als die Realität. Und vollends wird es zu einem irrealen Traum, wenn man sich vorstellt, dass zu einer sinnvollen komparatistischen Beschäftigung mit der Rezeption eines/r Autors/in eigentlich die Sammlung seiner/ihrer Übersetzungen in *alle möglichen* Literatursprachen gehört. In Wirklichkeit ist

aber beinahe regelmäßig, mindestens jedoch außerhalb der größten Nationalbibliotheken, das Gegenteil der Fall: Nur selten besitzt eine Bibliothek des Sprachgebietes A überhaupt Übersetzungen des/r Autors/in aus dem Sprachgebiet B in die Sprachen C, D, E usw., und dies gilt keinesfalls nur für die sogenannten ‚kleineren' Sprachen. Daher ist es schon in Österreich schwierig, beispielsweise die Übersetzung eines kanonischen englischen Texts ins Französische zu finden. Das komparatistische Studiengebiet ‚internationale Rezeptions- und Translationsforschung' ist also, was die Basis in den Bibliotheken betrifft, zumeist und noch immer auf individuelle Buchbeschaffung aus vielfachen Quellen angewiesen. Nun ließe sich einwenden, dass dies angesichts der fortschreitenden Digitalisierung ein vorübergehendes Problem darstellt, was auch grundsätzlich zutreffen mag; indes sind die allermeisten Übersetzungen überhaupt und natürlich fast alle Übersetzungen von Texten, die selbst noch nicht oder erst seit kurzer Zeit gemeinfrei sind, gar nicht anders denn in Print-Ausgaben verfügbar, und die Beschaffung von Campus-Lizenzen wäre für die selten nachgefragten Übertragungen in Drittsprachen finanziell nicht sinnvoll. Daher wird es auf absehbare Zeit dabei bleiben, dass man für das exemplarische Arbeiten an den multiplen Übersetzungen eines bedeutenden kanonischen Werks idealerweise an mindestens einem Ort Exemplare sammelt, wie das die Wiener Komparatistik eben mit dem *Zauberberg* sowie einigen Werken Elfriede Jelineks tut, abgesehen von literarischen Sachwörterbüchern, die Gegenstand eines weiteren Beitrags sind (cf. p. 707–736).

Die Abteilung für Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft innerhalb des Instituts für Europäische und Vergleichende Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft der Universität Wien verfügt über eine separate Fachbereichsbibliothek, an der sie mit zwei weiteren Fächern partizipiert. Diese Bibliothek ist, was den rein komparatistischen Anteil betrifft, mit ca. 11.000 Bänden nicht besonders umfangreich, insofern sie die großen nationalphilologischen Fachbereichsbibliotheken und die Zentralbibliothek der Universität Wien nicht ersetzen oder duplizieren, sondern ergänzen soll. Daher sammelt diese Bibliothek ausschließlich komparatistische Sekundärliteratur, also Methodologie, Fallstudien, komparative Literaturgeschichte, außerdem Reallexikographie der Literaturwissenschaft sowie in wenigen Ausnahmefällen Primärliteratur, nämlich Übersetzungen einiger kanonischer Texte. Anlässlich des ICLA-Kongresses 2016 wurden als Beispiel für konkrete Textarbeit innerhalb der Komparatistik mehrere Sektionen der vorhandenen Bücher ausgestellt, insbesondere Beispiele für die 800 Stück umfassende Serie an Dissertationen, Diplomarbeiten und Masterarbeiten der Wiener Komparatistik sowie alle ICLA-Proceedings, die seinerzeit beschaffbar waren. Auf die Auflistung dieser Publikationen kann hier verzichtet werden, nachdem die Website der AILC/ICLA https://www.ailc-icla.org/other_publications/ dies übernommen hat. Hingegen soll kurz die dritte Sektion der seinerzeit paradigmatisch ausgestellten Bücher

dokumentiert werden, und zwar, um einen über den Anlass hinausgehenden Nutzen zu stiften, erweitert um diejenigen Drucke, die sich nicht im Besitz der Wiener Komparatistik oder formal: des Universitätsbibliothekssystems der Universität Wien befinden oder erst in den letzten Jahren erschienen.

Es sei darauf verwiesen, dass die Universität Wien über ein Zentrum für Translationswissenschaft mit einer wiederum eigenen Bibliothek verfügt. Dennoch wird in Veranstaltungen der Abteilung Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft immer wieder an literarischen Übersetzungen prinzipiell oder fallweise gearbeitet. So waren auch die Übersetzungen des *Zauberberg* bereits im Arbeitskontext eines Seminars textanalytisch und sozialhistorisch bearbeitet worden. Der Roman bietet eine Reihe interessanter Spezifika, gerade, was das Übersetzen angeht, angefangen beim Titel, der in den indoeuropäischen Sprachen beinahe abwechselnd mit der Wurzel „Zauber-“ und dem Attribut „magisch“ gebildet wird (wobei sich mal die eine, mal die andere Variante durchsetzt – beispielsweise war der erste französische Teildruck in der Übersetzung von Georges Peÿ 1925 *La montagne enchantée* betitelt, während es später bei *La montagne magique* blieb), über die Frage, wie die leise Ironie des Erzählers gegenüber seinem Helden und wie dessen lethargisches Interesse an den verschiedensten Bildungsimpulsen sprachlich spürbar gemacht werden, über das Faktum, dass man sich das Sanatorium Berghof geradezu als Prototyp des kosmopolitischen und damit auch vielsprachigen Europa am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkriegs vorstellen muss, über die teilweise hochspeziellen, zitathaft einmontierten oder mit Hans Castorps Worten nacherzählten Diskurse über das Wesen der Zeit oder die Medizin, bis hin zu der berühmten Passage am Ende des 1. Bandes, die Thomas Mann auf Französisch schrieb und für deren Transfer in Übersetzungen sich logischerweise verschiedene Lösungen anbieten.

Hier nun folgt die Liste aller bisher bekannten Übersetzungen des Romans, also auch solche, die bisher nicht beschafft oder autopsiert werden konnten, und zwar nach Sprachen geordnet und mit einer kurzen chronologischen Auswertung. Es sei ausdrücklich darauf verwiesen, dass hier nicht die im Begleitheft einer Kabinettausstellung des Heinrich und Thomas Mann-Zentrums Lübeck erschienene Bibliographie von Georg Potempa abgeschrieben wurde (Auswahl-Bibliographie 1993, 70–77), die freilich inzwischen 30 Jahre alt ist. Dort werden mit bibliophiler Akribie und letztlich auch aus Sammlerperspektive zusätzlich alle maßgeblichen Angaben zu Seitenzahl, Buchaustattung, Auflagen usw. verzeichnet, und außerdem wird die Geschichte der deutschen Teil- und Vorabdrucke sowie der verschiedenen Editionen dokumentiert, was alles hier keine Rolle spielt.

Georg Potempa hat auch eine Übersicht über den Ablauf der bis damals registrierten Übersetzungsgeschichte geliefert (vgl. auch den Kommentar von Michael Neumann hg. 2002, Bd. 2, 121). Von besonderer Relevanz für die Verbreitung war

als zweite erschienene Übersetzung die englische (1927). Die späten 1920er und frühen 1930er Jahre sahen dann Übertragungen des *Zauberberg* in weitere wichtige europäische Sprachen wie Polnisch und Schwedisch (1929), Dänisch, Jiddisch, Tschechisch (1930) und Französisch (1931). Für die Schicksale beispielsweise der italienischen und russischen Übertragung sei nachdrücklich auf den Beitrag von Potempa (Anmerkungen 1993, 54–61, hier: 60) verwiesen. In der Summe zählt er Übersetzungen in 27 Sprachen aus 31 Ländern (Anmerkungen 1993, 55), von denen die Mehrheit „erst aus der Zeit nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, ja sogar erst nach dem Tode des Dichters 1955“ stammt (Anmerkungen 1993, 61). Zum Zeitpunkt der Lübecker Ausstellung war der *Zauberberg* in mehrere Sprachen sogar mehr als einmal übersetzt worden, und die neueste Übertragung war die ins Makedonische 1987 (Anmerkungen 1993, 61). Inzwischen zählen wir knapp 60 Übersetzungen (einige davon allerdings nur revidierte Fassungen) in 36 Sprachen, von denen die neuesten die Übertragung ins Vietnamesische 2013 und die Neuübersetzung ins Tschechische von 2016 sind. Nicht aufgeführt sind hier einfache Neuauflagen derselben Textfassung, die insbesondere auf Englisch, Französisch, Japanisch, Polnisch, Rumänisch, Russisch, Slowenisch, Ungarisch vorliegen, wobei namentlich preiswerte Paperback-Ausgaben eine weite Verbreitung begünstigen, aber eben auch eine entsprechende Rezeptionsbereitschaft am Markt demonstrieren. Einen Roman von über 1000 Seiten zu übersetzen, dessen spezifischen Ton zu treffen, eine besondere Herausforderung ist, stellt ein deutliches merkantiles Risiko dar – oder eine erhebliche Beanspruchung öffentlicher oder privater Kulturförderung. Jedenfalls ist das Vorbereiten und Produzieren eines solchen Projekts weder ein zufälliger noch ein kurzfristiger Akt. Daraus folgt, dass die internationale Diffusion eines gewichtigen Klassikers der Moderne ein belastbares Modell liefert für die Rezeptionskurve des zentralen Kanons, auch, was die räumliche oder linguistische Nähe oder Ferne von Sprachkulturen betrifft. So dürfte die Existenz von Versionen des *Zauberberg* in den germanischen Sprachen sowie denen der Nachbarländer Deutschlands wenig verwundern, wohingegen die Wertschätzung für den Autor evident wird in der Tatsache, dass der Markt den *Zauberberg* inzwischen auch für japanische, koreanische, chinesische, vietnamesische und arabische Muttersprachler/innen anbietet. Aus europäischer Perspektive schrieb Michael Neumann, „[m]ittlerweile“ habe der Roman „den Weg in die verschiedensten und entferntesten Kulturen gefunden“ (hg. 2002, Bd. 2, 125). Dies ist, nebenher beobachtet, auch ein faktisches Statement gegen die hin und wieder beobachtbare Praxis, sich trotz aller Anerkennung für die ästhetische Einzigartigkeit des Originals der Einfachheit halber international, aber auch und gerade in akademischen Lehrveranstaltungen, ersatzweise über die englische Übersetzung zu verständigen, die zudem oft den verlockenden Vorteil hat, aufgrund der ungleich höheren Auflagenzahlen zumeist als preiswertes Paperback verfügbar zu sein. Wer die hier folgende Liste

überfliegt, wird konstatieren, dass dennoch bisher weiterhin einige Lücken verblieben sind. Natürlich ließe sich eine sehr viel längere Liste lebender Sprachen entwickeln, indes sollen hier nur die größeren aktiven Literatursprachen genannt werden, in die nach bisheriger Kenntnis der *Zauberberg* noch nicht übersetzt wurde: Belarussisch, Birmanisch, Hindi, Indonesisch, Isländisch, Letzeburgisch, Maltesisch, Mongolisch, Pashtuni, Suahili, Thailändisch, Urdu. Dies sind Desiderate, durch deren Erfüllung die Verflechtung der Weltliteratur, ganz in Goethes Sinn und in dem seines überzeugten Jüngers Thomas Mann, weiter vervollkommnet würde.

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The editors of the five volumes

Vol. 1: The Languages of World Literature

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Achim Hölter, born in 1960 in Dülken (Rhineland, Germany), after teaching in Wuppertal, Bochum, and Bonn, was Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Münster from 1997 until 2009 and has been holding the same position at the University of Vienna since 2009. He was chairman of the German Society for General and Comparative Literature (DGAVL) from 2005 until 2011 and chief organiser of the XXI. World Congress of the ICLA in Vienna. He is a member of the Academia Europaea. His main research interests are Romantic Studies, Thematic and Discourse Research, Art and Literary Historiography, Ritualisations of Literature, Aesthetic Self-Reference, Comparative arts, International Reception History, Canon Research, Libraries and Literature. Some book publications: *Ludwig Tieck: Literaturgeschichte als Poesie* (1989); *Die Invaliden* (1995); *Die Bücherschlacht* (1995); (ed.): *Marcel Proust. Leseerfahrungen deutschsprachiger Schriftsteller von Theodor W. Adorno bis Stefan Zweig* (1998); (ed.): *Comparative Arts* (2011); (ed. with Rüdiger Zymner): *Handbuch Komparatistik* (2013); (ed. with Stefan Alker): *Literaturwissenschaft und Bibliotheken* (2015); (ed. with Monika Schmitz-Emans): *Literaturgeschichte und Bildmedien* (2015), most recently: *In 200 Büchern um den Globus. Expeditionen in die neuere Weltliteratur* (2023). Newly available is the database of the project funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF): *Ludwig Tieck's Library. Anatomy of a Romantic and Comparatist Book Collection*: https://tieck-bibliothek.univie.ac.at (printed monograph including catalogue planned for 2025).

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His most recent book publications are (ed., with Christine Ivanovic): *Nach Wien! Sehnsucht, Distanzierung, Suche. Literarische Darstellungen Wiens aus komparatistischer Perspektive* (2015); *Die literarische Zensur in Österreich 1750-1848 (*2017); (ed., with Ina Hein, Karoly Kókai and Sandra Vlasta): *Brüchige Texte, brüchige Identitäten. Avantgardistisches und exophones Schreiben von der klassischen Moderne bis zur Gegenwart* (2018); (ed., with Achim Hölter and John A. McCarthy): *Taking Stock – Twenty-Five Years of Comparative Literary Research* (2020); (ed., with Juliane Werner): *Popular Music and the Poetics of Self in Fiction* (2022), and *Censorship of Literature in Austria, 1751–1848* (2022).

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Vol. 3: Discourses on Nations and Identities

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