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Japanese Literature Studies

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Introduction to Japanese Literature Studies

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Here are four articles on Japanese literature, each one of which tries to elucidate its not-well-explained aspects from a different point of view. The first one, María Jesús De Prada Vicente's "The self-organization of Japanese Literature", shows us the fundamental character of Japanese literature in terms of self-organization through oscillations between two poles and shifting of central axes. The author's surprising use of Prigogine's thermodynamic theory to explain the formation of Japanese literature as a system is just revealing. The second article, Min Byun-hoon's "Mythological Heroes in Korea and Japan", gives us a significant hint to understand the similarity and the difference of literary archetype between Korea and Japan, geometrically and culturally so close to each other. Restraining himself from a diachronic method, the author succeeds in showing up the prototype of Japanese narratives. The third one, Oshima Hitoshi's "The literary value of Basho's poetry", treats one of the most famous Japanese poets, Basho, aiming at showing the universality of his poems. By this, the author tries to liberate his poetry from philosophical or religious interpretations in vogue in the West, by introducing structural analysis and semiotic interpretations. The last one is Cynthia Daugherty's "The Decorative and the Poetic in Rimpa Art", which treats a problem concerning the relation between literature and visual art in Japan. The author's insistence on the link between Rimpa Art and Japanese classical poetry leads us to rethink the cliché about the art in Edo period. With these four articles, I hope the reader will capture something essential of Japanese literature and its tradition.

The Self-organization of Japanese Literature

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Abstract One of the things of Japanese literature the Westerners have difficulty in seizing is the notion of seasonal time it relies upon. Different from Western literature based either on mythology or history, Japanese literature has been split between the two and has arranged the antagonism by introducing a third element which consists of the circulation of four seasons. Thus from the 10th century on, the main rule of composing a Japanese poem has been to express human sentiments by way of a thing or a phenomenon representing one of the four seasons. Now, this introduction of seasonal time is related to the other characteristics of Japanese literature: oscillation and shifting. Instead of making a choice out of them, it oscillates between the mythological and the historical, the primitive and the civilized, the domestic and the international, etc., shifting gradually from the original point in search of a new system of equilibrium. This self-organizing movement is just like an apparently chaotic dissipative system described and explained by Ilya Prigogine, a world-famous physicist. Different from Western or Chinese literary system, it never takes root in the historical nor does it cling to the mythological, but just oscillates between. As for modern literature, we have to say it has difficulties. For the oscillating system does not work fully under the devastating modernization process.

Key Words chaos; hybridism; constant oscillations and shifting; self-organization

It seems Japanese literature is not easy to evaluate adequately in a universal context. In this article, Dr. De Prada Vicente will explain the causes of the difficulty and propose an appropriate approach to seize the essential of that literature.
(H. O., editor)

1. Three-fold Time

Aristotle(384 – 322 B. C.) said in his *Poétique*(325 B. C.) that tragedy was a mimesis of the events that took place in human history and that epic poetry was an idealization of tragedy (89). According to him, tragedy and epic poetry were much higher in quality than comedy or lyrics and that history was the soul of tragedy(92). His history-centered vision has exercised so much influence on the Western world that we can say the whole body of Western literature has been history-centered.

Of course, there have been anti-historical movements, such as Romantic movements that longed for the world of myths and dreams beyond history and Proust's search for lost time in his remembrances of the primary stage of his life. But such new directions did not change the main stream; the Western literary world has not ceased to consider historical time as the truest and this reflects even on today's literary and cultural studies. It is doubtlessly historical positivism, the product of the 19th century, that is still influential in academic fields despite the vogue of structuralism in the latter half of the 20th century.

One of the consequences of this history-centered vision of Westerners is found in their incapacity to seize other literatures adequately. Japanese literature is a prime example, despite the love Westerners express for it. Loving a thing is no guarantee of a good understanding of it. We should ask ourselves what kind of works they love, what charm they find in them and how they interpret them.

One of the factors of Japanese literature that makes it difficult for a Westerner to understand it is the notion of time developed in it. Time in Japanese literature in general is not a single, strait current from the past to the present and from the present to future. Rather, it has three layers: a mythical one that consists of timelessness, a historical one opposed to it and a seasonal one that comes between them as an intermediary. In Western literature, as well as in Chinese[1], the first of these three do appear, but usually in conflicts, while Japanese literature also includes the third one, the indication of the four seasons of the year, to mediate the opposition of the mythical and the historical times.

The three-fold time of Japanese literature was established as a code as early as the beginning of the 10th century, with the compilation of *Kokin-waka-shu* (*Imperial Anthology of Ancient and Modern Poems*, 905). The anthology having being considered as a Bible for more than a thousand years allows us to imagine how deep and strong its influence on Japanese literature has been.

To show how the three-fold time works in concrete cases, let us quote one of Kino Tsurayuki's (866 – 945) *waka*[2] poems from the anthology.

> Chi-haya-buru/ kami-no igaki-ni hau kuzu-mo/ aki-ni-wa aede utsuroi-ni-keri
> (Tsuneya, *Kokin Waka-shu* 106)
> (How autumn is strong! / Even the arrowroot crawling on the sacred fence of the powerful gods Cannot resist it./ Its color has turned.)[3]

Here, the dominance of seasonal time is clear. For the poet says "autumn" is stronger than the eternal or the mythical represented by "the sacred fence of powerful gods". As for historical time, it looks absent, but it exists, for if "powerful gods" cannot "resist" seasonal time represented by "autumn", it means they have already lost the eternal or mythical. The poet does not admire the seasonal beauty; he just laments the loss of the mythical due to the coming of the historical. This does not mean, however, that the poet is in despair because the seasonal time that implies irreversible changes assures him of the repetitive cycle. Here we see "autumn" plays the role of intermediary between the mythical and the historical, making up for the

void caused by the loss of the eternal.

Another example of the seasonal time in Japanese literature is taken from the *hokku*[4] poems composed by one of the best known poets of Japan, Basho (1644 – 94). It is taken from his famous *Oku-no Hosomichi* (*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, 1702):

Natsu-kusa-ya/ tsuwamono-domo-ga/ yume-no ato (Matsuo Basho 84)
(Oh, the summer grass! / The trace/ of the warriors´dreams...)

Here again, the dominance of the seasonal time represented by "the summer grass" is clear. But this time, it is placed not over the mythical but rather over the historical represented by "the warriors". The real hero of the poem is evidently "the summer grass," not "the warriors," and it is in "the grass" representing the vitality of Nature that the poet saw "the trace of dreams" of those who had fought centuries before at the place where he has found himself.[5]

While at first glance it appears that the poet did not have mythical time in mind, the exclamatory form of *Natsu-kusa-ya* (Oh, the summer grass!) implies an admiration or awe for the eternal represented by the periodicity of summer. Here again, seasonal time symbolizes irreversible changes and repetitive returns at the same time. It is mediating the opposition of the mythical and the historical.

The examples we have seen are from traditional literature. How about the modern examples? We have to say that the fact that time is three-fold in traditional literature has made it difficult for modern Japanese to create a modern novel of Western style. If we do not find a novel in modern Japan comparable to one by Flaubert or Tolstoy, it is quite understandable. Under the pressure of objective realism and historical development of a story that they imposed upon themselves following the model of a Western novel, Japanese hardly succeeded in creating a novel in that style because of their non-epic tradition. If they tended to escape from it into confessional novels called Shi-shosetsu, it is again quite understandable.[6]

2. Chaos

To understand Japanese literature adequately, it is also important to know that chaos is a key esthetic model for this literature. By the word "chaos", we do not mean the opposite of "order" but the original, undetermined state of the world prior to the division of "order" and "disorder". Since this notion is lacking in the West, Westerners have difficulty in seizing the essential of Japanese esthetics even as they find it mysteriously attractive.

Indeed, Western esthetics has always been centered on order. As is indicated in the following passage of Parmenides (5^{th} century B. C.), one of the fathers of Western philosophy, Westerners have walked on the way of Being, the cognizable way of order and logic he built up, rejecting the unknowable Non-Being, disorder and nonsense.

Listen and bear my words in mind, I will tell what ways of inquiry you have to

think:
The way that is and is not Non-Being. It is the way of conviction for it leads to Truth.
The other way that is not and needs to be Non-Being; I tell you it is a completely unknownpath;
For you will never be able to know Non-Being; it is just unrealizable;
You will never be able to make it known. (Marzoa 43)

Certainly, Nietzsche (1844 – 1900) tried to go against the orderly esthetics by propagating the esthetics of disorder he found in ancient Greek civilization, but his insistence on Dionysian ecstatic beauty[7] never overcame the traditional reliance on Apollonian esthetics. Even Baudelaire(1821 – 67), so fond of the exotic and the satanic, was a loyal disciple of Apollo, which can be seen in the following words of his poem titled *L'Invitation au voyage* (*Invitation to travel*):

Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté/ Luxe, calme et volupté. (Baudelaire 77)
(Over there, you will have nothing but order and beauty/ Luxury, peace, and sensuality.)

Structuralism, a method of textual analysis that bloomed in the latter half of the 20th century, has surely contributed significantly in opening a door for Westerners to appreciate other civilizations and cultures, but we have to say that in the end it was another form of inquiry for orderly beauty for it tried to explain the unchangeable and the universal of humanity by analyzing languages, marriage systems and myths, always in terms of a dichotomous schema. Such a method unfortunately could not provide a framework for understanding a culture based on the esthetics of chaos such as that of Japan. The schema could be useful in revealing the brain structure of humanity, but it was not enough to engender an understanding of the chaotic. To grapple with Japanese literature whose esthetics is based on chaos, we need another method.

3. Hybridism

Before exploring a method to understand Japanese literature in an adequate way, let us mention another difficulty for Westerners or other non-Japanese people to understand it: hybridism. By this term, we mean the coexistence of two different elements in one and the same space. Japanese literature, as well as Japanese language, does not know dialectics; it juxtaposes opposite elements without the need to make a synthesis out of them. The hybridism of Japanese literature began with the oldest book of Japan, *Kojiki* (*The Records of Ancient Matters* 712). The text of the book presents hybridism both in structure and style, and it is this hybridism that has impressed an indelible mark on Japanese literature.

From a structural point of view, the text remains far from being a totality; it gives the impression of a gathering of pieces each of which used to belong to a structured whole. There is no principle that unifies the gathering, but two forces in opposite directions coexist within one text. Those forces are of mythological and historical

orders. The mythological force aims at conserving the most primitive stage of people's history, while the historical one aims at narrating a history of the construction of a civilized nation. The two are obviously opposite to each other, but coexist at any cost. George Sansom, one of the pioneers of Japanese Studies, found the text chaotic (Sansom 22), which is understandable because the coexistence of the two opposites in one and the same text usually gives such an impression. Nevertheless, the text is not just a juxtaposition of two different forces. There exists a third one that mediates the two just like the seasonal time intervening between the mythical and the historical that we saw above. This third is a vitalistic world-vision, according to which all that happens is a manifestation of the sacred, vital and generative energy called *musuhi*[8]. The intervention of this vision turns the historical events narrated in *Kojiki* into the results of the divine actions of Nature.

The vitalistic vision lying at the bottom of the text of *Kojiki* was first discovered by Maruyama Masao. He made the following formula out of the words that appear frequently in the text: "tsugi-tsugi-ni nari-yuku ikioi" (the force that pushes the becoming forward and continuously), (Masao 3 – 66). His formula showed that the Japanese way of viewing history consisted in viewing history as if it had been a series of natural happenings. Haruko and Theodore Cook share this affirmation when they say, in their *Japan at War, an Oral History*, that the Japanese who had fought in World War II conceived of the war as something that came to them, not as something they did (Haruko and Cook 3).

Now, though we said above that *Kojiki* as a text has a hybrid character presenting a heterogeneous feature, it is not totally lacking in order. For example, the mythological passage of the quarrel between the couple Izanagi and Izanami, who gave birth to the islands of future Japan, shows clearly the division of the country of the Alive and of the Dead:

> At last, Izanagi's beloved siser(wife) Izanami came after him. So he blocked the path with an enormous rock to prevent her from passing. Standing at the both sides of the rock, they cursed each other to divorce. Izanami, the wife, said first´"My dearest man, given the circumstance, I will kill a thousand people's lives from your land each day." To this, Izanagi, the husband, answered´"My dearest sister, if you do that, I will construct a thousand and five hundred cottages for childbirth a hundred newborn children. (Kenji 67)

Apparently, there was a victory on the part of the Alive over the Dead for there were more people born than dead. But we have to notice that even if the couple divorced, they still loved each other and that the wife, representing the country of the Dead, kept on being active. The division of Life and Death was truly marked there, but it does not guarantee the peace and stability of the world. The order established by them is not definite; the battle between Eros and Thanatos did not cease.[9]

Let us see now the hybridism of *Kojiki* from a stylistic point of view. It is generally written in classical Chinese called *kanbun* because the Japanese of the 8th century did not have their own writing system yet, but we find in it many words and expres-

sions proper to Japanese language called *Yamato-kotoba*, whose transcription in Chinese characters was made in such a way that the phonetic aspect of each word was conserved. Many of such words and expressions are names of gods and sacred places, songs and some expressions the editors found irreplaceable by Chinese language. We can appreciate a glimpse of the ancient Japanese language and culture through them.

Let us see an example of the hybrid style in the text of *Kojiki*.

> When the country was young and kurage-nasu tadayoeru like floating oil, there was something coming out like reed buds and it became finally a god called Umashi Ashikabi-hikoji. (Jun 51)

In this quote, the italic parts correspond to the names or expressions proper to Japanese language and the rest to Chinese. The first of the italic parts means "floating like a jellyfish" and the second, the name of the god born out of the "float". We can imagine that they were too important for the editors to translate in Chinese; they wished to keep the original phonetic form in order not to lose the memory of the past.

Later, this hybrid style became the common use. Around the 12th century, the most common style became that where words of Chinese origin were written in Chinese characters and *Yamato-kotoba* written in Japanese alphabet called *kana*, combined according to Japanese syntax in one and the same text. This style has survived all the linguistic changes the Japanese have suffered till today. Japanese literature can thus be said to be hybrid in this sense, as well.

4. Constant Oscillation and Shifting

To understand the non-historical, chaotic and hybrid nature of Japanese literature in movement, we have to go beyond the domain of humanistic sciences; we are obliged to get into physical sciences for these could give better explanations of the dynamics of any object. To determine which physical science is precisely the most useful, let us first pick up the most important points concerning the dynamics of Japanese literature.

From the beginning of its history, Japanese literature has had two opposite poles: the mythical and the historical, the primitive and the civilized, *Wa* (the vernacular, Japanese literature) and *Kan* (the foreign, Chinese) or, in other words, the natural and the artificial. These two have never made up a synthesis; they have just juxtaposed themselves to each other. Thus establishing a two-world system in parallel, this arrangement has worked without much difficulty.

Some may think the system derived from Chinese Taoism, especially from its theory of Ying and Yang, but as such a setting is common to the so-called primitive societies that try to cope with their environment(Lévi-Strauss 132 – 135), we are inclined to suppose it had existed even before the introduction of Taoism to Japanese Archipelago. The hybridism must have its origin in the prehistoric age.

Now, Japanese literature like any other literature in the world is a living body that moves in time and space. What is specific of Japanese literature is that it has been attracted by two opposite poles from the beginning, and that it has naturally os-

cillated from one side to the other incessantly. In certain ages, it was nearer to one of the poles; at others, to the other.

Moreover, we find that the poles themselves shifted according to periods. In premodern ages, the pole of *Kan* (*the Chinese*) was opposed to that of *Wa* (*the Japanese vernacular*), but in the modern age, it is *Yoo* (*the Western*) that took the place of *Kan* and opposed itself to *Wa* which was no longer the same as the premodern *Wa* but a sort of mixture of the premodern *Wa* and *Kan*. Although the structure of bipolarity has not changed and the hybridism is still working, the contents have altered because of the shifting of the poles. We can conclude that Japanese literature has not only oscillated from one side to the other but also has shifted from one point to another according to cultural currents.

Once all this is seen and taken into account the chaotic and hybrid nature of Japanese literature, we can find a physical theory suitable to explain its dynamics. A biological theory could also be useful, but generally speaking, biology depends on physical sciences; we would rather seek it therefore in the realm of physics.

As far as we know, the most suitable and useful to our objective is thermodynamics. For it offers scientific explanations to moving and chaotic phenomena of a system. Actually, Claude Lévi-Strauss already applied it to explain the nature of the difference of so-called primitive societies from civilized ones (Charbonnier 35 – 48). His explanations are not fully satisfactory because he did not view any dynamics in the "primitive" societies, but it was his useful idea to find some utility in this science for the understanding of the phenomena of human societies.

Among the modern thermodynamic theories, it is Prigogine's *dissipative structure theory* that is the most interesting. The theory reveals the process of self-organization of a chaotic system that lacks in equilibrium owing to its peripheral location, exchanging a limited amount of energy with the external world. Such a system, according to the theory, remains as distant from the primitive static stage as from organizing a solid structure with equilibrium. It affirms that such a non-equilibrium system will never remain chaotic but form a structure in its own way, presenting oscillations and shiftings (Ilya Prigogine et Isabelle Stengers 171 – 194).

Now, we can deduce from this theory at least two conclusions. First, there are types of systems. One is at the primitive stage, completely stable and without any movement; and another type has a dissipative structure, unstable and chaotic but able to organize itself with its particular oscillations and shiftings; the third is an organizing a solid structure with equilibrium through the dynamic exchanges of energy with the outer world. These three correspond to systems of all kind, among which, of course, we can count literary ones. Literatures can be classified into three types: that of an isolated "primitive" society with primary equilibrium system, literature of a mid-closed peripheral society with non-equilibrium system, and literature of a civilized world with solid equilibrium system. Japanese literature belongs evidently to the second type, while Chinese or Western literature to the last. Prigogine's theory explains perfectly the dynamics of Japanese literature with its oscillations and shiftings.

The other conclusion we can deduce from the theory is that Japanese literature is a system that can organize itself from the original chaos. It will never achieve a solid

system with equilibrium but form one like a "jellyfish" floating on moving water. The above mentioned phrase of *Kojiki*: kurage-nasu tadayoeru, suits the theory perfectly. It is with a good reason that the editors of the oldest book of Japan conserved the expression.

5. The Floating World

Let us see now some examples of the formation of a "jellyfish" system of Japanese literature. The first expression corresponding to it is what we have just seen: "kurage nasu tadayoeru". There are second, third and many others that followed it, expressing a vision of the floating world. Here are some of them.

In *Man-yo-shu*, the oldest poetic anthology compiled in the 8th century, we find an expression such as *kamo-no ukine* (sleeping wild duck floating on the water), which indicates more or less the same world vision as "kurage nasu tadayoeru". The expression appears for example in the poem No. 2817:

> Wagimoko-ni/ Koi-fure-ni-ka-aran/ Oki-ni-sumu/ Kamo-no ukine-no/ Yasuken-mo-naki. (Ito Haku 72)
> (Oh, my beloved one/ Have I fallen in love? Like a sleeping wild duck/ floating off the coast/ my heartsis trembling.)

In this poem, the word "uki" is polysemous. It means "floating" but also "sad". The word being associated with "kamo" (wild duck) implies loneliness, anguish, even death, first because wild ducks are migratory and second because to see only one of them, rather than in their usual coupling, provokes the sensation of loneliness and melancholy. The expression reflected a world vision which was not as optimistic as "kurage nasu tadayoeru" of *Kojiki*. It shows the world was viewed as unstable and melancholic. Between the prehistoric and the historic times, there must have been a big social and cultural change.

The following poem, No. 419, also from the *Man-yo-shu* is another example of the same melancholic vision:

> Momo-zutau/ Iware-no ike-ni/ Naku-kamo-wo/ kyoo-nomi mite-ya/ kumo-gakuri-nan (Ibid. 140).
> (Eternally continuous/ the Pond of iware/ a Wild duck is crying on there/ Is this the last time I see them? / Ah, I am going to pass away..).

The poem is said to have been composed by Prince Otsu (663 – 686) just before his death. The victim of a conspiracy by his political enemies, he sees to have composed it before killing himself at home. "Kamo" (wild duck) is here directly associated with death and, by saying goodbye to it, the prince himself seemingly expressed his wish to migrate to the world beyond the "clouds" (kumo). The verb "to die" is expressed here as "kumo-gakuri", which literally means "to hide behind the clouds".

In *Man-yo-shu* and posterior anthologies, the migrant kamo was sometimes replaced by other beings such as "chidori" (plovers). In *Man-yo-shu*, plovers appear

for example in Kakinomoto-no Hitomaro's song (Ibid. 117), but it is later in *Kin-yo-shu*, *Senzai-shu* and *Shin-Kokin-shu* that they appear more frequently. Here is an example (No. 1331) taken from Shin-Kokin-shu, the last and the most complete anthology of Japanese court poetry compiled in 1205:

> Tsukuzuku-to/ Omoi-akashi-no/ Ura-chidori/ Nami-no makura-ni/ Nakunaku-zo kiku (Jun 115)
> (Deeply and deeply/ I thought of you all night/ My head on the pillow of the waves/ Hearing the plovers crying and crying. .)

The poem is composed by Gon-Chunagon Kimitsune, with a remarkable technique. First, it is composed in a symmetric form with the correspondence of the first repetitive phrase "tsukuzuku" (deeply and deeply) which corresponds to the final phrase which is also repetitive: "Nakunaku" (crying and crying). Second, the word "akashi" of the second phrase has a double meaning: the verb signifying "stay up all night" and the name of the place where the prince Hikaru-Genji, the well-known literary hero of Genji Monogatari, stayed with melancholy. The word "ura" in the third phrase also has a double meaning: "seashore" and "back". Ff course, "chidori" (the plovers) that appear in the middle of the poem play the main role of evoking sadness, loneliness and anguish of life with their "naku" that means "singing" and "weeping" at the same time.

In the 16th and the 17th centuries, when the millenary aristocratic culture was over, the floating world took a completely different tone. The word corresponding to "uki-yo" began to mean a cheerful and lively world instead of a melancholic one. The time of popular joie de vivre began. The new taste of the new era reflected on literature, both in poetry and prose. Haikai poetry was born as a mockery of waka, the traditional court poetry, and as a picaresque genre of novels, Ukiyo-zoshi were born. Here is the very beginning of Saikaku's famous Ukiyo-zoshi: *Kooshoku Ichidai Otoko* (*The Sexual Life of a Man Who Loved and Loved*, 1682), which reveals how lively the world vision of his time was:

> Lamenting the cherry blossoms falling down/ the moon glow disappearing over the hill of Irusa/ here is a man in a silver-mining town in the County of Tajima/ leaving aside the duties of the floating world/ spending days and nights in the two golden ways of sexual life/ called Yume-suke(= the dreaming boy)....
> (Saikaku 39)

We can see from the quote that the traditional esthetic values evoked by the fall of cherry blossoms and the glow of the moon were replaced by the more realistic pleasure of sex (kooshoku) associated with another pleasure, that of money making which is promised by the silver mining (kane-horu). Designed as a parody of the famous *Genji Monogatari*, the novel reflects a gay vision of the floating world.

To see the continuity of the vision of the floating world in modern times, it is enough to see the following poem "Kurage-no uta" (*Song of a Jellyfish*, 1952) com-

posed by Kaneko Mitsuharu that reminds us of the most ancient world vision appearing in Kojiki.

> Yurare yurare, momare momarete/ Sono-uchini/ Boku-wa/ Konnani sukitootte-kita. Daga/
> Yurareru-no-wa, rakuna-koto-dewa nai-yo./Soto-kara-demo suite-mieru-daro. Hora...
> Swaying and swaying, rocked from side to side, I´ve become so transparent meanwhile.
> But you know, swaying and being rocked like that is no easy. Look! You can see through me, From outside to inside... (Mitsuharu 83 – 86)

Expressing his own life as one of a jellyfish, the poet showed his unconscious loyalty to the most ancient tradition of Japanese literature based on the oscillations and shiftings.

6. Structure Out of Chaos

Let us see now the self-organization of Japanese literature from the point of view of the structure made out of it. As the first gods were born out of the floating stage of the world, it began to form a structure with its basic character of oscillations and shiftings. The first formation of structure can be seen in the setting of *Kojiki* and *Nihon Shoki* in parallel in the 8th century. Despite similarities in content, the two books were compiled with different aims. That of the former was not to lose the mythical vision of the world; that of the latter was to establish a historical vision of the nation newly born, though it contains a lot of mythical elements. Such a parallel setting appears not only in literature but also in other cultural fields, the most remarkable example of which is the setting of Shinto and Buddhism. But here, we would like to mention only literary examples.

The 8th century saw another literary setting with the same structure. The compilation of an anthology of Chinese poems composed by Japanese poets: *Kaifusoo* (*Cherished Recollection of Poetry*, 755), made a juxtaposition set with *Man-yo-shu*, the above mentioned anthology of *waka* (759?). Thus was established a set of Yamato-uta in contrast with Chinese poetry, *Kan-shi*, which continued to exist till the beginning of the 20th century. [10]

The parallel setting of *Yamato-uta* and *Kanshi* seems to have ceased in the 10th century with the compilation of *Kokin-shu* (905), the first imperial anthology of waka considered as the bible of Japanese literature for centuries. Nevertheless, the very fact that it has two prologues, one in kanbun and the other in wabun, indicates that Chinese literature was at least as important as Japanese to the men of letters of the time. Moreover, as is shown in the following quote, the editors of the anthology held a comparative vision of literature and knew the fundamental difference of *Yamato-uta* from *Kanshi*. To them the characteristics of the former consisted in expressing human emotions by way of natural elements.

> The poetry of Japan has its roots in the human heart and flourishes in the countless leaves of the words. Because human beings possess interests of so many kinds, it is in poetry that they give expression to the meditations of their hearts in terms of the sights appearing before their eyes and the sounds coming to their ears. Hearing the warbler sing among the blossoms and the frog in his fresh waters -is there any living being not given to song? It is poetry which, without exertion, moves heaven and earth, stirs the feelings of gods and spirits invisible to the eye, softens the relations between men and women, calms the hearts of fierce warriors (Tsuneya, 11).[11]

Indeed, *waka* poetry consists in the expression of the "meditations" of human "hearts" in terms of the perceptible, while Chinese poetry expresses the same often in terms of narrating events or happenings in human life. Though it is undeniable that such indirect expressions do exist in Chinese poetry and that it influenced the formation of *waka*,[12] but it is in Japan that they flourished.

The fact that the set of *waka* and *kanshi* flourished in Heian literature is best seen in the compilation of *Wakan Rooei-shu* (1018). This book is an anthology composed of 588 Chinese poems and 216 *waka* and was read all over Japan all through Middle Ages, which shows clearly how far Chinese poetry penetrated the Japanese mind despite the flowering of *waka*. We can see that without *kanshi*, *waka* did not have its *raison d'etre*.

Perhaps the most achieved form of the structure is to be found in Noh plays developed in Medieval Japan. Though *Heike-Monogatari* (*The Chronicle of the War between Heike and Genji*, 1309?) shows the set of *Wa* and *Kan* cultures by its hybrid style, the Noh plays of Kan-ami (1333 – 84) and Ze-ami(1363 – 1443) present the structure of juxtaposition in a more complete form. Their plays can be considered as a sort of incarnation of the millenary structure, not only of *waka* and *kanshi*, but also of Shinto and Buddhism, the noble and the popular or even the dead and the alive. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it is in Noh plays that the essence of Japanese literature can be found.

As for Edo literature from the 17th century and modern one after 1868, the structure was maintained at least until the mid-Edo period, that is the 18th century.[13] This means from the 19th century on, it has been losing a good balance of the two opposite elements, becoming more and more chaotic. The introduction of Western literature could not but increase the tension between the traditional and the modern, without achieving a new structure juxtaposing them one beside the other. It seems that even today, the Japanese are struggling for a new structure out of chaos without success.

One of the reasons for the modern and contemporary failure in constructing a new culture is the lack of bipolarity, without which there is no room for oscillation or shifting of the system. Japanese literature has lost its bipolarity because of the nationalistic policy that Meiji and posterior governments took to unify the country's cultures. Let us remember that all the men of letters from Antiquity to the end of Edo or even in the early Meiji period, were instructed at least in two different languages. In modern and contemporary Japan, there is hardly anyone capable of composing a poem both in Jap-

anese and a Western language. Even if today's Japanese is still written in Chinese characters and Japanese syllabary, the lack of bipolarity is undeniable. To reactivate the Japanese literary system, the Japanese need a good knowledge of another literary language than Japanese.

Notes

1. With the case of Chinese literature, almost the same can be said. For historical writings such as Sima Qian(145 – ? B. C.)'s Records of the Grand Historian(Shiji, 91 B. C.) could correspond to what Aristotle called tragedy. For they were based on historical facts, but not without epic elements in Aristotelian sense. Different from modern historical monographs, his Records narrates stories about what happened in the past, in a marvelous prosaic style. It is true Chinese literature lacks in epic poetry, but it is partly because it had a great historical literature as Sima Qian's Records that could replace epic poetry, in such an ancient period. In other words, Chinese literature has not really lacked in epic poetry, but has expelled it out of the realm of poetry so that it became a part of historical writings. See Victor Mair, *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature* (Columbia Univ. Press, 2010). Jacques Pimpaneau, *Chine*, *Histoire de la Litterature*(Philippe Piquier,2004).
2. The term waka or yamato-uta means Japanese song or poem, usually composed of 31 syllables, and distinguished from kan-shi, Chinese poem.
3. See Okumura Tsuneya and Shincho-sha, eds, *Kokin waka-shu* (Tokyo: Shincho-sha 1982)106. Translation by the author of this article. All the translations in the article are by the author of this article.
4. Hokku is the briefest form of Japanese poetry, composed of 17 syllables. Haiku being the modern term for hokku, it is more adequate to call Basho's poems hokku.
5. Basho explains that he composed this poem at Hiraizumi, Iwate prefecture, in Oku-no Hosomichi.
6. There are some exceptions; some writers have created a modern story in which seasonal time has its role to play. Such are Shiga Naoya's An-ya kooro, Tanizaki Jun-ichiro's Sasame-yuki. .
7. Friedrich Neitzsche. *Birth of Tragedy*. Trans. Michael Tanner and Shaun Whiteside (Penguin Classics, 1994).
8. The term musuhi is transcribed in Kojiki with two Chinese characters that mean "procreation" and "spirit" respectively.
9. Sigmund Freud(1856 – 1939) insisted on this in his Beyond the Pleasure Principle(1920).
10. It is well known that writers such as Akutagawa Ryunosuke(1892 – 1927) was pleased to compose kanshi.
11. The English quote is from Robert Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford University Press, 1961).
12. Ki-butsu chin-shi, to express emotions through things, one of the ways of Chinese poetical expressions, appears in Man-yo-shu for the first time in Japan.
13. See Nakano Mitsutoshi, *Juhasseiki-no Edo Bungei* (Iwanami, 1999) 6 – 10.

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Mythological Heroes in Korea and Japan

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Abstract Despite the cultural similarity and the common historical background of Korea and Japan, the two nations created quite different types of mythological heroes. Comparing the ancient texts such as *Samguk Yusa* in Korea and *Kojiki* in Japan, we find the following differences: 1) Japanese heroes were generally born rather in an ignoble manner without any superhuman character, while Korean equivalents born in an extraordinary manner, with superhuman qualities; 2) Japanese heroes conquered lands and built up their nation with cunning and the help of local people, especially of local women, while Korean equivalents did it with bravery and honesty, usually having loyal subordinate men help him. For example, Susanowo, a builder of pre-Yamato Japan, was born when his father wiped his mucus and did not cease crying all through his youth, while Korean Chumong, the founder of Kogryo, was born out of a giant egg and began to show his extraordinary strength and military skills at the age of seven. The former was expelled from Heaven and got down on Earth where he became a hero, but he conquered the land with cunning and the help of a local woman while the latter bravely fought against enemies and won the wars to be the first king of Kogryo. These differences are important because it is they that mark the fundamental difference in the narrative literature of the two nations.
Key words national myths; heroes; superhuman character; faults; bravery

Many of the scholars who realize a comparative study of Japanese and Korean myths concerning the birth of the nation, tend to take interest in finding out historical relations between the two countries. Obayashi Taryo, one of the most prominent of these scholars, once said 'if there are similarities in the myths concerning the birth of kingdoms between the Peninsula and the Archipelago, it is probable that there was an intimate relation between the cultures of the ruling classes of both" (Obayashi 56 - 57). Indeed, ancient Korean and Japanese myths, especially those concerning the birth of nations, have so many common elements that we easily allow ourselves to think of the intimate political and cultural relations between the Peninsula and the Archipelago.

This said, historical approaches are not the only valuable way to a comparative study of the myths of the two countries. Other approaches can be useful in elucidating the essential qualities of each country's literature. If we focus, for example, on the typology of the mythological heroes or the narrative structure of the two, we will find interesting similarities and differences that may give a hint as to the fundamental char-

acter of each of the two cultures.

For any study of such similarities and differences, the myths registered in *Samguk Yusa* (*The Legends of the Three Kingdoms*, 13th century) and *Kojiki* (*The Record of Ancient Matters*, 712) are the most creditable texts. From these two texts, we find the following similarities: 1) both myths narrate the nation-founders' long-distance journey either in the form of a run-away or an expedition due to persecution or punishment; 2) both include scenes in which the hero's mother or wife was confined in a narrow, enclosed space, which seems to indicate hard trials to be overcome before gaining happiness; 3) both feature heroes as illegitimate or second sons who had no right to become their fathers' successors. These similarities point to links existing between the Peninsula and the Archipelago from prehistoric times.

As the differences are particularly useful in elucidating the nature of narrative in Korean and Japanese literature, it is on these that I would like to focus. It is easy to remark on differences concerning the final destination of the mythological heroes of Korea and Japan,[1] but more important are those that concern each hero's character, manner of birth and process of becoming a hero. I will focus especially on this third difference, pursuing textual comparisons in *Samguk Yusa* and *Kojiki*.

Korean Mythological Heroes

One of the characteristics of ancient Korean myths is that all the heroes who came to found a nation are described to having been born in an extraordinary manner and with superhuman powers that lasted until the end of their lives. They were divine heroes from beginning to end.

Tangun, the founder of the Old Chosun, is a prime example. According to the Wei-Shu,[2] the myth says, Tangun's grandfather Hwan-in, Heavenly King, had a son called Hwan-ung, who descended to earth to found the "City of God". Together with his ministers of clouds, rain and wind, he instituted laws and moral codes and taught human beings various arts, medicine, and agriculture. One day, he met a tigress and a she-bear living in a cave. These two creatures asked him to transform them to human beings. On hearing their request, Hwan-ung ordered them to eat sacred food and remain in the cave for 100 days, but the tigress disobeyed by leaving after only twenty days had passed. She-bear, obeying the king, could finally become a woman as she had wished. Now, as a woman, she wanted a husband and a child. Hwan-ung granted those wishes by marrying her himself and, through him, she had a boy who was named Tangun Wanggom. It is this child who would later become the founder of ancient Chosun.

The myth continues to narrate Tangun's heroic deeds but without further mention of his father Hwan-ung. It tells that Tangun built the capital city of Asadal and founded a nation named Chosun. After moving several times, he returned to Asadal to become a mountain god at the age of 1,908. This unusual longevity is another sign of the hero's extraordinary character.

Similar characteristics can be found in the myth of Hyokkose, the founder of Silla Kingdom, who is equally treated in Samguk Yusa. The mark of his divine nature is manifest in his extraordinary birth that took place when the six chieftains of Chinhan,

the southeastern part of the Korean Peninsula, gathered to discuss the formation of a united kingdom and selection of a king to rule over it. First, they saw a strange light cast from the sky onto a well called Najong at the foot of Yang Mountain and a white horse bowing down there as if worshiping a god. When one of the chieftains discovered a large purple-colored egg there, the horse ascended to Heaven after a long whinny. Then, a boy emerged from the egg. On seeing the boy, the chieftains did not hesitate to bathe him, and saw his body radiating light. Birds and beasts were dancing; Heaven and Earth were shaking, the sun and the moon were emitting splendid light. The chieftains recognized their king. He was named Hyokkose and became the founder of Silla (Ha and Mintz 49 – 50).

The same myth also narrates the extraordinary birth of King Hyokkose's wife, Aryong, who is said to have been born from the ribs of a dragon (Ha and Mintz 50). This birth is similar to that of the first woman, Eve, in of the Bible, but other features of the story are quite different. Aryong became Hyokkose's wife and co-founder of Silla Kingdom. What is clear in the myth is that the couple who founded the nation were both divine by nature.

In the myth of Chumong, the founder of Koguryo, we again find a story of an extraordinary birth. According to Samguk Yusa, it is in Sam-guk Sagi, the oldest historical book compiled in the 12th century, that his extraordinary birth was narrated. One day, Lady Yuhwa, the daughter of the dragon king, was confined in a dark room by King Kumwa of Tongmyong. But in the room, a strange sunlight entered her and then she gave birth to a giant egg. Out of the egg, came a beautiful boy. That was Chumong, the future founder of Koguryo (Ha and Mintz 49 – 50), which reminds us of the myth of Leda and the swan or Danae and the golden rain of Ancient Greece.

This time again, the hero is hatched from an egg, but Chumong's egg was placed in various precarious situations. Chumong's egg received nothing like the honor that was accorded to that of Hyokkose of Silla. First, King Kumwa tried to feed it to dogs and pigs. When these animals refused it, the king threw it away on a road. Fortunately, the passing horses and cows avoided trampling it and birds even protected it from danger with their wings. All the king's efforts to destroy the egg met with failure, so he decided to return it to Lady Yuhwa. She incubated it till the boy was ready to emerge. The same myth tells that the boy was of incredible beauty. When he was seven years old, he made himself a bow and arrows and showed his marvelous skill of shooting. We further learn that he was a son of Heavenly King who married a daughter of the river dragon god, Habaek (Ha and Mintz 46).

The last example of a myth featuring an extraordinary birth is the one about Suro of Karak-kuk, registered in the second volume of Samguk Yusa. According to this myth, there was a chief ruling over a hundred families and 75,000 people. One day he and his folk heard a strange voice coming from a place called Kuji, Turtle's Back, on the top of North Mountain. The voice announced the coming of a new king, saying: "I have come down from Heaven on an imperial mission to build up a country here. If you dance on the top of the mountain digging the soil, a new king will appear and all of you will celebrate his birth." On hearing this announcement, the chief and

his folk began to dance, chanting the strange words as they were ordered.[3] Then, they found golden eggs, which they worshiped. On the following day, six boys hatched from the eggs. One of the boys looked so handsome and brave that they all held him in reverence. The boy was the future King Suro, the founder of Karak-kuk or Kayaguk (Ha and Mintz 158 – 159).

This time again, the hero was born out of the egg like Hyokkose of Silla and Chumong of Koguryo. That his birth had been expected by the people for a long time is a feature more similar to Hyokkose's story than to the others. Notable differences between them are that the King of Silla's birth place is unknown while Suro's is clearly stated. Silla's was the only egg, but Suro's was one of six, corresponding to the six tribes he would rule over. However, the broader features of the stories are the same, namely their extraordinary births and their superhuman natures in body and soul. Korean myths of the nation founders tend to distinguish the heroes by these stories of their extraordinary births and innate superhuman qualities.[4]

Japanese Mythological Heroes

It is interesting to see that, in contrast to Korean mythological heroes, Japanese heroes do not manifest any divine or superhuman nature in their way of being born. Some of them were surely born in an extraordinary manner, but never in ways that indicate any divine or heroic nature. Let us examine a few concrete cases.

Susanowo-no Mikoto, the stormy hero that appears in Kojiki, was born from the runny nose of his father Izanagi, the god who gave birth to the Archipelago. While the birth is certainly extraordinary, it cannot be described as an honorably divine one. Kojiki tells that when Susanowo-no Mikoto was born, he already had a beard that reached down to his chest, but any hope that the beard might indicate advanced maturity is quickly dashed. His father, Izanagi-no mikoto, apparently did consider him an adult, since he ordered him to rule over the sea.[5] But the bearded boy cried for his mother who had already passed away to Ne-no Katasu kuni, the land of the dead (Ogihara 73). Such psychological immaturity hardly marks Susanowo-no mikoto as a divine hero. And his behavior grew worse. He cried ceaselessly and demoniacally, pouring out such an abundance of tears that he needed to replenish his supply. Consequently, he dried up not only the green mountains, but the seas and rivers. Kojiki adds that by his furious crying, the voices of evil gods began to spread like flies, causing every kind of disasters, which naturally made his father angry. Thus, he was expelled from Heaven. In short, Susanowo-no mikoto is described as a child caught in the terrible twos.

Nevertheless, Susanowo-no mikoto became a hero who opened a new horizon in the Japanese Archipelago. Kojiki shows that his heroism started after his fall from Heaven into Izumo. There, by defeating an eight-forked serpent that had been disturbing the local people, he gained respect and popularity, which he had never enjoyed in Heaven. In Izumo, he even met a beautiful woman, married her and had a mansion constructed to live in with her. He became a king with a happy life.

Another mythological hero is Okuni-nushi-no kami, the true founder of Izumo nation. In his case, nothing is written in Kojiki about his birth. He is known to have

been a great hero, and Kojiki tells it, but we are not given the slightest hint of how he was born. Kamiyama Shunpei says he was a descendant god of the lineage of Nekoku (the land of the dead). His lineage come from Kami-musuhi-no kami (one of the three pillars of Heaven and Izanami-no kami) and her son Susanowo-no mikoto (Kamiyama 10 – 29), but this does not explain his being a hero. Even though Okuni-nushi no kami appears as an important hero in Kojiki, we cannot see that he was destined to be a hero from the beginning.

Another example is Hoori-no mikoto, who was a son of Ninigi-no mikoto who came directly from Heaven and of Kono-hana-no sakuya-hime, a princess of Izumo belonging to Ashihara-no nakatsu-kuni (the Country with Plenty of Reeds), an ancient name of the Japanese archipelago. With such parentage, it is not surprising that he would be the king of the united nation of Heaven and Earth.

The circumstances of his birth are, however, quite indecent, not at all suited to a future king. For his father Ninigi-no mikoto doubted the child was his, because Kono-hana-no sakuya-hime, the mother, appeared pregnant after only one encounter with him (Ogihara 134 – 135). Despite the superficial resemblance between Yuhwa's delivery of Chumong of Koguryo and that of Kono-hana-no sakuya-hime to her son both in a narrow room (Ogihara 135), the former's son was born as a superior man to human beings while the latter's as an inferior one. Hoori-no mikoto's inferiority is shown by his being born when the fire the mother had set around herself became weak while his brother Hoderi-no mikoto was born when the fire was strong.[6] Kojiki tells clearly that he was a weak boy in comparison with his brother.[7]

The last example of Japanese mythological hero is Ukaya-Fuki-aezu-no mikoto, son of Hoori-no mikoto (descendant of Heaven-Earth union) and of Toyotama-hime-no mikoto (daughter of the god of the sea). He was to be the king of Heaven-Earth and the Sea alliance. His birth, as described in *Kojiki*, is certainly extraordinary for he was born out of his mother who took the form of huge shark.[8] But even if so, no other part of the myth on his birth indicates any divine or heroic nature. Here again, we see that Japanese mythological heroes were not born heroes, which stands in contrast to their Korean counterparts.

The Process of Becoming a Hero

It is interesting to see how Japanese mythological heroes born as weak or disobedient beings eventually became real heroes. Generally speaking, they became heroes, even rulers of a new land or founders of a new nation, only after going through many trials, persecutions and wanderings. We could say their hard experiences are a sort of rite of passage, which Korean mythological heroes did not experience at all.

While some Korean heroes also experienced persecution and wandering away from home, these experiences cannot be interpreted as rites of passage; rather, they were suitable occasions for the display of the heroes´extraordinary power or for conquest of a new territory. Trials, if ever they existed in Korean myths, were not a necessary condition for a man to become a hero because Korean heroes were heroes from the beginning of their lives. By contrast, Japanese heroes were not born heroes. Nor did they manifest any extraordinary power in their childhood. They became heroes on-

ly by overcoming trials and tribulations.

Let us remember that Susanowo-no mikoto was a disturbing, disobedient child who was expelled from Heaven by Heavenly gods´ unanimous vote, but that once on Earth, he became a hero who had a successful life in a new land. Okuni-nushi-no kami and Hoori-no mikoto became real heroes after having gone through persecutions and wonderings. It is not in their nature to be a hero, but their experience of life made them divine heroes. [9]

Susanowo-no mikoto was expelled twice, first by his father Izanagi-no mikoto and secondly, by the committee of Heaven. But expulsion proved good for him since, once out of Heaven, he became a real hero settled in the country called Izumo and had a happy life there. As for Okuni-nushi-no kami, he suffered his brothers´ persecutions and went to Ne-no kuni, the Land of the Dead where he became a hero and finally the ruler of Izumo. Hoori-no mikoto, whose grandson would be Jinmu, the first emperor of Yamato, had similar trials. Ill-treated by his brother Hoderi-no mikoto, he went down to the bottom of the sea where he met a beautiful princess and married her. With the help of his father-in-law, the god of the sea, he could defeat his brother when he returned to Earth. We see that these characters were all born as a miserable, weak or unruly babies who had to face difficulties, but these trials transformed them.

Now, when we compare the manner of nation-making in Korean and Japanese myths, we find an interesting difference. For example, if Koguryo founded by Chumong represents the union of Heaven and River because Chumong was born from a god representing Heaven and a goddess representing River-Dragon, Yamato represents a double union. It represents first the union of Heaven and Earth, and then that of Heaven-Earth and the Sea. The first union was made by the marriage of Hoori-no-mikoto's father, Ninigi-no mikoto from Heaven, and Kono-hana-no sakuya-hime belonging to Earth; and the second by the marriage of Hoori-no-mikoto, representative of Heaven-Earth union and Toyotama-hime representative of Sea world. Let us add that the first emperor of Yamato, Jinmu, was a grandson of Hoori-no mikoto.

As for the complexity of the birth of Yamato in comparison with that of Koguryo, it could be explained by the difference of the geographical situations of the two countries, but that would not be sufficient. There must be other reasons we have not yet figured out. [10]

Concerning the parents of Japanese mythological heroes, there is an interesting point to add. Not all of them had two parents. Examples include wild Susanowo-no mikoto whose mother was dead, and violent Yamato Takeru, the conqueror of the South and the East of the Archipelago, whose mother does not appear in the myth at all. As for warmhearted Okuni-nushi-no kami, his father does not appear in the myth, only his mother does. Susanowo-no mikoto and Yamato Takeru were both expelled from their homeland by their fathers symbolizing authority and power; Okuni-nushi-no kami had no father, which indicates the vacancy of the throne. It should be added that neither Susanowo-no mikoto nor Yamato Takeru could be the successor of their fathers, while Okuni-nushi-no kami could occupy the seat of power.

Companions in the Heroic Journey

Another remarkable difference between Korean and Japanese mythological heroes lies in the type of friends or collaborators who helped them become nation-founders. Casting a glance at Korean heroes, we notice that they were accompanied and supported by their followers. Their Japanese counterparts, by contrast, are usually alone. Hwan-ung of the old Chosun was, for example, accompanied and supported by the ministers of wind, rain and clouds when he descended from Heaven to Earth under the recognition of the god of Heaven (Ha and Mintz 32). Chumong of Koguryo had three follower-friends when he ran away from his home land Puyo because his elder brother Taiso conspired with others to kill him.[11] On arriving at Modung valley, he got three more and to each he gave a surname for he considered them as gifts from Heaven because of their extraordinary brilliance. It is thanks to them that he enlarged his influence and could finally found Koguryo, a new nation (Ha and Mintz 46). It is true he was a born hero, but without his charismatic charm that attracted his loyal friends and followers, he could not have reached the throne.

Other Korean heroes share this basic pattern. Hyokkose, the founder of Silla, was never alone. When he was born, he was already surrounded by six patriarchs and their peoples who were expecting his birth. Suro, the king of Kara-guk, was not alone, either. At the moment of his birth, he had such a dignity that the local people adored him.

As for Japanese mythological heroes, they were never accompanied during their hard trials as we have seen. Susanowo-no mikoto was born without mother to take care of him, and remained alone when he was expelled from Heaven to live on Earth. When he killed the eight-forked serpent to protect the family of the princess Kushinada, he had nobody to help him. He conquered the land of Izumo all alone. Okuninushi-no kami and Hoori-no mikoto suffered and overcame trials on their alone, too. They defeated their enemies without anybody's help.

According to Nihon Shoki (dated 720), Yamato Takeru was accompanied by his followers when he went to the south-western and eastern parts of the Archipelago to enlarge the territories of Yamato, but Kojiki, more mythological and compiled earlier than Nihon Shoki, tells that he went there alone (Sakamoto 84 – 94). It seems Japanese mythology considers loneliness as a necessary condition for a man to be a real hero.

We should add, however, that the Japanese heroes often encountered local women who helped them in one way or another. Before they conquered a new land, even if they had no people to follow them, they had local women to marry and their wives´fathers, very powerful in the region, welcomed and helped them become a ruler. For example, Suseri-hime who became Okuni-nushi-no kami's wife, was a daughter of Susanowo-no mikoto, the ruler of Ne-no kuni (the Land of the Dead). Toyotama-bime, Hoori-no mikoto's wife, was a daughter of the god of the Sea. Having such women as wives, the heroes could easily possess an enormous political power thanks to collaboration with their fathers-in-law. Such encounters with local wives who had powerful fathers do not exist in Korean mythology where heroes were accompanied by

male followers. Of course, any encounter of a hero with a woman makes a romantic story. If Korean myths mark a manly, historic character, Japanese ones a romantic taste. Songs and poems are naturally more abundant in the Japanese tradition.

Magic or Cunning Strategy

We have seen that during their wonderings, Japanese mythological heroes often encountered women and their powerful fathers, while Korean heroes were accompanied from the beginning by loyal male followers who helped them defeat their enemies. Now, we will see another difference between the two traditions. This difference concerns the hero's way of defeating the enemy. Where Korean heroes conquer face-to-face in an honest way, Japanese heroes make use of magic or cunning strategies.

Let us remember for example the case of Izunagi-no mikoto, the creator of Japanese Archipelago. When he ran away from Yomi-no kuni, the Land of the Dead, where his beloved wife Izanami-no mikoto was, he threw the coronet of dark vine and the comb he wore on his head towards the ugly women chasing after him. Out of the coronet and the comb teeth were born the grapes and the bamboos. Since the ugly women were busy eating them, he could runaway from them (Ogihara 64 – 66). Izanagi-no mikoto was not strong enough to combat his enemies on his own so he made use of magic.

Another example of such strategizing is found in Susanowo-no mikoto's battle against the eight-forked serpent. Instead of combating it face-to-face, he invited it to have sake first so that it got drunk and could not defend itself from his attack. He could make the kill easily because his enemy was drunk. His victory was thanks to a cunning strategy (Ogihara 88).

Ookuni-nushi no kami also used magic to free himself from danger. When he visited Susanowo-no mikoto in Ne-no kuni (the Land of the Dead), he was put into a cave full of snakes, bees and centipedes, but he got rid of them thanks to the magic scarf that the princess Suseri-hime had given him (Ogihara 97). His manner of defeating his brother Yaso-gami, his eternal enemy, was with the sword, the arc and arrows that he had stolen from Susanowo-no mikoto (Ogihara 98-99). We cannot say Ookuni-nushi-no kami, the founder of Izumo nation, got to the throne in a very honorable, heroic way, either.

The same can be said about Hoori-no mikoto, who first provoked a quarrel with his enemy brother Hoderi-no mikoto. When he was attacked, he used the magic gems given by his father-in-law, the god of the sea, and won (Ogihara 144). Yamato Takeru, the most heroic figure in Japanese mythology, is another who used cunning devises to kill his enemies. Disguised as a woman with a sword hidden in his robe, he approached Kumaso Takeru-no mikoto and his brother to kill them with the sword. On his return to Yamato, passing through Izumo, he killed Izumo Takeru-no mikoto, the local ruler. Yet again, he used a trick to kill his enemy.[12] Although some specialists such as Suzuki Hideo point out that Yamato Takeru's cunning way can be viewed as a sign of intelligence, at the same time his dishonesty cannot be denied (Suzuki 4 – 5).

Korean mythological heroes did not make use of such strategies or devises. They

all combated against their enemies with their own, though certainly superhuman, power and fighting skills. When Chumong, King of Koguryo, wanted to subordinate the King of Pullyu and saw that the King did not want to obey him, he decided to compete with him in archery. Since he won the competition, the King of Pullyu surrendered and gave his country to Chumong, who gave a part of his land to the defeated in turn (Ha and Mintz 46). Chumong was always heroic not only in strength but also in morality. Such a hero does not appear in Japanese mythology, as we have seen.

We have seen fundamental differences between Korean and Japanese mythological heroes. One of them is the heroes´ way of being born to the world. While Korean heroes are born in an extraordinary way with equally extraordinary countenances and talents, Japanese heroes are born in an ignoble or at least very ordinary manner and manifest no mark of heroism at the moment of birth. Another difference we have seen concerns their way of becoming a hero. If Japanese figures became real heroes, it is only after overcoming a series of hard trials. They are either alone or helped by a woman with magical power who loves them. The Korean counterparts were heroes from the beginning and defeated their enemies with the help of male followers. The third difference concerns the way of their defeating enemies. While Japanese heroes use magic or cunning strategies, Korean ones fought bravely and honestly without any devices. While neither type of mythological hero is better than the other, nor is one is the source of the other, Korean and Japanese mythological heroes are strikingly different despite their common basis. To recognize the differences is an important and necessary step to understanding the literature of each tradition, for the basic character of literature comes from ancient mythology.

Notes

1. In the Japanese case, the heroes who went far away almost never returned home while Korean heroes did and constructed a new country there.

2. The text refers to the Wei-Shu, Chinese historical document compiled in the 6th century. To give credibility to itself, it uses the saying "In the Wei-Shu it is written that . . . ." The English wording of the phrase is from Ha Tae-Hung and Gratton's translation of *Samguk Yusa* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2004) 32.

3. The chant was magic. It said, "Turtle, turtle, push out your head." See Ha Tae-Hung and Gratton Mintz, trans. *Samguk Yusa* (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 2004) 158.

4. According to Torigoe Kenzaburo, *Kodai Chosen to Wa zoku* (Tokyo: Chuko shinsho, 1992) 13, 16, 18, 62 – 63, Korean myths of heroes hatched from eggs have their origin in the ethnic group Wa or Wo who used to live in Shandong Peninsula, China. He added that they emigrated to the southern part of the Korean Peninsula; some of them even to Japanese Archipelago to form Yayoi culture. His conclusion is that Korean myths of Hyokkose and Suro were originally myths of the Wa heroes, whose original form disappeared due to Chinese civilization that destroyed it. But from our point of view, this kind of hypothesis is not convincing for it fails to explain either why Japanese heroes were not born out of eggs while Korean ones were or why Korean heroes looked like Chinese brave men and Japanese did ones not.

5. Yoshida Atsuhiko pointed out Izanagi's consideration of his three noble children including Susanowo as adults. See Yoshida Atsuhiko, *Nihon Shinwa-no tokushoku* (Tokyo: Seidosha, 1989) 125

–126.

6. According to Yoshii Iwao, fire was the symbol of a magical power that mountain gods were believed to possess. Such a belief was held by slash and burn farmers.

7. Okuni-nushi-no kami, whose birth is not described at all in *Kojiki*, was weak, too. For he was a kind of slave to his brother Yaso gami . He suffered persecutions more than once like Hoori-no mikoto.

8. *Kojiki* relates the hero's birth as follows: 'the princess Toyotama-hime-no mikoto, said "I cannot give birth to a child in the sea because he is descendant of Heaven. That is why I have come up to the Earth." Then she began to build up a hut on the shore with cormorants' feathers and thatch, where she was going to give birth. But before building it completely, she felt the baby was coming out. So she entered the shelter quickly and said to her husband Hoori-no mikoto, "You know anybody from another world has to be in the original form at the moment of giving birth. So I will take my original form that I beg you not to see." But Hoori-no mikoto, unable to understand what she meant, caught a glimpse of her giving birth and was astonished at the sight. For she was no more a human being but a huge shark crawling on the ground. Hoori-no mikoto could not help being horrified and ran away from there... See Ogihara Asao, ed., *Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshu*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1994) 145.

9. Japanese mythological heroes and their process of becoming a hero left a deep trace on literature. The mono-gatari genre in the Heian and other periods succeeded the theme and the type that the ancient myths had developed. It would be interesting to make up a thematic and typological genealogy starting from Kojiki to modern novels. See Min Byung-hoon, " Monogatarieui Yurilon -Pakhewa Tomangeui Simcheung-" *Ilboneomunhak* 40, 2009.

10. It may be that Japanese mythology tried to put more emphasis on the unity of all the territories Yamato possessed.

11. In Lee Kyopo's epic poetry: Tong-myong Wang-pyon (1193), his escape is not described as a lonely journey, either, but an accompanied one. The author who was a famous poet of Koryo Dynasty, says that Chumong did not escaped under pressure, but departed of his free will.

12. Yamato Takeru secretly changed Izumo Takeru's sword for a false one. See Ogihara Asao, Ed. *Nihon Koten Bungaku Zenshu*, Vol. 1 (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1994) 216.

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The Literary Value of Basho's Poetry

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Abstract Although the poetical works of Basho, one of the most eminent haikai poets, have exercised influence on Western modern poetry whose most well-known example is Ezra Pound's imagisim, they have been interpreted wrongly by the Westerners who put too much emphasis on zen spirit. Of course, there are exceptions such as Octavio Paz or Yves Bonnefoy, who made successful interpretations of them by purely literary reading; they tried to understand Basho as a poet, as a linguistic genius, instead of looking for a philosopher in him. Nevertheless, before Lee Oryong, a Korean literary critique, there was no structural analysis of them which could reveal their real universal value. It is thanks to him that the interpretation of Basho's entered a new phase. Following and advancing his analysis to a deeper level, we discover Basho's poetry as a synthesis of structural dynamics deriving from the opposition of two elements and keen sense of temporality coming from the unconscious in which life and death melt together. "*Umi-kurete/ Kamo-no koe/ Honokani shiroshi*" (*The Sea darkened/ Voices of wild ducks/ Vaguely white...*) is one of the best examples of such poetry that evokes the unconscious in which day and night, white and black, visible and audible, reality and dream, life and death... melt together. Basho's poetry is neither realistic nor surrealistic. It is one full of polysemy that derives from the language of the unconscious.

Key Words Zen Orientalism; structural dynamics polysemy; unconscious

1.

Basho(1644 - 94) is well known throughout the world to those who love poetry. His specialty known as hokku[1] is probably the shortest form of poems of the world, but it is not the briefness that is their most important feature. In this article, some of his poems will be analyzed as a step towards defining their importance as literature. For few in the world seem to appreciate their real literary value.

While many poets in the world have taken interest in his poems and some have even confessed they were influenced or inspired by them to create their own poems, they have not necessarily appreciated Basho's poetry; in most cases, they were attracted to the short form of poetry called hokku or haiku. Where they may seem to admire Basho, it is often because of his status as the greatest master of hokku in Japan. For example, Ezra Pound (1885 - 1972) is known as a modern poet influenced or inspired by hokku. He himself said that his *In a Station of Metro* (1913), well known

in the West as an exemplary work of Imagism, was inspired by hokku:

> A Chinaman said long ago that if a man can't say what he has to say in twelve lines he had better keep quiet. The Japanese have evolved the still shorter form of the hokku.
>
> "The fallen blossom flies back to its branch: A butterfly."
>
> That is the substance of a very well-known hokku. Victor Plarr tells me that once, when he was walking over snow with a Japanese naval officer, they came to a place where a cat had crossed the path, and the officer said, "Stop, I am making a poem." Which poem was, roughly, as follows: "The footsteps of the cat upon the snow: (are like) plum-blossoms."
>
> The words "are like" would not occur in the original, but I add them for clarity.
>
> The "one image poem" is a form of super-position, that is to say it is one idea set on top of another. I found it useful in getting out of the impasse in which I had been left by my metro emotion. I wrote a thirty-line poem, and destroyed it because it was what we call work "of second intensity." Six months later I made a poem half that length; a year later I made the following hokku-like sentence:
>
> "The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
> Petals, on a wet, black bough." (468)

From the quote, we see that in Pound's case, it is not only the shortness of hokku but the super-position of images that interested him. The fact that he does not mention the Basho's name suggests that this master was not necessarily more important to him than other creators of hokku. Pound mentions two hokku [I don't think you need to pluralize Japanese nouns when used in English] that inspired him: "The fallen blossom flies back to its branch: A butterfly." and "The footsteps of the cat upon the snow: (are like) plum-blossoms." The first was composed by Arakida Moritake (1473 – 1549)[2] and the second by a Japanese naval officer. Pound must have made his encounter with Basho through Chamberlain's translation of Japanese poetry.[3] It is, however, hokku in general as a form of poetical creation that inspired him.

To find Western appreciators of Basho's poetry, we have to wait until the latter half of the 20th century. Among them are Yves Bonnefoy (1923 –) and Octavio Paz (1914 – 98). These two internationally renowned poets have shown a solid appreciation of Basho's poems.

Bonnefoy once confessed that Basho, since he "married the infinite to language" (Bonnefoy) was one of the poets who contributed significantly to his own conception of poetry. In Paz, who translated Basho's *Okuno hosomichi* together with Hayashiya Eikichi, the interpretation of Basho's poetry reached a depth that no other Westerners has ever made. Here is an interpretation of one of Basho's poems that he developed:

> Un viejo estanque: salta una rana ¡zas! Chapaleteo.

(An old pond: a frog has jumped fast! Sound of water.)

We are in front of an almost prosaic enunciation of facts: the pond, the frog's jumping, the sound of water. Nothing is less poetic; common words and an insignificant fact. Basho has given us simple notes as if to indicate a few realities unconnected to one another with his fingers, discovering the meaning of which is left to us. Yes, it is we, the reader, who have to recreate the poem. First, we find a passive element: the old pond and its silence. Then, comes the surprising jump of the frog that breaks the silence. Of the meeting of the two, a poetic illumination must come out, recapturing the silence that existed at the beginning. This time, the silence is full of meaning. Our consciousness spreads into waving successive associations like the water of the pond spreading in concentric circles. This small haiku is a world of resonances, echoes and correspondences (Basho, Sendas de Oku 32)[4].

His analysis of the poem is brilliant. It leads us to discover a dialectics of silence expressed by Basho's genius of condensation.[5] Free from orientalism, he could open a new horizon to appreciate Basho's poetics on a universal level.

2.

So far two major currents have made the evaluation of the literary value of Basho's poetry difficult. One is the religious or philosophical approach to it that spread among the Western intellectuals for more than half a century. They have been influenced by Reginald Blyth (1898 – 1964) and Daisetsu T. Suzuki (1870 – 1966). Blyth and Suzuki commonly considered Basho as a Zen mystic. It cannot be denied that Basho practiced Zen for some time, but to explain his poetry in terms of Zen will hinder us at a good understanding of it though there are still many who take this approach.[6]

The other current is an academic one based on the combination of the traditional Japanese philology[7] with modern Western positivism. It is a method of interpretation commonly accepted among Japanese scholars still today; they consider it less risky from a 'scientific' point of view. Even though they recognize it is not the most literary way, they remain attached to it reasons of security.

Their procedure consists first in clarifying the meaning of each word of a poem, and then, in establishing its message in terms of the historical and literary context. Such a method looks infallible, but it fails just because it cannot cast light to the literary value of the poem. Very often, such interpretations are unsatisfactory to the common reader who just loves poetry.

This academic current was once harshly criticized. Lee Oryong(1933 –), a Korean literary critic, openly criticized the 'would-be scientific' method prevalent among Japanese scholars who study Basho or other haiku (is haiku better here than hokku?) poets. In his *Haiku de Nihon wo yomu* (*Reading Japan through haiku*), he enumerated the 'faults' of Japanese academic approaches (7 – 20), the first of which is what he called 'haiku nationalism'. By this, he meant the ideological tendency of Japanese scholars to be convinced that other peoples than the Japanese would

never be able to understand haiku. He made fun of them saying that they like to preserve the monopoly right for haiku while they believe naively that they can appreciate poetry of other nations freely. He did not deny the necessity of knowing the particular codes belonging to traditional Japanese culture in order to understand haiku, but he made it clear that knowledge of such cultural codes is necessary for everyone to understand any kind of poetry of any nation.

The second fault of Japanese academics he criticized is a sort of empiricism whereby understanding of a poem necessitated experiencing the moment of creation of the author. He warned that reproducing the author's experience like a detective who tries to find out the murderer by collecting 'evidence' would be useless and even harmful to the appreciation of the poem because it might reduce our imagination and creativity, two key elements for understanding poetry.

Intentionism combined with biographism is another fault that Lee raised up. Just like Proust against Sainte-Beuve[8], he condemned as sterile minute studies of the life of the author of a literary work in order to find out his or her intention at the moment of creation. To him, poetical creation could be reduced neither to the facts of the author's life nor to his or her consciousness. Lee could have said as Proust said: "A book (or a poem) is a product of another myself than what we usually manifest in our habits, our society, our vices. This another myself, if you like to understand it well, is at the deep bottom of ourselves, trying to recreate itself in us so that we can reach it" (L'Auteur 148).

He did not deny the value of the philological approach that covers inter-textual studies, but he cautioned that no reference to another literary text outside the text itself could advance the appreciation of that text's intrinsic value. He insisted on the independent meaning of each work of poetry even if literary contexts may influence the making of it. For example, he quoted one of Basho's poems: "Yuku-haruya/ Tori naki Uwo-no/ Me-wa namida" (Spring gone! / Birds cry and Fish/ Eyes are tears) (Basho, Basho bunshu 71) and said that this poem should not be interpreted in terms of Du Fu (712 – 770). As with many scholars, he knew that the poem was somehow inspired by this Chinese poet of whom Basho was fond (Lee Oryong 16)[9].

Concerning his own interpretations of Basho's poems, we can appreciate not only his efforts to interpret them in terms of Western rhetorical devices which seemed to be universal to him, but also and especially his efforts to make a structural analyze of it. For example, the famous poem of the frog jumping into the old pond that we saw above is interpreted by Lee as a composition of irony because of the silence evoked by the sound of the water; and his structural analysis reveals the intrinsic literary value of the poem. Let us abbreviate his analysis in the following manner:

> The poem: An old pond! / A frog is jumping/ the Sound of water, is of the same structure as Basho's another famous poem: Shizukasa-ya/ Iwa-ni shimiiru/ Semi-no koe (Silence! / Penetrating into the rock/ Voices of cicadas); at the place of the cicadas, the poet put the frog, and instead of "penetrating", "jumping". (..) The old pond evokes a timeless time far beyond our human time, just like the unchangeable rock; and the frog is represented as a limited

> being living for a short time just like the cicadas. The only difference between the two poems lies in the uniting factors represented by the verbs "jumping" and "penetrating". It is this "jumping" that introduces a dynamism into the poem, a dynamism of unifying two different times, two different spaces, two different sensations. (Basho, Basho bunshu 71)

To Lee, it is the structure that unites different components of the poem that determines the essence, and it is the components arranged in dichotomy that make up the structure.

3.

Lee Oryong's structural analysis of Basho's poems opened a new way to understand the poet's literary art. Indeed, if Basho's poetry has a depth that no other poets of Japan have reached, it is due to the structural force caused by the opposing elements in each of his works. Sometimes the elements even melt down into a synthesis on a further level by the mediation of a third element, which reminds us of the dialectic movement Octavio Paz remarked upon. That is the case of the poem of the old pond, in which the frog's jump works as the mediator, melting down the opposition of the pond and the frog. The jump must be instantaneous but dynamic, which breaks the static atmosphere caused by the oldness of the pond; thus, the pond as a wide plane and the frog as a dot, as well as the oldness of the pond as immutable timelessness and the frog as the mutable present get to a fusion with the sound of water representing the synthesis on a level beyond because the visual disappears giving way to the audible.

The same dialectic can be found in another other poem Lee analyzed: Silence! The cicadas' voices penetrating the rock. It is the penetration of the voices that makes up a fusion of the opposition of silence versus voices, the immutable and eternal rock and the cicadas representing the mutable present.

Now, perhaps needless to say, the immutable timelessness associates death and the present to life. These two poems send us back to the original state of the world where life and death were one and the same. Composed of so few words, they make a miniature of the immense universe.

We have to say however that not all of Basho's poems possess such depth or breadth and that other poets have also managed to create poems of high quality. Nevertheless, it is Basho who has always been considered the genius, more precisely, as the poet saint of Japan,[10] which should not be regarded as mere hyperbole. His poems often do possess more dimensions, more depth and breadth.

Let us examine one of the poems of Yosa Buson (1716 – 84) in order to see in what way Basho's poems excel. Buson has been considered one of the best post-Basho poets. The following is one of his poems that begin with Samidare-ya:

> Samidare-ya/ Taiga-wo mae-ni/ ie ni-ken. (Yosa Buson&Kobayashi Issa 91)
> (Rain of May! / In front of a huge river/ two houses.)

The poem is easy to understand because of its visual character. The rain of May is a pervasive one, and there is a huge and probably slow and quiet river in front of which two tiny houses stand. The poem is composed of opposite elements, such as the rain that falls vertically and the river that runs horizontally, the rain with straight lines and the enormous river flowing as a wide open plane, and two tiny immutable houses set against the huge. Buson composed a picture of the scenery using contrasting elements but making a harmonious atmosphere between Nature and human life just as would a painter of Nanga. [11]

Now, compare this poem to one by Basho that begins with the same *Samidare-ya* (Rain of May!).

> Samidare-ya/ Shikishi hegitaru/ kabe-no ato. (Basho, Basho bunshu 110)
> (Rain of May! / Colored papers torn off/ Traces of the wall.)

This poem looks more difficult to understand than that of Buson for it does not depict any scenery. The first phrase: Samidare-ya, is independent from the rest, and the second and the third combined together indicate the traces of the colored papers that used to be on the wall but are no longer. In Basho's poem, there is a temporal dimension that not found in Buson's.

Of course, there are movements in Buson's, too; for the rain falls, the river runs and the tiny houses must be lived in by people. But the movements are still timeless just like those in a motionless picture. Basho's has a dimension of time indicated indirectly by the traces of colored papers on the wall.

From a structural point of view, Buson's is composed of opposite elements but they are predestined to harmony because the poet-painter composed it to be so. As for Basho's, we cannot find scenic harmony between the opposite elements. Rain of May could tear out the colored papers and penetrate the wall. And knowing that the colored papers stuck on the wall symbolize the artistic and poetic activities[12], we see or hear the poet's lamenting. After all, the poem is of the same structure as another poem in *Okuno hosomichi*:

> Natsu-kusa-ya/ Tsuwamono-domo-ga/ Yume-no ato. (Basho, Basho bunshu 84)
> (Grasses of summer! / The warriors/ Traces of their dreams.)

Both poems transmit a common message that Nature erases all, even human activities, historical or literary, that long for the permanent.

4.

Now, let us have a glance at the academic interpretation of the poem of the colored papers torn off the wall just analyzed above to show how far it can go and within what areas it is limited. As we said, the interpretation is made out of the combination of biographism and intentionism together with philology. It proceeds with a philological study of the text in order to reach the supposed 'intention' of the author at the mo-

ment of creation of the poem.

As the poem is found at the very last part of *Saga-nikki* (Saga Diary) which Basho wrote in 1691, scholars tend to interpret it in terms of the text below:

> May the 4th
>
> Could not sleep last night. Tired out, lay down all the day. The rain did not stop till afternoon.
>
> Thinking of leaving this Rakushi-sha tomorrow, I gave myself the last chance to see the whole house that I was sure I would miss, walking from the entrance to the private room, one room after another...
>
> Samidare-ya/ Shikishi hegitaru/ kabe-no ato. (Basho 110)
>
> (Rain of May! / Colored papers torn off/ Traces of the wall.) (Yosa Buson&Kobayashi Issa 101)

They proceed to interpret the poem with the knowledge of *Rakushi-sha*, a country house of Basho's good friend and disciple Kyorai, where they spent days and nights exchanging ideas, composing poems together, and finally get to the conclusion that the poem is an expression of the poet's personal feeling for the house and his friend Kyorai.[13] Thus, they reduce it to the personal history of the author.

But what they are implying is that so long as we do not know what *Rakushi-sha* was, who Kyorai was and what sort of relationship they had, we can never appreciate the poem. If this is the case, the poem must have a very limited value for only few people surrounding the author could really appreciate it. If so, what literary values could it have? A poem is always born out of a concrete and specific circumstance, it is true, but it gains literary value precisely because it goes beyond that. This academic approach based on biographism and intentionalism cannot clarify the true value of a literary work. In this, we agree with Proust and Lee Oryong.

One may argue that no poem can be totally independent from the rest of literary world. Again, it is true, but one poem is one poem so long as it is put as such in a book. The interpretation of the poem we have just seen depends totally on the text of *Saga-nikki*, but in fact, it is put independently in another book,[14] which demands another interpretation.

The same thing can be said of the poem of the frog jumping into the old pond. Separated from the rest, it can be interpreted in the way Lee Oryong or Octavio Paz did, but put together with another poem, it can be interpreted otherwise. In fact, Shiraishi Teizo (1932-99) gave a different interpretation to it, for he found it just beside another one that read:

> Nagaki-hi-wo/ Saezuri-taranu/ Hibari kana.
> (For a long day/ tirelessly singing/ Ah, skylarks!).

To Shiraishi, the poem of the frog was an expression of a joyful spring full of vitality and noise because put together with the other of the skylarks singing all day long, it could not mean otherwise(Shiraishi 203). Knowing that the poem is usually interpre-

ted as a supreme expression of silence, Shiraishi dared to interpret it differently because he knew that the meaning of a hokku depends on where it is put.

Concerning the poem of the frog, there is an interesting question: how many frogs were there? Lee Oryong poses this questioned for Japanese nouns do not change according to the number. The word *kawazu* which means frog can be singular or plural. Lee said most people, in or out of Japan, seem to have no doubt about it; they unanimously believe it is singular, but Lee asked who knows? Even if he did not dare to say that frog is plural, the question was opened.

Shiraishi dared to say that the frogs were numerous. He said if skylarks were singing from morning till night expressing the joy of spring, of life and of love, why should we think there was only one frog that jumped into the pond? Many frogs jumped into the water one after another, joyfully, he supposed. We see from this that the meaning of a hokku cannot be determined univocally. It depends a lot on the context in which the poem is found.

We should not forget that the literary value of each poem can be found in its structural force. It is on this that we would like to insist on treating, in this article, Basho's poetry. But we have to admit that sometimes, the structural force of one poem becomes stronger or weaker depending on the context in which it is found. An example of this is the case of the following poem also quoted above:

Natsu-kusa-ya/ Tsuwamono-domo-ga/ Yume-no ato.
(Grasses of summer! / The warriors/ Traces of their dreams.)

This poem is found both in *Okuno Hosomichi* and *Sarumino*, two different books edited in the same year 1691. Put in a different context, the same poem varies in structural force. When the poem is in *Okuno Hosmichi*, it appears beside a poem composed by Sora[15] and presents a double fold structure. On the other hand, in *Saumino* the poem has a simpler structure. Let us quote Sora's poem:

Uno-hana-ya/ Kanefusa miyuru/ Shiraga-kana. (Basho, Basho bunshu 84)
(Ah, Flower of Deutzia! / We see Kanefusa there/ His white hairs..)
(Basho, Basho bunshu 71)

Put together with Basho's poem of the summer grasses, we see that the two poems corresponds to each other in a very coherent way. For each of its elements is presented in quite concrete form in contrast with the abstract character of the elements of the other poem. "Flower of Deutzia", a specific noun, corresponds to "grasses of summer" non-specific; "Kanefusa"[16], a proper noun of the aged warrior who fought there centuries before at the place where Basho found himself, corresponds to "the warriors" non-specific, and "white hairs" of the old warrior corresponds to the abstract philosophical expression of "traces of their dreams". The whole poem having the same structure as the other presents a concrete version of the other.

The abstract and the concrete are presented by the two poems with the same structure. The structure itself of each of the poems does not alter because of their jux-

taposition, but the poems get more structural force mutually. The two with one structure make up a poem on a larger scale and of a stronger structure.

5.

It is often said that no poem out of its own language can be appreciated fully. However good the translation might be, it will necessarily lead to a betrayal of the original meaning as expressed in the Italian saying: *traduttore*, *traditore*. We would like however to insist that there is something important that can be transmitted even through translation. The transmittable is the structural dynamics of the work and so long as the translation transmits it, we can say it is an effective one. We have focused especially on the structural analysis of Basho's poems to show this. The structural force of a poem, maybe of other genres too, goes beyond the difference of cultures, languages, historical periods, etc.

All this seems to have something to do with the structure of the human mind and basic psychology. It seems that the works of our psyche go everywhere in the same manner at least when we find ourselves before the eternal drama of life and death. Attitudes toward death and life can vary according to cultures, but the fact that any individual of any ethnic group can appreciate an artistic psychological drama that develops under the tension between the opposite powers of life and death shows the universal character of human psychology. We get satisfaction when the tension of the drama melts down in harmony. We become deeply touched by a well-done tragedy because it represents the catastrophe of life and death. The higher the tension is, the more satisfaction or emotion we get. Sigmund Freud may have explained this mechanism in terms of *eros* and *thanatos*. An artistic work imitates that mechanism lying deep inside our psyche. Art consists in reproducing the dramatic reality, imitating it and displacing it to an unreal level. What is called *catharsis* is there.

We have tried to show that Basho's poetry is universal. It has genuine literary value because it represents the cognitive categories belonging to every human being such as dynamic/static, alive/dead, special/temporal, and makes an extremely condensed solution to the conflicts caused by them. In this sense precisely, it reminds us of the work of a dream Freud explained in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899). Like a dream, Basho's poetry expresses our unconscious in a condensed and displaced way. That is why it can liberate us from anxiety and stress. His concentration of mind must have freed language from the everyday use, letting it touch the bottom of the mind.

Hokku, the form of poetry he adopted comprised of only 17 syllables, must have facilitated the condensation of different levels of concepts and perceptions. But not every hokku composer could realize what Basho did. His genius must lie in a sort of courage to break with everyday use of language; he jumped into the old pond of our mind just like his frog.

In a very short poem such as hokku, it is almost impossible to compose a sentence with a subject and a predicate. If Basho excelled over other poets, it is because he tried harder to be free from grammar and logic in order to keep the primitive stage of human language in mind. If his poems go beyond the division of subject/object and

self/the other, it should not be understood in terms of Zen Buddhism or Taoist philosophy with which he is known to have been familiar. We have to consider him as a poet above all and see that he concentrated himself in choosing words and combining them at a subconscious level. He tried to exhaust the possibilities of human language as a symbolic system.

If to many of us, language is a tool to use, it was not so to him. Language must have been regarded by him as something given before his or others´existence. In other words, language was his master, not the reverse. He could have said like Arthur Rimbaud (1854 – 91): *Je est un autre* (I is another).[17] To Basho as well as the French poet, poetry must go beyond ego.

Understanding Basho in this way is not really new. As a lover of Rimbaud, Bonnefoy understood him more or less in a similar way. "About pines, we have to learn from pines; about bamboos, from bamboos" (Nose Asaji 432), said Basho to one of his disciples, Doho.[18] By "learning", he meant "assimilation" over the gap between subject and object. A poetical spirit such as Bonnefoy might have seized the notion of "learning" in Basho's sense.

To see the condensation work in Basho's poetry, let us examine the following poem:

> Umi-kurete/ Kamo-no koe/ Honokani shiroshi. (Basho, Basho bunshu 228)
> (The Sea darkened/ Voices of wild ducks/ Vaguely white...)[19]

First of all, we have to say the poem is not composed in obedience to the established rule of hokku. Instead of 5 – 7 – 5 syllables, it is composed of 5 – 5 – 7. The poet must have been motivated by a necessity. Basho dared an adventure beyond the limit of hokku.

The literal meaning of the first phrase: *Umi-kurete*, is "the Sea has darkened", but the word "kurete" usually means "the Sun goes down". The first condensation is there; the Sea and the Sun get melted and the whole world has become dark.

Another condensation appears in the second and the third phrases: *Kamo-no koe/ Honokani shiroshi.* As the world is dark, one cannot see anything clearly. Therefore, came the audible "voices of wild ducks". And yet, one tries hard to distinguish the origin of the voices. Then, the visible "vaguely white" appears. This time, the audible gets melted with the visible, which creates a dreamlike effect (Maria Jeus De Prada Vicente and Oshima Hitoshi 102 – 107).[20]

Seeing Basho's condensation at work, some may be tempted, wrongly, to associate him with surrealism. As Rimbaud was not a surrealist, neither was Basho. The only thing we can say of the poem quoted above is that he reproduced a world or a stage of mind in which different senses get melted and that the real and the unreal cannot be distinguished from each other. It is a dizzying expression of existential anxiety because of the darkness of death invading the light of life. That is why, when we read it, we feel a sort of relief. For we can see the bottom of ourselves, not directly but through an artistic work. Art is our best consolation.

Notes

1. Actually, the word "haiku" is not adequate for Basho's poems. For haiku is a modernized term for hokku. "Hokku" originally meant a short poem that initiated a chain of poems called "Renku" composed by a group of poets. See Inui Hiroyuki and Shiraishi Teizo, *Renku Nyumon* (Izumi Shoin 2001).
2. The original of the poem quoted here is "Rakka e-ni/ kaeru-to mireba/ kocho-kana" (A fallen flower on a bough/ Has it come back? / No, 'twas a butterfly.). The author Arakida Moritake is considered the Father of haikai poetry, out of which the genre hokku we know was born.
3. He must have read B. H. Chamberlain's *The classical poetry of the Japanese* (1888) or *Japanese poetry* (1910), or even "Bashō and the Japanese Poetical Epigram." In *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 2 (1902).
4. Octavio Paz. 'La poesia de Basho' 1954. Ed, Matsuo Basho. *Sendas de Oku*. (Seix Barral, 1981) 32. Translation from Spanish to English belongs to the author of this article.
5. Maria Jesus De Prada Vicente refers to Lacanian concept of metaphor, another expression of Freudian concept of "condensation". She explains Basho's poetry in this term. See Maria Jesus De Prada Vicente, *Nihon Bungaku no Honshitsu to Unmei* (Fukuoka: Kyushu University Press, 2004) 141 – 144; and Maria Jesus De Prada Vicente, *Yuragi to Zure no Nihon-Bungakusi* (Kyoto: Minerva Shobo, 2005) 102 – 107.
6. Blyth introduced haiku to Westerners in his four volumes of Haiku (The Hokuseido Press, 1949 – 1952) and Daisetsu Suzuki introduced Zen to the West in numerous works written in English, among which Zen and Japanese Culture (Pantheon Books, 1959) explains Basho's poetry as a representative expression of Zen culture. This vision has been widely supported by Westerners; from the Beatniks to Martin Heidegger, the German philosopher. The same vision is found in Fernando Rodriguez Izquierdo, *El Jaiku Japones* (Madrid: Hiperion, 1972) 67 – 68 or Roger Munier, Haiku (Paris: Fayard, 1978) 16 – 17.
7. It is in the 18th century with Ogyu Sorai that the philological interpretation method was formed in Japan.
8. See Marcel Proust, *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954) 157 – 158.
9. Basho sometimes mentions the name of Du Fu or quotes a passage of his poems in his writings, for example, in Okuno hosomichi.
10. In Japanese, hai-sei: hai means haiku or haikai, sei a saint.
11. Nanga, which literarily means Southern paintings, is a school which flourished in the late Edo period among artists who considered themselves intellectuals. They all admired traditional Chinese culture and the taste is reflected in this poem by Buson.
12. In Edo period, it was a custom among the poets to write a poem on a colored paper and stick it on a wall. Some men of letters liked to stick many pieces of colored paper on a wall just to decorate the interior of a house.
13. Mukai Kyorai (1651 – 1704) was one of the editors of Saru-mino, an anthology of his hokku master, Basho.
14. Actually, it is put as an independent poem in Zo-dan-shu edited by Takarai Kikaku in 1691.
15. Kawai Sora (1649 – 1710) was one of Basho's disciples. He traveled together with his master to the North of which this wrote Okuno Hosomichi.
16. Mashio Kanefusa was an aged vassal of Minamoto-no Yoshitsune who fought and was killed in the battlefield near Hiraizumi in the Tohoku region in the 12th century. Visiting the place, Basho remembered the battle that took place there about 500 years ago.
17. This famous phrase is found in Rimbaud's letter to Georges Izambard, dated on May the 13th, 1871. See Arthur Rimbaud, *Oeuvres* (Pocket Classiques, 1990) 77.
18. Hattori Doho. San-zoshi (1776) in Nose Asaji. *San-zoshi Koshaku* (Meicho kanko-kai: 1970)

19. The poem was originally in Kasshi ginko(1684). See *Basho ku-shu* (Iwanami, 1962) 228.
20. To see the details of the analysis of the poem, see Maria Jesus De Prada Vicente and Oshima Hitoshi. *Yuragi to zure no Nihon-bungakushi*(Minerva, 2005).

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The Decorative and the Poetic in Rimpa Art

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Abstract This paper examines the treatment of flowers and other natural elements in the paintings of the Rimpa style against the background history of style's description as "decorative". Since this style was one of the first to be admired, collected and studied during the period of Japonism from the late-nineteenth century, the background of European and American writers led to a description of the style as "decorative," a description that has not only endured but also migrated to Japanese art historical exegesis. In traditional European art such elements from the natural world tend to be supplementary to a historical, religious or mythological theme. Works of art on which these themes are presented on their own are classified as decorative art. In Japanese art, notably in Rimpa such themes are featured as the main subject and derive overwhelmingly from classical literature. In this sense, the themes are more cultural more than natural. Rimpa art is not only highly literary in its choice of themes but also in techniques. Artists made rhetorical use of poetic techniques to assert their connection to classical Japanese culture and to "classicize" the Rimpa tradition itself.
Key words Rimpa; Heian period literature; flowers in painting; decorative art

1. On Becoming "Decorative"

The style of art called Rimpa is a major star in Japanese art – loving world, both in Japan and in Western countries. After Ukiyo-e, it is probably the best represented of Japanese arts in Western collections, particularly in the United States. It was first formulated in Kyoto during the Momoyama and Edo periods by two upper-class merchants, Tawaraya Sôtatsu (late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries) and Hon' ami Kôetsu (1558 – 1637). The second generation is represented by two Kyoto merchant brothers Ogata Kôrin (1658 – 1716) and Kenzan (1663 – 1753), and the third generation by the samurai class artist Sakai Hôitsu (1761 – 1828) who worked in the shogunal city of Edo. There are many other artists, but these are the "towering" figures of the style. Although Rimpa is often translated as "school" ("School of Rin"), it is more accurate to consider it an affiliation, as artists conferred upon themselves status in its ranks.[1] They did not necessarily study with a practitioner of the style, but learned through studying the compositions of earlier masters whom they chose to emulate. In the case of these five artists, their generations did not overlap, so they had only the master's art works from which to learn.

From the late nineteenth century when Europeans and Americans first began

publishing on Japanese art, the works of artists of the style called Rimpa have been described as "decorative". Among the first Westerners to articulate this link between Rimpa and "decorative" was William Anderson (1842 – 1900), a British surgeon who lived in Tokyo between 1873 – 1800 and collected Japanese art during this stay. His collection gave the British Museum its start in Japanese art (Clark 70). In his *Pictorial Arts of Japan* (1886), he mentions Kôrin. Not an uncritical admirer, he writes that the redeeming feature of the artist's work is its "decorative qualities":

> In his delineations of the human figure and quadrupeds, however, his daring conventionality converts some of his most serious motives almost into caricature. His men and women had often little more shape and expression than indifferently-made dolls, and his horses and deer were like painted toys; but in spite of all this, the decorative qualities of his designs leave him without a competitor. (66)

The French art historian Louis Gonse (1846 – 1921) wrote on Japanese art in *L'Art Japonais* (1883) and the monthly journal *Japon Artistique* (founded in 1888). In an 1890 issue of the journal, he states: "... the decorative sense is the very essence, the supreme law of the Japanese aesthetic ... (Gonse; quoted in Clark 68); he described Kôrin as "the genius of decoration" (Clark 68). Ernest Francisco Fenollosa (1853 – 1908), an American, was in Japan from 1878 until 1890 during which time he taught at the University of Tokyo and worked for the foundation of the Tokyo Fine Arts Academy. He returned to the United States to become curator of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. As curator, he worked with Okakura Tenshin to make impressive acquisitions for the museum.

Although the term "sôshoku" has existed in the Japanese language, inherited from Chinese, few references occur before the Edo period (Tamamushi 140 – 141). There are three known Edo period uses of the term with references to the plastic arts: paintings on screens and scrolls, sword fittings and sutra mountings.[2] In the late Edo and Meiji period, with the developing interest in Western aesthetics the term was used as a translation for "decorative", but it is Western writers who applied the term to describe the traits of Japanese artists, in particular those of the Rimpa style.

After these Western publications appeared, the term started turning up in Japanese descriptions of Rimpa. Early instances may be found in articles about Kôrin's two most famous works, the National Treasures *Kôhakubai-zu byobû* (Red and white plum blossom screens) and *Kakitsubata-zu byobû* (Iris screens)[3]. They were published for the first time in the prestigious art-historical journal Kokka at the beginning of the twentieth century: the Plum screens in 1904 (Hamada, "Ogata Kôrin hitsu baika-zu byôbu nitsuite") and the Iris screens in 1907 (Hamada, "Ogata Kôrin hitsu kakitsubata-zu"); and both were described as exemplars of Japanese decorativeness in art. The texts begin with statements of Kôrin's talent, particularly emphasizing his design sense. The entry about the Iris screens states that the work is characterized by its decorative (sôshokuteki) qualities and design (zuanteki) aspects. Kôrin's skill is revealed in how the repeating pattern of the irises gives the composition unity without becoming monotonous (Hamada, "Ogata Kôrin hitsu kakitsubata-zu" 178). In con-

clusion, the writer states that Kôrin benefited from his study of various styles, which in turn enabled him to produce a work that should be considered as Nihonga, Japanese-style painting (178 – 179). In the 1907 article, the Plum screens are also described as a supreme example of a decorative work of art. To support this statement, the author notes that Western viewers recognize Kôrin as a world-class artist (Hamada, "Ogata Kôrin hitsu kakitsubata-zu" 569 – 570).

That Rimpa was decorative or "sôshokuteki", depending on the language of the publication, became an idée reçue until the work of Satoko Tamamushi and Timothy Clark, who began to historicize the use of the term. In fact, it is not an inaccurate description in certain respects. However, the meaning of the term in Western art history is problematic when applied to a different tradition. On one hand, the way that Rimpa artists presented many of their themes would invite the Western sense of the term, especially given the historic moment when Rimpa works were introduced in Europe and America. On the other hand, by the same definition, Rimpa should be categorized as the opposite of decorative because of its close relationship with Japanese literature.

2. The Presentation of Rimpa

At a glance, Rimpa art presents overwhelmingly as an art of natural imagery, conventionalized figures, a bolder graphic presentation, and material luxury—all connected to being decorative. First, let us consider the themes that are common in Rimpa. Although Rimpa artists depicted traditional Chinese themes, Yamato-e themes dominate. A major genre from the early in the history of the style is paintings of the four seasons. These works with the Inen seal, associated with Sôtatsu, typically present a profusion of flowers over a plain background or against gold-leaf. A landscape setting is not indicated. The clusters of flowers move from right to left, organized according to the progression of the seasons from spring to winter.

Other works treat poem anthologies. Sôtatsu and Kôetsu are in particular known for their collaborations on several hand scrolls of Kôetsu's calligraphy of *waka* poems and Sôtatsu's under-painting: flowers of the four seasons on the *Kokinshû* (*Imperial Anthology of Ancient and Modern Poems*, c. 905), deer on the *Shinkokinshû* (*New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times*, 1206), lotus on the *Hyakuninisshû* (100 *Poems by* 100 *Poets*, compiled by Fujiwara no Teika in the 1230s) and cranes on the *Sanjurokkasen* (*Poems of the* 36 *Poets*, compiled by Fujiwara no Kintô 1009 – 1011)—all flora and fauna. Teika's twenty-four poems of the birds and flowers of the year (two poems for each month, 1214) are a theme undertaken from the second generation onwards. Kôrin, Kôetsu and Hôitsu produced sets of hanging scroll sets with and without the poems, as well as in works on paper or in Kôetsu's designs on ceramic. Two sets of screens by Kôrin, both of which have been designated National Treasures, depict little other than flowers and blossoms. The iris screens (*Kakitsubatazu byôbu*) show two different vantage points of a blooming expanse of irises on a golden background. The plum screens (*Kôhakubaizu byôbu*) show two plum trees, one with red and one with white blossoms, separated by a meandering stream.

Although flowers and natural imagery dominate, figures are also common. The

same basic types that we identify in Sôtatsu's compositions turn up again and again in works of virtually all subsequent Rimpa artists. In general, the figures follow the conventions of the Yamato-e classic manner.[4] They are highly conventionalized and generalized as "everyman" courtiers and ladies. Their faces are portrayed using *hikime-kagihana* (dashes for eyes and a hook for the nose); the women are uniformly portrayed with long flowing hair, executed in a wide calligraphic stroke; and the men wear black *eboshi* caps. The garments of both male and female figures are painted in various colors. Such figures are applied with little variation by Rimpa artists. In short, these "delineations of the human figure and quadrupeds," even if not "caricature" as in Anderson's estimation, can appear as cut-out accessories, pasted where needed.

Third, Rimpa artists also used Yamato-e materials and techniques, in particular rich mineral pigments and gold. However, the number of elements in the compositions tend to be reduced or repeated as a pattern, and the treatment is often bolder. The shapes are often softer and inkier. The most extreme expression of this tendency is the *tarashikomi* (ink pooling) technique, which became a hallmark of Rimpa. These Rimpa traits of a high proportion of images from nature, conventionalized figures, bold expression and luxurious materials mean that it can be interpreted as decorative in the sense of design. However, "decorative" has another salient aspect concerning meaning or a lack thereof.

3. The Decorative in Western Art History

The term "decorative" has had a pejorative connotation in traditional European art history, which even the philosophies of Modernism, the period during which Japanese arts, including paintings, prints, lacquer and ceramics were introduced to the West, did not quite shake. Gonse made an astute observation on a difference between Japanese and European art: "What we call the minor arts there [in Japan] form an inseparable totality with what we call the fine arts" (Gonse). Of course, he was referring to the situation since the Renaissance when the status of artists and craftsmen was differentiated, and artists entered the higher rank as intellectuals with painting joining the disciplines of history, poetry and mathematics. This development was accompanied by a hierarchy of genres. Historical, religious and mythological themes were worthier of depiction since the artist and the viewer needed to read and study in order to convey and understand the art (Runia 28). By contrast, floral themes and landscapes could be seen with the eyes. Depicting them was an act of direct copying, not an engagement with the intellect or imagination. Paintings and sculptures in the high genres may have "decorated" grand spaces, but they were not the decoration. The decoration was what enhanced and filled the space around these "focal points". In this way, fine art asserted meaning and decorative art attended to function. Decorative art was also allied with the applied arts, the point Gonse made in his comparison of Japan and Europe. This point also relates to John Ruskin's preference for Gothic, pre-Renaissance, styles.

The imagery of the decorative and applied arts was often floral or connected with nature. Mythological scenes were also common, but one can say that they were used

"decoratively" not in the manner of, for example, Botticelli's (c. 1445 – 1510) *Primavera/Allegory of Spring* (c. 1482) or any of Titian's (c. 1488/90 – 1576) many mythological paintings. Malcolm Bull argues that mythological subjects in fact offered artists an otherwise limited opportunity to depict imagery from nature which was not much a part of the Christian story, nor often in history (75).

In decorative painting schemes, by contrast, flowers, Flora (the mythological goddess of flowers) and allegorical representations of the seasons are common (Hyde 111 – 112). Such scenes did not aim to convey a message or engage the intellect. Rather they were part of a larger scheme, filling space in a beautiful and pleasing way. Fundamentally, elements from nature were not subjects on their own until the advent of the still-life genre.

The genre of still life, emerging around the beginning of the seventeenth century did enable flowers, fruits and insects to take the center proper, but it was a site where the tensions of the history and the associations of flowers converged. On one hand, it was hugely popular, desired even by Kings (Runia 28). In line with this kind of demand, a floral still life was also expensive, costing more than other still life subjects and sometimes even more than a history painting. Moreover, it was a fine vehicle for the display of virtuosity. Yet this very illusionism broadcast it as imitation and highlighted its lack of narrative content. Norman Bryson makes this point in his academic study of still life, one of the first. Still life's inferior status has also been reflected in scholarship and it was not much examined until Post-Modernism made the study of "lower" genres respectable in academia. In Bryson's words: "While history painting is constructed around narrative, still life is the world minus its narratives or, better, the world minus its capacity of generating narrative interest" (60). At best, the flower choices could be read for their emblematic meanings. Although such readings did not involve a story, they made possible interpretations of still life as as vanitas, or cautions to the viewer on the meaninglessness of the earthly life. Thus, still life was illusion on both actual and metaphorical levels.

In the period of Modernism, from the late-nineteenth century when our pioneering Japanese art experts were writing, artistic traditions were challenged and new solutions were sought. Decoration or ornament and natural imagery were debated by intellectuals and either embraced or eschewed by artists. The movements of Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau and the Pre-Raphaelites embraced floral themes, though not uniformly decoration and its implication of meaninglessness. Architects tended to damn it. The architect Adolf Loos in his provocatively titled essay "Crime and Ornament" (1910) made the strongest case against it. Among his arguments against ornament was that ornament no longer had any connection with Western culture: "Modern man has art, not ornament"; moreover: "Modern man uses the ornaments of earlier or alien cultures as he sees fit. He concentrates his inventiveness on other things" (294). A comparison may be made with what David Batchelor has written about the systematic marginalization and degradation of color through a process of linking it with the Oriental, pagan and feminine, with what is harmful or offers but brief pleasure, and with emotion or excess; but not wholly with importance or logic. The story of flowers, as well as the decorative, is quite similar. European art has a tradition

where flowers tend to be viewed as decorative. They can be attributes of human characters in history and narratives, as well as emblematic of virtues or vices; but they do not in themselves have the capacity to tell a story.

4. Rimpa in a Literary Space

While Rimpa presents as decorative for its floral motifs and colorful stylized shapes which may seem simply to be visually attractive, the style is by Western notions also the opposite of decortiave because of its deep involvement with literature. This involvement links the natural elements and floral motifs to a world of meaning. Many compositions directly relate to a narrative scene and poetic image either as an illustration but more often as a reference to a specific poem or story; other works may not have such a direct link, yet they still carry literary overtones. For example, works in the four seasons genre do not relate to any particular poem but they evoke a literary atmosphere. The connection to the literary world is also evident in the sense that artists put into visual practice something of the principles inherent in the literature.

4.1 Allusive Variation as Visual Rhetoric

Rimpa is seen to exemplify the rhetorical technique of *honkadori* or allusive variation which is used in classical poetry. Brower and Miner (14) describe its purpose as "not just to borrow material or phrasing, but to raise the atmosphere—something of the situation, the tone, and the meaning—of the original. Through the repetition of established figures, elements and entire compositions, Rimpa artists "raise the atmosphere" of the classical past, Yamato-e painting and their own tradition.

Sôtatsu established the figure type and many compositions that were borrowed by subsequent artists. His own figures seem in turn to have been borrowed from specific figures occurring in earlier Yamato-e scrolls: Sôtatsu's Narihira used in *The Ise Stories* images is from the *Legend of Sugawara Michizane*, his mountain ascetic also in *The Ise Story* images is from Saigyô in *Tales of Saigyô*, and the horse and Narihira's companion is from *Tale of the Hôgen War* (Yamane, *Sôtatsu School* 40). These figures are exemplified in a set of album leaves attributed to Sôtatsu.[5]

One example is "Mount Utsu" ("Utsuyama") from episode 9 of *The Ise Stories* (compiled from late-ninth through the early-eleventh centuries). The episode narrates that Narihira and his companion (with horse) are on a journey East when they come to Mount Utsu over which they pass by way of a dark, narrow path lined with ivy and maple trees. On the way, they meet an ascetic, traveling in the opposite direction. Missing his love back in the capital, Narihira composed a poem for the ascetic to deliver. The Sótatsu album leaf shows the three figures, classically portrayed on a landscape that only emerges as a result of the placement of the green shapes against the gold. It indicates the reality of the space but in highly abbreviated forms. The composition shows just the figures separated along the indication of the zig-zag path. Each figure looks in an entirely different direction. Altogether the composition succeeds in freezing a moment of isolation that matches the tone of the poem:

Suruga naru
utsu no yamabe no

utsutsu ni mo
yume ni mo hito ni
ahanu narikeri[6]

Where in Suruga
rise the flanks of Mount Utsu,
Neither the senses
nor dreams ever gladden me
with the presence of my love (Mostow and Tyler 34)

Though the formal qualities can be enjoyed, knowing the associations to the literature and to the Rimpa story adds to the experience of the art. These figures and the mountain path are repeated throughout Rimpa as a set composition that itself functions as a unit or an icon. In many cases, there is little distinct variation, but in other cases artists add their own touch. For example, Fukae Roshû (1699 – 1757) uses the exact scene in a six-panel screen, but to it he adds a stream of water, reminiscent the Kôrin's style of stream.[7] His composition is "updated" by the addition of the Kôrin-associated element.

Other variations separate the component parts in diptychs and triptychs of hanging scrolls. Hôitsu flanks a Rimpa style Mount Fuji (which appears in the next segment of episode 9) by Narihira on horse back on the left and the traveling companion on the right. Suzuki Kiitsu (1796 – 1858) combines Narihira and the traveling companion on the central scroll, with Mount Fuji on the right scroll and the Sumida River on the left (this river appears in the final scene of episode 9). Kiitsu's work exemplifies allusive variation particularly well because the figures are the "borrowed" elements from earlier works, but the flanking landscapes are not in the typical Rimpa style. Rather they are executed in what can be described as a sharper, harder literati style.[8] The juxtaposition of the classic figures and the less magical, more "realistic" landscapes throws the "borrowed" nature of the figures into relief.

It is significant that the genre of poet portraits (*kassen*) developed in the second and third generations of Rimpa, as artists became more aware of promoting a Sôtatsu and Kôrin tradition. In particular, Fujiwara no Teika's (1162 – 1241) well-known *honkadori* poem of *Sano Crossing* is appropriate. The key images from Teika's poem are the sleeve and the winter scene:

Koma tomete
Sode uchiharau
Kage mo nashi
Sano no watari no
Yuki no yûgure.[9]

There is no shelter
Where I can rest my weary horse
And brush my laden sleeves:

The Sano ford and its adjoining fields
Spread over with a twilight in the snow. (Brower and Miner 306)

Kôrin's established the elements of the composition: the figure on a horse, a companion or two, and the gesture of arching "a laden sleeve" over the head.[10] These elements are another visual application of allusive variation. Kôrin borrowed the Sôtatsu figures which Sôtatsu borrowed from Yamato-e; Kôrin matched the gesture to the poem's imagery. The set of elements was borrowed by subsequent artists who placed in their own versions. These artists added a new layer of allusive variation by combining this image with other poet/poem compositions. For example, Kiitsu's four handscrolls for the seasons feature a different poet in one season's landscape. Each poet's poem is implied by the borrowed Rimpa imagery for the poet set against the season featured in a famous poem.[11] Winter is represented by Teika; Spring by Narihira; summer by Hitomaro; and autumn by Saigyô.[12]

These types of compositions highlight a stylistic gap between the borrowed "old" part and the "new" element. As such, artists make clear that they are taking something from tradition and producing a new combination of what is already familiar, skillfully turning *honkadori* into a visual-rhetorical technique.

4.2 Reducing to Poetic Imagery

Another defining characteristic of Rimpa is a tendency to simplify the compositions by reducing the number of elements. The motivation for reduction is not determined solely by "decorative" or aesthetic goals. There is another principle at work as well. The poetic method of kibutsu chinshi (expressing emotion by reference to concrete things) is also influential on the presentation of the visual arts in general and on Rimpa's choices of reduction in particular. The image choices are built into the poetry; and these images are often connected to an element of the natural world: flowers, birds, autumn mists, or the moon.

Since courtiers and ladies communicated their heartfelt emotions through poetry, poems are abundant in the classic romantic narratives, *The Tale of Genji* (completed by 2008) and *The Ise Stories*. A poem is something of the equivalent of the dramatic moment that is depicted in traditional European art. In *The Ise Stories*, one can say poetry is the real focus of each episode in that the narrative revolves around the poems. *The Tale of Genji* also centers around the poems: its 54 chapters include 795 *waka* (Murase 2). Thus, *kibutsu chinshi* is amply present in narrative as well. Both stories have a rich tradition of illustration in the visual arts. There is a canon of textual excerpts and pictorial images for illustrations in a conservative vein (Murase 13 – 14), but creative contribution by many Rimpa artists was a much more extreme reduction to images from the poems.

The most famous scene for reduction relates to the first segment in episode 9 of *The Ise Stories*, which narrates a break during the journey East. When Narihira and his companions come to Yatsu Hashi (Eight Bridges), they sit down around a patch of blooming irises (*kakitsubata*). Narihira is asked to compose an acrostic poem with the syllables *ka-ki-tsu-ha-ta*. After reading his poem, which expresses longing for his lost love left behind in the capital, we are told that it leaves not a dry eye among the

group.

Karagoromo
Kitsutsu narenishi
Tsuma shi areba
Haru-baru kinuru
Tabi wo shizo omofu[13]

Robe from far Cathay
long and comfortably worn
bound by love to stay
I cover these distances
shrouded in melancholy. (Mostow and Tyler 33)

A hanging scroll by Kôrin is on a plain background.[14] The three figures, in purely classic Yamato-e/Sôtatsu style, dominate the composition against a simplified background with few props for their picnic. Sitting on the board curve of the bank, they gaze towards the marsh. Kôrin indicates this shape less through its own delineation than through the interaction between different shapes. In Kôrin's composition, the bank on the water's edge is defined by the meeting of the gold expanse with the clumps of irises and the waves of water; in this sense, the bank is made of negative space. The bridge is also reduced to a minimum of one plank, jutting in horizontally from the left. It is more common to see around five planks, as in the Saga-bon version. The Saga-bon Ise, published in 1608 in Saga, was of the first of the classics to be printed in moveable type, the characters of which were based on Kôetsu's calligraphy. The images in the Saga-bon Ise became established as the standard iconography. However, Kôrin's painting includes far fewer elements and the Yamato-e conventions for the facial expressions are also limiting, and yet it is the faces of the figures against the simplified background that capture the moment of the poem being recited—all three turning to look at the irises with Narihira looking the most pensive and poised. Sôtatsu's *Mount Utsu* album leaf also used the gaze of the characters to good effect.

Among the best-known Rimpa compositions of these same sections of episode 9 remove even the figures. These most reduce to the poetic image. An Inen seal set of screens is a reference to the *Mount Utsu* section.[15] The composition is comprised only of vividly colored green and gold wedge-shaped forms separated by a band of ivy and maple leaves painted in murky tones over gold.[16] Sotatu's more narrative-style composition on the album leaf is interesting to compare to this greatly reduced version for the point that Sôtatsu did not include either maple or ivy in the composition. Those elements are mentioned in the narrative but not the poem, whereas the Inen seal work does include them. In this sense, the Inen work "adds" elements despite the otherwise greatly reduced imagery.

Another composition by Kôrin excluded the figures of the Eight Bridge section,

depicting only repeating shapes for the irises and the bridge.[17] This composition was produced in various formats, including scrolls, screens, fans and a design on lacquer. The composition of the Nezu Museum *Kakitsubata* screens is similar again, but it shows only the irises.[18] *Kakitsubata* is at the center of the poem. It has been argued that this set of screens is an example of design and not connected to *The Ise Stories* because irises are also a motif independent of that story. In the five-volume set of *Rimpa Painting* organized by genres, the iris with bridge screens are in volume 4 ("Scenes from Literature, People") while *Kakitsubatazu byôbu* are in volume 2 ("Seasonal Flowering Plants and Birds"). However, history of the association of irises with Ise and the depth of the artist's cultural knowledge seem too strong for the image not to have Ise as one layer of meaning and association.[19]

5. Conclusion

Literature is one of the most important themes in Japanese art. Rimpa artists, though known for their many depictions of literary themes, did not on the whole choose an illustrative style of depiction with the goal of recreating the story.[20] The Rimpa style is, however, distinguished by a different approach: that of symbols of poems, using techniques from the literary tradition itself. They started with the imagery inherent in the literature and expressed it through the use of stock classical figures and the natural elements in the poems, and their combination. They removed extraneous details and placed the selected elements either on a background of empty space, rich mineral pigments or gold. However, in this luxurious baldness, the elements can be detached from their literary sources and it becomes very easy to read their designs or decorations. Something similar may be said to have happened to the poems. Originally, the elements from nature must have had a greater spiritual or religious significance, but this could have been lost or weakened; the natural elements came to be identified with human emotions.

Rimpa artists repeat these elements both across different works or in a single composition. The repeated elements take the form of clumps of flowers in four season painting, irises or any number of Rimpa motifs (plums, streams, waves). Such usage becomes ritualistic, connected to the idea of asserting a link to the culture that produced the literature and to articulating a Rimpa tradition. However, the repetition of the images also creates a visual pattern, and Rimpa compositions become aestheticized.

Despite the cultural background of Western views on the decorative (a kind of anesthetization), the first Western writers on Japanese art were attracted to Japanese art in general. Thus, we cannot ascribe a pejorative nuance to their description of Rimpa. It might better be termed an expression of cultural primitivism, though not of the noble savage variety but as an exotic and sophisticated alternative culture. Yet it must be noted that the best Rimpa works of art to leave Japan during this period went to collections in the United States, not in Europe. These early writers were from mainly from Britain, France and Germany, with the notable exception of Fenollosa, the American from Boston. On the Japanese side, it is easy to understand why Meiji writers seized on the term for "decorativeness" since it turned Rimpa into a symbol of

the Japanese spirit half of the Meiji motto "Western technology, Japanese spirit," a motto that is in itself a pattern of allusive variation.

Notes

1. Rimpa is comprised of two characters: "Rin" is the second character in the name Kôrin and "Ha" ("pa"), often translated as school. For more details on the history of the name in English see Yamane, "The Formation and Development of Rimpa Art." *Rimpa Art from the Idemitsu Collection* (Tokyo, London: The British Museum Press, 1998) 13 – 14.
2. These are: in Kuwayahma Gyokushû's *Gyokushû gashû* (1790) for the paintings used to decorate rooms; in Watababe Hidemitsu *Nagasaki Gajinden* (prior to 1830) in connection to sword fittings; and in Okada Kiyoshi's *Itsukushima hômotsu zue* (1842) in the context of describing the mountings for the *Heiki Sutra*. See Tamamushi, "'Decorative' in Japanese Art Historical Discourse." *International Symposium on the Preservation of Cultural Property: The Present and the Discipline of Art History in Japan*. Tokyo: Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, 1999) 241 – 242.
3. *Kôhakubai-zu byôbu*, early-eighteenth century, pair of two-panel screens, 156 x 173 cm (each), MOA Museum of Art, Atami. *Kakitsubata-zu byôbu*, pair of six-panel screens, 151. 2 x 360. 7 (each), Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo.
4. The rendering is well exemplified by the illustrated segments from a *Tale of Genji* handscroll, dating to the early 1100s. The twenty illustrations and twenty-eight segments of text are divided amongst several collections. The majority are held by the Gotoh Museum (Tokyo) and the Tokugawa Reimeikai Foundation (Tokyo).
5. The album leaves are distributed among many different private collections. Several are in American collections: The Mary and Jackson Burke Collection (New York), The Cleveland Museum of Art, The Nelson-Atkins Mseum of Art (Kansas City, Missouri), The Minneapolis Institute of Arts.
6. The poem (904) is by Narihira, appearing in the *Shinkokinshû*. The translation is by Mostow and Tyler (34).
7. Fukae Roshû, six-panel screen, 152. 4 x 267. 8 cm, The Cleveland Museum of Art.
8. Hôitsu, Mount Fuji Hanging scroll triptych: 104. 5 x 39. 5 cm (each), private collection. Kiitsu, Mount Fuji and Sumida River from *The Tales of Ise*, triptych, 98. 3 x 29. 6 cm, private collection.
9. The poem from *Shinkokinshû* (VI:671) is translated by Brower and Miner (306).
10. Kôrin's *Crossing at Sano*: two-panel screen, 170 x 184, private collection.
11. Kiitsu, *Scenes from four seasonal poems*, four handscrolls, 10. . 1 x 143. 6 each, private collection.
12. Narihira's poem is from *Kokinshû* (I:53); the poem attributed in the scroll to Hitomaru is (KKS, IX:409); Saigyô is Shinkokinshû (XVIII:1810).
13. The poem (410) appears in the *Kokinshû*. The translation is by Mostow and Tyler (33).
14. Kôrin, Yatsuhashi, hanging scroll, 95. 7 x 43. 3 cm, Tokyo National Museum. 15. Inen seal, Utsuyama, pair of six-panel screens, 159 x 361 cm each, Manno Art Museum (Osaka).
16. The pair of six-panel screens are in the Manno Art Museum (Osaka): color on gold-leaf paper, 159 x 361 cm each.
17. Kôrin, Yatsuhashi, pair of six-panel screens, 179 x 371. 1 each, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York).
18. The pair of six-panel screens by Kôrin is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York): color on gold-leaf paper, 179 x 371 cm each. A pair of six-panel screens by Hôitsu is in the Idemitsu Museum of Art (Tokyo): color on gold-leafed silk, 163 x 372 each. The composition of the bridge with

irises painted on a gold-leaf background was widely copied by Kôrin's followers.

19. Kobayashi Tadashi edited this set of books with color reproductions of works by the full range of Rimpa artists in all genres.

20. The album leaves are in the Harvard University Art Museum. They were a gift from the Mingei Movement leader, Yanagi Sôetsu, to Langdon Warner, 1946. See Wheelwright, *Work in Flower: The Visualization of Classical Literature in Seventeenth-Century Japan* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1989) 112.

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"You're Forever Stuck in Neutral, Manmeat": Hobbesian Biopolitics and the Rise of the Transhuman

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Abstract For the past forty years, mainstream American comics have openly invited discussions of biopolitics and bioethics, challenging the positivistic metanarrative that genetic engineering will yield tremendous benefits to humankind. Using Hobbes' consideration of the monstrous sovereign in *Leviathan* and, by extension, Derrida's recently published lectures on *The Beast and the Sovereign*, this paper investigates the ways in which science fiction comics—most notably Jonathan Hickman's *Transhuman*—represent the field of genetic research as a force that eschews political and ethical boundaries in order to further a selective vision of the enlightenment trajectory. *Transhuman* adapts the tropes of dystopian science fiction to the study of bioethics and offers a bold challenge to the Derridean conception that beasts and sovereigns function as easily interchangeable forces.

Key words Biopolitics; Transhumanism; Science Fiction Comics; Hobbes; Derrida; Hickman

In the posthumously published *The Beast of the Sovereign*, *Volume I*—which, we are told in the book's preface, is the first in a projected annual series of forty-three volumes of Jacques

Derrida's lectures—Derrida argues that there exists a relationship between beasts and their masters that is complex, interchangeable, and even communal, as "sovereign and beast seem to have in common their being-outside-the-law" (Derrida 17). Such commonality causes beast and sovereign to have a "troubling resemblance: they call on each other and recall each other, from one to the other; there is . . . even a worrying natural attraction, a worrying familiarity, [a] . . . reciprocal haunting" (17). To make this argument, Derrida lists a series of examples—many of them culled from Western fairy tales—in which tyrants transform into ferocious animals and vice versa. It is this "troubling resemblance" between beast and sovereign that elicits the rise of the transhuman, which, as comic author Jonathan Hickman has suggested in the graphic novel*Transhuman*, is a "transitory state" that underscores "the evolutionary progress from human to posthuman" (Hickman 113). Before a

beast mutates into a sovereign, it must first occupy a space in which, for a time, it is neither beast nor sovereign but a fusion of both states. Transhumanism, then, cannot function as a permanent condition, and its temporality allows for the "worrying natural attraction" between beasts (or monsters) and kings that Derrida highlights in his consideration of sovereignty.

Additionally, Derrida draws upon a monstrous narrative of a different sort, namely, Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. Derrida is particularly struck with Hobbes' introduction, in which the philosopher of early modern sovereignty argues that "Art . . . imitat[es] that Rationall and most excellent work of Nature, *Man*. For by art is created that great LEVIATHAN, called COMMON-WEALTH OF STATE, which is but an Artificiall Man; though of greater stature and strength than the Naturall, for whose protection and defence it was intended" (27). For Hobbes, the creation of the "Artificiall Man" leads to a potentially paradoxical dominion over the animal kingdom via the "right of nature" (30). And yet, we must ask, what is the nature of the artificial man? If the collective body Hobbes refers to as the "Man" is more than a metaphor for sovereign governance, as Derrida certainly suggests, then what is the "Man?" Does his artificial nature render him more human than the original man, and thus impossible to wholly differentiate from the beast who is outside the law? How might the beast rise to rule, and what might its ability to rule imply about the temporal, transhuman nature of the state?

While Hobbes could not have anticipated the historical permutations of the concept of statehood that would lead Derrida to his arguably peculiar (though not unreasonable) reading, the political apparatus detailed in*Leviathan* does, even by early modern standards, depict a beastly creature that, by Hobbes' own admission, exists both within and outside the realm of political policy. Categorizing Hobbes' political philosophy as an act of early modern transhumanism would, of course, be anachronistic, yet Hobbes' contention that beasts and sovereigns exist outside the law—that is to say, human law—leaves a trail of proto-transhumanist breadcrumbs that Derrida is easily able to follow. Indeed, Hobbes makes the following odd juxtaposition regarding the law's inability to restrict non-human entities when explaining his interpretation of the first and second Natural Laws of Contracts:

> [1] To make covenants with brute beasts is impossible because, not understanding our speech, they understand not, nor accept of, any translation of right, nor can translate any right to another; and without mutual acceptation, there is no covenant.
>
> [2] To make covenant with God is impossible, but by mediation of such as God speaketh to . . . for otherwise we know not whether our covenants be accepted or not. And therefore, they that vow anything [OL: to God] contrary to any law of nature vow in vain, as being a thing unjust to pay such vow. And if it be a thing commanded by the law of nature, [OL: they vow in vain;] it is not the vow, but the law that binds them. (Hobbes 85)

It is this slippery space between beasts and sovereigns (in this case, the divine sovereign) that Derrida pinpoints in his lectures. Both archetypes are outside "the

law" in a human sense, yet are bound by the Hobbesian conception of natural law, thus imbuing figures at the opposite end of the power scale with the possibility of interchangeability. In *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, Roberto Esposito also makes note of this conundrum, arguing that, for Hobbes, "the force of sovereignty . . . [is] directly proportional to the renunciation precisely of its exercise" (39). Derrida, as we might expect, ups the biopolitical ante, employing some rather baroque imagery and wordplay that will lead us to a discussion of the representation of biopolitical discourse in science fiction comics; this application, I should note, has not been foregrounded in *The Beast and the Sovereign, Volume I*. Before we arrive at that point, let us grapple with the Derridean interpretation of sovereignty one more time.

Returning to the dichotomy of beasts and sovereigns and its depiction in the schismatic image of the Artificiall Man, Derrida suggests that sovereignty is an "Artificiall Soul;" we may think of this artificial soul as a fractured conglomerate of life and lifelessness, a force outside the law that causes a biopolitical breakdown of the social order it seeks to establish. Let us further consider Derrida's vision of Hobbesian sovereignty:

> This sovereignty is like an iron lung, an artificial respiration, an 'Artificiall *Soul*.' So the state is a sort of robot, an animal monster, which, in the figure of man, or of man in the figure of the animal monster, is stronger, etc., than natural man. Like a gigantic prosthesis designed to amplify the power of the living... But this state and prosthetic machine, let's say prosthatic, this *prosthstate* must also extend, mime, imitate, even reproduce down to the details the living creature that produces it. Which means, paradoxically, this political discourse of Hobbes's is vitalist, organicist, *and* mechanicist... This systematics of Hobbes is inconceivable without this prosthstatics (at once zoologistic, biologistic, and techno-mechanist) of sovereignty. (28 – 9)

It is this idea of the prosthstate, that is to say, the artificially constructed state that is subject to revolutionary mutations, with which I wish to graphically engage. Derrida's analysis of sovereignty as not just an "Artificiall Man" but an "Artificiall Soul," in conjunction with descriptors such as "robot," "animal monster," "iron lung," and "gigantic prosthesis," strongly suggests that the interchangeable nature of beasts and sovereigns is contingent upon the process of grafting a new vision of biopolitical sovereignty onto the older, existing political body. The prosthatic, according to Derrida, serves as a kind of leveling mechanism, one that may potentially reverse the hierarchical political structure implicit in Hobbes. If grafting cannot abolish the system that places beasts in the service of the sovereign, it at least affords an opportunity in which the vertical mechanism of rule may realign itself so that the boundaries between beast and sovereign become increasingly unclear.

While Derrida's entry into the realm of biopolitical philosophy is somewhat radical and challenging in its execution, I would like to point out that the theoretical maneuver to which Derrida refers has functioned as one of the dominating tropes in science fiction comics for more than four decades. As is often the case in the history of

comics, all roads generally lead back to Jack Kirby. In this case, we may most concretely track Kirby's interest in biopolitical systems to the creation of the Inhumans, a species of moon-dwelling super-beings who are subjected to genetic manipulation at the hands of the alien race known as the Kree and subsequently become invested in a program of genetic self-augmentation. Within the Inhumans, the tenuous relationship between beasts and sovereigns is more clear than in any other corner of the Marvel Universe.[1] The society of the Inhumans, led by their monarch Black Bolt, are indeed a royal family, and yet, for decades, they have been one of the most disadvantaged and oppressed factions in the comic book cosmos. Consistently represented as a vulnerable culture in need of protection, despite Black Bolt's sovereign status, the Inhumans have spent most of their narrative history living in secrecy and seclusion while applying the process of Terragenesis, a breeding and mutation scheme that is as likely to leave the subject horribly deformed as it is to grant the recipient biological augmentation in the form of superpowers. Consequently, the Inhumans have, for most of their history, been the beasts of the Marvel Universe.

While the political status of the Inhumans has endured a series of permutations too numerous to count in this paper, their standing within the Marvel Universe has experienced its most substantive shift within the past two years. With authors Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning at the helm, the Inhumans have recently decided that they have had enough. After being abducted and tortured by the Skrulls, a longstanding alien militant army and enemy of the Inhumans, Black Bolt returns to his homeland with plans of conquest and political ascendancy.[2]

Reaffirming their biological advantages and their royal bloodline (i.e. their right to rule), the Inhumans launch a full strike on their makers, the Kree. Despite their mastery in military affairs, the Kree are almost too easily defeated by Black Bolt, his wife Queen Medusa, and their entourage of genetically augmented warriors. In a highly uncharacteristic moment, Ronan the Accuser, the current leader of the Kree, offers a quick surrender and a recognition of the Inhumans' genetic superiority. Ronan views the Kree as a stagnant race, and it is his hope that a new regime of Inhuman rule will result in the biological advancement of his own people; in short, he hopes the Inhumans will perform augmentation experiments on the Kree, as the Kree once did for the Inhumans. Instead of opting to fight to the death, Ronan acknowledges that the Inhumans have "come to destroy the ancient Kree" and that "it was*always* going to be this way" (Abnett and Lanning 37). Ronan acknowledges the prosthstatic nature of sovereignty, explaining that his role as head of an empire was meant to "kee[p] the gears oiled, waiting for the real thing" (39). In comics terms, where such story arcs and cosmic power struggles can sustain themselves for years, even decades, this turn of events occurs astonishingly fast, indeed, within a single issue (i.e. the one-shot issue*Secret Invasion: War of Kings*). Indeed, despite decades of struggle, the power balance between the beast and the sovereign, in this case, reverse themselves within a matter of hours. As a reward for his submission, Ronan is granted the boon of marriage to Crystal, sister to Queen Medusa. This political alliance further complicates the role between ruler and ruled, and Crystal's vehement dislike of her family's monarchical policies (as well as her genuine affection for Ronan) suggests that a biopolitical reversal may occur yet again in future stories.

While the above scenario appears to clearly illustrate Derrida's conception of the beast who is outside the law, the long tale of the Inhumans is also imbued with several of the tropes of Jack Kirby's artistry: cosmic battles, fallen heroes, family sagas, and a kind of eventual optimism that goodness and justice will prevail over the forces of corruption and coercion. In their recent rendition of the Inhumans' mythos, Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning have closely adhered to Kirby's original vision while also granting Black Bolt his long-awaited rise to power. Abnett's and Lanning's suggestion that the ascension of the Inhumans may be short-lived aligns this cosmic saga with Derrida's postulate of monarchial reversibility, that is to say, the king that is easily made can be just as easily unmade. Although this premise is not entirely without political truth the complexities involved in the shifting of statehood have been justifiably reexamined in other biopolitically-charged comics. At long last, the Inhumans have successfully grafted themselves onto the state, but can such an operation be so easily undone? Can the Artificiall Man undo the intricate workings of the prosthstate? I will now turn my attention to two works of graphic fiction that call into question the likelihood of such a complete reversal.

The precarious relationship between beasts and their at least temporary masters is, of course, not limited to Kirby's durable creation. In the 1980s and early 90s, the biopolitical trajectory of the sovereign who exists outside the law was demonstrated in a number of prominent science fiction serials. In Carl Potts' and Alan Zelenetz's 1986 graphic novel *The Alien Legion: A Grey Day to Die*, a military force in the pay of the "galarchy" is ordered to assassinate the leader of the Technoids, a "myoelectronic race who espouse participant evolution, choosing to change themselves . . . using technology to improve on nature and creating interfaces between electric and organic matter" (187). While "myoelectronic" may sound like an invented term meant to add a sense of authenticity to the science fiction world of *Alien Legion*, myoelectric engineering (as opposed to "myoelectronic") in fact refers to the process of creating prosthetic limbs that can be grafted onto the human body. The durable design of myoelectric prostheses has allowed such devices to "dominat[e] prosthetic development," although "[p]resent systems [of design] provide less than satisfactory solutions... [and the] means of control is very difficult if not impossible to achieve in a prosthesis" (Englehart, Hudgins, and Parker 157). This tension between the desire for prosthetic control and the difficulty in navigating such a system is recurrent throughout *A Grey Day to Die*, as the galarchy, an interstellar empire ruled by a small sovereign council, determines that the Technoids' program of "participant evolution" constitutes a threat to the current rule of law. What the galarchy fails to recognize, however, is that the Technoids' unstable revolution is destined for failure; that which the sovereign body cannot perceive will be clearly assessed by the Alien Legion's infantrymen, for the Technoids, despite volunteering for prosthetic augmentation, are less than willing participants in their own evolution.

Near the conclusion of *A Grey Day to Die*, the Technoid leader, Commander Dethron—a name that explicitly mimics the verb "dethrone"—is revealed as a former (and heavily decorated) member of the Alien Legion who has seized control of the Technoids in order to exact revenge upon the military power for abandoning him during an earlier skirmish. Ultimately, the Technoid rebellion is undone because of De-

thron's lasting ties to humanity. This supposed weakness is overtly represented during a monologue in which Dethron bitterly crushes a flower, lamenting that he cannot "feel [its] delicate petals…or smell [its] sweet, subtle perfume... except as particles and waves coldly analyzed by the sensor-computer apparatus of this damned body" (Potts and Zelenetz 192). Dethron may have successfully utilized myoelectric surgery to place his consciousness within a mechanistic body, but his consciousness nonetheless remains humanly sentimental, vengeful, and fallible. In short, the leader of the Technoids is not beastly enough to execute a successful political revolution.

Dethron's revolutionary failure underscores a critique of the Derridean conception of monarchical interchangeability; although Derrida argues that beasts and sovereigns may assume and reassume the respective role of the other, *Alien Legion* points out that the relationship between beasts and sovereigns is far more inflexible than Derrida's reading of Hobbes indicates. *Alien Legion* argues that such extreme reversals of centralized power are not so easily achieved, and if they are achieved, a return to pre-revolutionary politics is improbable at best. In their epic tale of revolutionary failure, Potts and Zelenetz highlight the difficulty of rolling back political authority in a government that is defined by hierarchical principles. Prosthstates, then, are not so easily grafted onto an existing political body; furthermore, if such a grafting is successful, the process may be irrevocable.

The most recent graphic novel to address—and, indeed, challenge—Derrida's consideration of the beast who is outside the law is Jonathan Hickman's *Transhuman*, a work that offers a bittersweet counterpoint to Kirby's, Abnett's, and Lanning's optimistic vision of royal liberation in *Secret Invasion*: *War of Kings*. While Hickman's work can simultaneously be read as an endorsement of and a satire on Darwinian idealism, the series also raises provocative questions regarding the legitimacy of sovereign power in the digital age. In *Transhuman*, readers are immersed within the petty, duplicitous world of corporate finance and venture capitalism, as two startup companies compete in the race towards developing new genetic technologies that will result in human augmentations, that is to say, superpowers. As the arrogant Princeton-educated scientist and head of the Institute for Integrative Genomics Anton Rebere explains in issue one, "transhuman" is a term best defined as "the expression that refers to the evolutionary progress from human to posthuman . . . [and] 'future man.' A person whose capacities so exceed current man that we would no longer easily define them as human" (Hickman 14). Rebere's vision for transhuman development proves somewhat chillingly accurate, as the text demonstrates that scientific enthusiasm coupled with the drive for wealth does indeed produce a "posthuman 'future man'" with highly problematic (albeit entirely ironic) results.

Although the methods employed in transhuman development are deliberately kept vague throughout the story, we are told the experiments involve a combination of drug therapies, surgeries, and, in some cases, the literal grafting of prosthetic devices. Eventually, we are treated to a detailed report of the first subjects, a group of monkeys who eventually come to simultaneously embrace and resent their role as transhuman subjects. While the results of the experiment are doctored by corporate supervisors in order to appease the investors and initiate testing on human subjects, the monkeys stage a series of revolts against their corporate sovereigns. These revolts, at least

initially, appropriately correspond to the monkeys' imposed role of the beast. In an unorganized fashion, individual monkey test subjects attempt to beat, threaten, bludgeon, and rape their human captors and observers. As Test Monkey 12118, aka Wayne, repeatedly tells his human analyst, "I see you, manmeat—monkey hungry" (20). Test Monkey 12314, aka Bob, has achieved the sort of rhetorical mastery that Wayne lacks and offers a more eloquent appraisal of the tensions existing within the testing facility. While staging one of several violent protests within the confines of the testing laboratory, Bob demonstrates that he has even learned to quote Barbara Ehrenreich, though he provides a unique addendum. Charging through the hallway and lunging at one of his scientific captors, Bob declares that "'Natural selection, as it has operated throughout human history, favors not only the clever but the murderous.' We will abide no longer any banana-appeasement policy!" (42).

Eventually such attempts at overthrow prove successful, as the monkeys begin to organize and secretly collude with one of the alpha males of venture capitalism, pitting their own mutual interests against those of the scientific community. As Bob explains to a documentary interviewer (who is actually a fellow simian in a human disguise), the monkeys have made a deal that grants them exclusive license to the marketing of their augmented abilities. When the interviewer comments, "so you [i.e. monkeys and humans] would now be working together," Test Monkey Bob (albeit no longer subject to testing) replies, "I'm not sure that together is the correct word . . . I would describe it more as 'working for'" (83 – 84). Bob makes this ominous pronouncement while seated at an executive table, clearly indicating that humans will be working for the greater good of monkeys. If we think of the alleged interchangeability between beasts and sovereigns as a kind of cooperation, Bob's declaration signals that the days of "working together" are over.

The final coup for simian sovereignty occurs at the conclusion of the mini-series, and we learn that humans are to blame for voluntarily exchanging their right to rule with their beastly counterparts. Skipping ahead a few years, we learn that the transhumanist experiments, which have since been performed widely on monkeys and humans alike, have resulted in a variety of genetic products and enhancements. The transhuman revolution is upon us, with one caveat: "the inability of the human body to accept multiple types of treatments—meant that a decision had to be made: People were forced to limit choice when picking a modification" (109).

Options include superhuman strength, super speed, etc. However, the human species, seemingly with few exceptions, opts for a "beta-booster" that "prevent[s] sickness . . . and aging" (109). In short, humans have exchanged adaptability for a static brand of life extension.

The monkeys, however, have chosen a very different path, opting for a wider range of genetic augmentations; in essence, monkeys have relinquished the option for personal immortality in order to purchase the sovereignty of their species. As the simian documentarian condescendingly explains, "There is now the growing concern that the repression of man's survival instincts . . . has become stagnant overnight. A moribund herd of humanity covers the Earth. You could have flown" (109). The story closes, then, with the following admonition, during which the human-seeming filmmaker reveals his secret monkey identity:

> It was always going to be this way. You overtaken by your lesser. Perhaps you should accept the reality of your situation. Nature abhors an unwillingness to truly evolve. Where did we begin with all this? Ah yes . . . Transhuman refers to the evolutionary progression from human to posthuman. A transitory state. Congratulations, you're forever stuck in neutral, manmeat. We'll be replacing you soon. (112 – 114)

Ironically and perhaps appropriately, it is the human drive for self-preservation that results in homo sapiens' devolutionary trajectory. Hickman's narrative acknowledges the human potential for ingenuity while aggressively critiquing the scientific and capitalistic metanarratives which declare that each step the human race takes is a positivistic negotiation, that is to say, a necessary and welcome step forward. In order to save its collective skin, humanity surrenders its humanness, becoming posthuman in

a biopolitically Faustian exchange. The beast that is outside the law becomes the law, and the law becomes bestial in the most servile fashion possible.

However, this reversal is notably different than that expressed in *The Beast and the Sovereign*. In the final chapter of *Transhuman*, human inertia has become an irrevocable state of being. The narrative offers no suggestion that humans will ever be able to rise up and conquer their simian masters. As the unnamed monkey states in the work's closing text, humans are being *replaced* in the biopolitical order of things. The act of replacement is notably different than an act of reversal, as replacement, within the context of Hickman's narrative, denotes a revolution with permanent ramifications. The shift from human to posthuman may be a "transitory state," but its consequences are immutable. Once the "Artificiall Man" has wholly conquered the human, there is little likelihood that the mechanism of reversal so appropriate to the saga of Jack Kirby's Inhumans will occur in the world that is envisioned in *Transhuman*. Hickman opts not to participate in the rhetoric of revolutionary optimism that Kirby and Derrida embrace. Like Hobbes' *Leviathan*, *Transhuman* enforces the notion that, in both theory and practice, there is no such thing as a positive biopolitics.

Like the most provocative philosophy of Jack Kirby, Derrida's consideration of the relationship between the beast and the sovereign is, perhaps unexpectedly, infused with a noteworthy dose of biopolitical optimism, despite Derrida's longstanding reputation as a political cynic and so-called moral relativist. In his most recently published work, Derrida obliterates these superficial critiques, arguing that the site of biopolitical struggle is one in which sovereigns may be toppled, the oppressed may seek retribution, and, if necessary, the order of things can be reversed again whenever such a shift is ethically, socially, or politically necessary. In *Transhuman*, however, the sense of struggle that defines biopolitics is rendered in less forgiving terms. Unlike Derrida and Kirby, Hickman envisions the rise of the posthuman as an evolutionary dead end; endless reversal is impossible in the world of *Transhuman*, as finitude is so clearly and starkly defined; humans will fall, monkeys will rise, and no such reversal will ever again occur. In Hickman's imagined future, we will become forever stuck in neutral, and we're racing towards that neutrality with astonishing speed.

Notes

1. See the Marvel Masterworks edition of *The Inhumans: Volume One* for a selection of the genetically altered family's earliest forays in the Marvel Universe. The collection outlines the Inhumans' royal dynasty and the pattern of social marginalization that Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning would later explode in *Secret Invasion: War of Kings*.
2. See Joe Pokaski's and Tom Raney's mini-series *Secret Invasion: Inhumans* for the tale of Black Bolt's abduction and torture at the hands of the Skrull army. In *Secret Invasion: War of Kings*, co-authors Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning use this earlier tale of oppression to rationalize, at least for Black Bolt, the use of a pre-emptive strike against The Inhumans' former masters, the Kree empire.

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Romanian Cultural Identity: Landmarks and Turning Points

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Romanian cultural identity emerged as a public issue only in the wake of the 1848 bourgeois and nationalist revolutions. The so-called "*revolutions a la francaise*" kick-started the split between Romania and the Ottoman world, in all possible respects. Over the last 150 years or so, the Romanian nation as a socio-symbolic construct has constantly been reworked.

For the Romanian identity project, born at the Eastern "peripheries" of the continent, the historical starting point was Europe and inevitably the non-European other. The collective imaginary related to national identity was the stage of an intense transit of cultural paradigms, responsible for tensions, deviations and ruptures, a catalyst of collective attitudes and a rich source of stereotypes. The polar drive of all these identity models is due to the common attachment of almost all peripheral cultures to strong, even authoritarian explanatory criteria, able to tightly organize the confusing and unquiet plurality of their semantic areas.

Promoted by intellectual and political elites and resulting in an "*over-determined*" imaginary construct, such as the type of nationhood advocated by Benedict Anderson, the paradigm of modern Romanian identity implied a *top-down* dynamics. Although hundred per cent elitist, this project has been successfully sold to the mass-nation, which in Romania cherished its own brand of "popular proto-nationalism", in the widely accepted terms of Erich Hobsbawn. In a way similar to different European areas, this project, propelled by the political and intellectual elite, was meant to keep together previously disperse territories, as it was the case of Italy and Germany as well.

In Romania, cultural producers have axiomatically been assigned an oversized role in defining the nation to her and to the world. Before as well as after the Iron Curtain, literature undertook a leading role in the invention of the nation. Theoretically evaluated as a "secondary" social force, literature emerged as the source and as the privileged vehicle of several models of action with a tremendous axiological impact.

The following articles point to a series of key-categories accounting for the Romanian cultural identity : landmarks (such as francophilia, the picturesque) or historical turning points (Ceausescu's national communism and the post-communist age). They are authored by academics based in Romania as well as by members of the Romanian Diaspora teaching in American universities and enjoying the privilege of an outlying point of view on the topic under debate.

Oriental Voyages: Marthe Bibesco's Extended Country[1]

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Abstract Marthe Bibesco (1885 – 1973), who lived and wrote under the sign of a double belonging—to Romania, her country of birth, and to France, her country of adoption—deserves an influential place in a European Francophone Literary History that is yet to be written. This essay will approach Bibesco's work from a francophone perspective that will enable the examination of her double-writing—a permanent negotiation between a set of dualities between Paris and Bucharest, between new and old, between the aristocratic and the popular—that also speak for the difficulty of establishing herself in one place or the other. A cross-reading of her travel to Persia (*Les Huit paradis*, 1908) offers an insight into the negotiations between Europeanism and Orientalism. Bibesco's standpoint is "Oriental" when Romanian realities are under consideration, but "Occidental" when Persian realities are filtered through the French model. The separation between the two Orients—Persian and Romanian—triggers an examination of the voice of the young author that tells her first story. It also establishes a stage for the eccentricity of an "Oriental" princess in Paris, as Bibesco represents it herself in writing. Behind the Eight Paradises' "fabulous Orient," one can detect the influence of the French writers' exoticism but also the traces of repression of a Romanian reality that the author wants to escape from.
Key words Poetical travelogue; Francophone zone; French cultural model; cultural commuting; reading double

This project emerges from a suggestion I made at the conclusion of my book on Anna de Noailles and hercultural family.[2] There I argue about the need of a history of Francophone Romanian literature that would place it alongside other Francophone and European literary traditions. It is in this spirit that I examine the work of Marthe Bibesco (1885 – 1973), who like Anna de Noailles, her cousin by marriage, belongs to a group of authors who contributed to the construction of a francophone zone between Paris and Bucharest. Despite their similarities, which are due above all to their familial background that designates them as authors of Romanian origin and French extraction, the two writers followed fundamentally different creative tracks. While Anna de Noailles, born on the banks of the Seine, sets out to ignore her paternal Romanian heritage, Marthe Bibesco lived and wrote implicitly through a dual allegiance: to Romania, her country of birth, and to France, her adopted country.

Marthe Bibesco's spiritual back-and-forth between these two countries constitutes her work's creative motor and one of the objectives of this article. My investigation is both cultural and literary. As I pursue a case of francophone literature emerged from a tradition of Romanian francophilia, I will also revisit and examine the specificity of a work that is neither French nor Romanian, but complex hybrid.

The foundation of Bibesco's work consists of a blend of antagonistic tensions; while remaining faithful to the country of her birth, she writes uniquely in French and wants to become a French writer. In the first decades of the 20th century, the success of her formula seems certain: by maintaining visibility within the salons and the circles of power in cosmopolitan Europe, Bibesco also gets remarkable attention among French literary circles with her first book on Persian travels (*Les Huit Paradis*)[3], awarded by the French Academy and praised by an "admiration club" composed of men of letters such as Barrès, Montesquiou and Proust. Nevertheless, today, the French literary institution has almost forgotten her, and her works have been relegated to the "Old Europe" corner of the library. Quite the opposite, in Romania, the public has just begun to gradually discover her, thanks to recent translations of her work.

This investigation will approach Bibesco's work from a francophone perspective in order to better understand her "double-writing", her permanent negotiation between a set of dualities (between Paris and Bucharest, between new and old, between the aristocratic and the plebeian) that also speak for the impossibility of establishing herself in one place or the other. Despite its uncertainties, Bibesco's existential and literary "in-between", site of my analysis, opens up a rich space of connections and communication.

In what follows I examine and define Bibesco's Frenchness as filtered through multiple variants of "Orientalism" that give us access to understanding her multiple identities as a francophone Romanian writer. Europeanism and Orientalism: A cross-reading of her travel toPersia (*Les Huit paradis*, 1908) offers an insight into the heterogeneity of her double "Orientalism". Bibesco's standpoint is part of Eastern European Orientalism when Romanian realities are considered, but and Western European Orientalism when she filters Persian realities through a French model. The distinction between Orients—Persian, French and Romanian—decides the zigzags of the story-telling. It also establishes a stage for the eccentricity of Bibesco's representation of herself as "an Oriental princess in Paris."

When one asks about the specificity of the "Orient" for an author born in Romania who writes in French and commutes, for a good part of her life, between the two countries, there is always a double answer: On the one hand, Romania is considered "Oriental" by the Western European countries due to its geographical position in what was then called "Oriental Europe" and to its historical status (Romania was part of the Ottoman Empire until 1877). On the other hand, the Romanian cultural elite systematically denied any connection with the Orient, turned completely toward the West and France. In this context, Marthe Bibesco' status was at the same time Oriental and Orientalist since, as an enthusiastic francophile, she embraces the French cultural model and its discourse.[4]There is in *Les Huit Paradis* [The Eight Paradises], Bibesco's travelogue to Persia that I will consider here, the discourse of a Romanian

aristocrat profoundly francophile who closely adopts the French writers' orientalist point of view—one more proof of the Orientalism's heterogeneity that asks, each time for a specific interpretation.

In 1905, Marthe Bibesco accompanies her husband, prince Georges Bibesco, toPersia, who was sent by King Carol I on a diplomatic mission to the Shah. She keeps a journal of the trip that becomes the point of departure for the travelogue. They traveled by car, a most unusual venture for the time, with a small group of people including Claude Anet, a journalist at *Le Temps*. He published his travel impressions in 1906, *Les Roses d'Ispahan. Voyage en Perse en automobile* [The Roses of Ispahan. Travel to Persia by car]. In 1908, Marthe Bibesco publishes her own variant of this trip, *Les Huit Paradis. Perse*, *Asie mineure*, *Constantinople* at the Hachette Publishing House. The book is rewarded with the "prix de l'Académie". Robert de Montesquiou, well known for his discriminating literary taste, writes a laudatory article about it in *Le Figaro*. He speaks about a "fort joli livre" ("a beautiful book") written by a princess that he noticed at a ball, dressed " … d'une robe de satin rose, du rose d'une rose dont seule, elle pourrait nous dire le nom …" [… in a pink satin dress, the color of a flower which only she could tell the name …] (Bibesco 102). Marcel Proust, wanting to write the author directly, wrote a burlesque epistle asking her cousin Emmanuel Bibesco, for her Romanian address:

> Faites à savoir àla Princesse
> Qu'elle est belle et géniale (sic)
> De cela je n'ai de cesse
> Mais où l'écrire, c'est le hic. [5]

[Do tell the Princess /That she is beautiful and a genius/ I'm sure of this/But where to write, that is the question…].

Proust's letter surprised the author with its excessive praises and critical observations. The superlative words could find their place in the album of a literary amateur. She is, as Proust says, the author"… d'une suite ininterrompue d'aquarelles admirables et limpides et d'une Œuvre d'art nouvelle qui atteint la perfection" [… of a suite of admirable watercolors and of a new work of art that reaches perfection]. And further: " Vous êtes un écrivain parfait, princesse, et ce n'est pas peu dire quand comme vous on entend par écrivain tant d'artistes unis, un écrivain, un parfumeur, un décorateur, un musicien, un sculpteur, un poète. "[6] [You are a perfect writer, Princess, and it's not too little to say that one understands that a writer like you is actually many artists united: a writer, a perfumer, a decorator, a musician, a sculptor, a poet]. However, in the same letter, Proust also carried out pertinent critical observations in addition to the type of flattery used with his friends. He warns her of the danger of pastiche, by being too much influenced by other writers. It is an overt allusion to Anna de Noailles' work, with which Proust compares *Les Huit Paradis*. His view coincides with the salons' opinion circulating at the time that Bibesco's book was "de l'Anna de Noailles en prose" [Simply, Anna de Noailles in prose]. Twenty years later, Marthe Bibesco reflects on the time of her first publication, and

on the number of enemies that she made for herself because of the praises brought "à-la-dame-à - la-robe-fleurie-auteur-d'un-joli-livre" [to the ···lady-in- a- flowery-dress-author-of-a-beautiful-book].[7]

The travelogue[8] starts the day of their arrival in Persia, on May 8, date inscribed on the first page of the book. The chronological indications—days, months, and time of the day—are always present, announcing a real travel log of the journey and its close resemblance to a diary. Yet, the reader's expectations are quickly deceived: if the book is triggered by real facts, the bulk of the story shows no precise information about the itinerary, the travel companions, or the adventures they encounter. For any specific details about the trip, the reader would have to go to Claude Anet's book.[9] There we learn about the identity of the travelers, the itinerary, and the incidents of this dangerous trip. After all, the 1906 expedition by car that starts in Bucharest, Romania, cross Russia and the Caucasus on their way to Persia could be equated to a Jules Verne adventure novel. One learns about the dangers of crossing Russia on the treshhold of Revolution, the meeting with Maxim Gorki, the political turmoils in the Caucaus, as well as the numerous cars' breakdowns.

In the preface, Anet states the intention of the book: "Je voudrais animer les ruines, les paysages, les hommes, et montrer, au milieu d'eux, les voyageurs que nous avons été." [I would like to give life to the ruins, the landscapes, the people, and show, among them, the travelers that we were]. A multitude of photographs adds visual interest to Anet's travelogue, thus satisfying the readers' need for strong sensations and curiosities. The book finishes with a few pages entitled "Comment aller en automobile à Ispahan" [How to go by car to Ispahan], a guide to future travelers on the same route. After six weeks of travel and many adventures, the expedition, as Anet tells it, arrives in Persia, on May 8th, which is the first day in Bibesco's book, who decides to leave out the first part of the travel. Travel does not seem to be the author's main interest or the need to feed the readers' curiosity for this extraordinary trip. As the book enfolds one discovers a poetical meditation on another culture that the author tries to approach through literature, music and philosophy.

Certainly, *Les Huits Paradis* belongs to the travel literature genre narrated by a first person subjective voice, the adventures of a voyage presented as real. But in this specific case, M. Bibesco—author, narrator, and heroine—deviates the course of the story from a realistic travel narrative to a distant poetic land. In the *Foreword* to the book, the author explains the origin of the title, based on the Islamic belief in the Seven Hell and Eight Paradises, that confirms that "God's mercy surpasses his justice." The words in epigraph by Renan and a quotation from a Persian philosopher indicate that intertextuality is the leading principle of this travel narration. The book is indeed scattered with quotations taken from "The Song of Songs", the *Koran*, Racine's tragedies, Flaubert's stories as well as from numerous Persian philosophers and authors. One could also add songs, poems, stories and numerous incursions in the Persian culture and civilization—an array of evidence that speaks for the minute documentation of a woman traveler who wants to overcome the condition of a lady tourist.

The traveler's real encounters become pretexts for digressions on literature, history or philosophy. Arriving in Ispahan and walking through the maze of the city's streets, in front of a pottery shop she tells the story of*Rubbayat* by Omar Khayyam, a meditation that ends with a homage to the nine hundred years ago poet and philosopher.[10] Impressed by the music that she hears from a neighborly garden, she is able to name all the mono-chord instruments which she compares to those of the Greek tradition and French poetry: "They sing in the minor key, as Verlaine would have liked it."[11] The French writers (mostly Racine, but also Hugo and Flaubert) are omnipresent (in the epigraphs and in the text) always in dialogue with the Persian culture. In an imaginary discussion with the old Khayyam, she tells him about Ronsard, the poet of the roses—"I want to teach you the name of Pierre Ronsard who, in the Occident, liked roses."[12]

Aware that her travelogue is framed by the French tradition, the author resorts sometimes to self-derision: "One would like to salute them all: heads (people) with turbans from M. Jourdain's feast, Orientals coming from the old engravings and Persians invented by Montesquieu to mock theParisians."[13] The irony, coming for a fervent francophile allows to wonder if the author sees the world uniquely through French lenses.

An answer could be found by following the ambiguity of the line—always present—between the Occident and the Orient.

The traveler who comes to Persia with great knowledge of the*One Thousand and one Nights* confesses that she heard those stories in her childhood back in Bucharest: "Et les noms magiques de Damas et de Bagdhad traversaient ces récits, oppressant de désirs nos cœurs d'enfants prédestinés aux voyages"[14] [The magic names of Damascus and Bagdhad, crossing all those stories, filled our young hearts, predestined to travel, with desire]. Her visit to Persia brings back the Orient of her Romanian childhood that she presents in a French cultural mould. Her atemporal attitude finds the perfect expression in the Persian travelogue with its incursions in the past, in the Persian garden that are also "les verts paradis des amours enfantines" as Baudelaire puts it ("Moesta et Errabunda").

The contact with the new country takes place through the senses. This is how the author describes her first impression of the new continent: "J'ai dit d'abord, voyant l'Asie: comme elle est verte et parfumée!" [When I first saw Asia I said to myself: How green and perfumed it is]. Even the air is different, heavy, filled with the aroma of orange trees where one can barely catch a glimpse of the shadow of caravans and camels in the sunset.[15] But Bibesco's big discovery is the Persian garden: in each city, at every stop, she looks for the garden that fills her dreams. The garden becomes the vehicle of her poetical dreaming. And it is in Ispahan, the city of roses that the author becomes a poet. From the roses of her room to the roses of the two gardens that surround her house, among the enamel basins and water fountains, the woman traveler compares the many real tableaus with Saadi's "flowery Eden."[16]

However, turned exclusively toward the past, her impressions happen mostly in the library. Looking at images from an old manuscript of "Goulistan" by Saâdi, she describes at length everyday scenes that she prefers to the present ones: "Mais pour

retrouver le décor d'une idylle persane, je n'ai qu'à repousser les rideaux deces fenêtres"[17] [In order to find the decor of a Persian romance, all I have to do is to push back the curtains of those windows].

Interested in images rather than people and by lansdscape she peints what Proust her*literary watercolors*. He used these words of appreciation also for Anna de Noailles' poetry, in his 1907 article on *Les Eblouissements* in which, enthused by the impressionistic brush of her poems, he compares them with some old Persian miniatures. Proust's poetic sensibility contrasts Bibesco's prose and Noailles' poetry and allows for a free association between "l'aquarelle encadrée de fleurs" (Proust 535) [the watercolors framed with flowers], the vivid colors and the exaltation of creation—leitmotifs for both writers. Among the watercolors, Proust finds in the work of these two authors an imaginary Orient with its artificial paradises that speak through the senses (Noailles 3 – 4).[18] And even if M. Bibesco did visit Ispahan and A. de Noailles saw it only from her window, it is the same Orient that they represent, the same one imagined by the French during their "travels" at the theater, exhibitions or Parisian world fairs.

In this respect, Marthe Bibesco's vision ofPersia is also *Franco-française*, leaving the Other always on the opposite side of the fence… The author responds to the call of a "fabulous Orient" as she calls it, which "illuminates the imagination"[19] and she represents it in her book richly ornated poetical images.

Leaving aside the reality—political or social—she let herself immersed in the daydreaming of the Other, grafted on the always-present opposition between Orient and Occident. Confronted with a different set of practices and customs, her perspective, saturated with occidental culture, exploits the exotic vein, similar to French writers use of it during the 19th century. This is, for instance, how she considers the Persian women, questioning their freedom and the rigid laws that imprison them. She thinks of their lives — "aux chambres basses des harems, dans les jardinsmurés"[20] [in the narrow rooms of the harem, in the fenced gardens] and feel sorry for their veiled faces, for their bodies dressed in their "black gloomy dresses" that makes one feel in a cemetery.[21] She would like to know their secrets but she acknowledges the impossibility of any dialogue: "Est-il possible de concevoir une différence aussi profonde entre leur humanité et la nôtre."[22] [Is it possible to conceive a more striking difference between their humanity and ours?]. She generalizes with the help of cultural stereotypes: "Les Persanes ont mille raison d'être heureuses. Elles sont enfantines et leur vie se passe à jouer dans les jardins…"[23] [The Persian women have thousand reasons to be happy. They are childish and pass their lives playing in their gardens…]. Observations that seem to fit characters coming from old poems or images taken from Goulistan's manuscript, more than real women that in fact she didn't have the opportunity to meet. All throughout the travelogue, one has the impressian that the author is bent over the books, images and manuscripts. The result is a view from a distance: "Vue de très loin, de très haut, la ville semble un grand champ bossué de tombes"[24] [Seen from afar, and from on high, the city looks like a big field blistered with tombs].

The distance, impossible to overcome, is defined not only in terms of space.

Her univocal perception betrays an absence—that of her Romanian voice. While born in a country labeled "oriental" byWestern Europe, the author reacts to the visited country like a French traveler. Pierre Loti appears to be the model. When Maurice Barrès advices her to write her travel notes, she asks: "Comme écrire sur la Perse après Loti?"[25] [How could one write about Persia after Loti?]. In Loti's footsteps, Persia becomes exotic, sensual, veiled, mysterious and atemporal. Outside of her reality, Bibesco finds herself in a land of miniatures, of poets and philosophers who sing love, women and a flowery paradise.

But these poetical watercolors hide a repression, that will surge to the surface later in her other works. The land of miniatures is also a flight from another reality that she wants to escape from. It is the patriarchalRomania to which she belongs where the laws toward women are similar to those she condemns in Persia. Marthe knows them well, herself a victim in her own marriage, in which the husband behaved openly as an oriental despot. Prisoner of laws and conventions of her country of birth, elle tries to find her freedom and her voice in Paris, the country where she starts writing.

Later, she takes on her double condition in her writing, decided to mark her own territory in a cultural field that is both Romanian and French. And while she writes fromParis, she imagines in her work "la patrie étendue" [the extended country] as she calls it, this intermediate space between Occident and Orient that she appropriates. The assessment of Bibesco's work changes drastically when one places it in the context of the francophone zone, a larger cultural space between East and West. From this space, at the same time close and distant vis-à-vis Paris and the East, one can read her work through lenses of both Frenchness and orientalism, and grasp the richness of her univers. Bibesco's "oriental voyages" should be examined in contrasting dialogue between her travel to Persia and her foray into the life of Romanian peasants (*Isvor*, *pays des saules*, 1928), ar well as her autobiographical pages of *La Nymphe Europe* (*Mes vies antérieures*, 1960; *Où tombe la foudre*, 1972). in order to ponder the true spiritual dimensions of her "extended country."

Reading double is in fact a requisite for studying a literature born in the process of cultural commuting in thefrancophone zone (Verona 115 – 26), a *modus operandi* that brings to light a dynamic family of francophone writers who, like Marthe Bibesco, negociate their literary status between the appeal and impositions of the French cultural model and that of their country of origin.

Notes

1. Marthe Bibesco (1886, Bucharest – 1973, Paris). Born Lahovary; her father, Ioan N. Lahovary was Romanian Ambassador to France (1893 – 95), Foreign Minister (1899 – 1900; 1907) among other high level appointments. In 1902 Marthe marries prince Georges Bibesco, son of Georges Bibesco and of Valentine de Caraman-Chimey. Her cousins Emmanuel and Antoine Bibesco introduce her to Proust. In 1905 she travels to Persia, topic of her first book, *Les Huit Paradis* [The Eight Paradises] published in 1908. After this date, she travels regularly between Paris and Bucharest until 1945, when the communist regime forbids her to enter Romania. She wrote a vast work, written in French. In 1955 she is elected member of the Belgian Académie Royale de langues et de

littératures françaises.

2. *Parcours francophones: Anna de Noailles et sa famille culturelle*, Paris, Honoré Champion, 2011.

3. The first book refers to*Les Huit Paradis*(Paris: Hachette, 1908).

4. As it was first defined by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, New York, Vintage, 1979 and modified later by cultural critics and historians who applied Said's theories to specific cases. See for instance Maria Todorova and her theory of Balkanism in *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford University Press, 1997.

5 – 7. *Au bal avec Marcel Proust*, 52 – 3, 56 – 7, 106.

8. A rereading of this text today can be made only in the first editions on 1908 since there is no other reprint of that book, a clear signal about the reception of the author's first book.

9. *Les Roses d'Ispahan La Perse en automobile à travers la Russie et le Caucause*, Paris, Librairie Félix Juven, 1906. Anet's book is dedicated to the two women who took part of the expedition, Princess Georges-Valentin Bibesco and Madame Michel Charles Fhérékyde.

10 – 17. *Les Huit Paradis*, op. cit., 179 – 80, 46 – 7, 182, 124, 56 – 7, 5 – 6, 101 – 6, 131.

18. In the Preface that Anna de Noailles wrote to the translation of *Goulistan ou le jardin des roses*, she lingers over the musicality of the word Ispahan, Saâdi, *Gulistan ou Jardin des roses*, *F. Toussain trad.*, Paris, Fayard, 1913, 3 – 4.

19 – 24. *Les Huit Paradis*, *op. cit.*, 94, 20, 151, 21, 154, 167.

25. *Au bal avec Marcel Proust*, *op. cit.*, 51.

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The Picturesque Romania: An Exercise of Re-territorialization and Symbolic Translocation

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Abstract Romania, a young state at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century had to find for itself a convenient position on the European map. It was not a European power center, but a periphery that fought for being recognized. This periphery developed a strategy of seducing the center, based on emphasizing the picturesque, via which an area full of differences was poetically represented as pleasant, interesting and relaxing. The picturesque diminished the differences that the eye of the foreign traveler discovered in both the human and natural landscapes: the differences became agreeable, without needing to deny or conceal them. Integration into another world could thus be made without giving up any particularities, which, nevertheless, had to become part of the communication, in order to create a discourse that would make them known and accepted. The present article is dedicated to the transformation of a cultural concept (the picturesque) in a cultural, economic and political advertising strategy of the country and its provinces, in an age in which communication specialists or branding manuals were totally unknown.
Key words picturesque; exotic; border identity; Romanian culture; nation and country branding

The progressive enlargement of the European Union has up to now entailed a steady effort made by the member states in view of reterritorialization and symbolic translocation. The participation in the construction of the E. U. always meant a rescaling of the geopolitical space, depending on the rights and duties that have kept reshaping its borders. The articles referring to the free circulation within the E. U. have proved to modify the concrete daily exercise of cultural exchanges over the borders, on the one hand, and, on the other, the collective perception of each single state's borders and of theUnion's borders. The interest for what remains on the outside of such a construction at a certain point is vital, and the phenomena of partition, disruption and/or cooperation always say something essential about the internal architecture of this construction.

This paper explores the ways in which Romanian culture builds up a border identity before but also afterRomania's accession to the European Union. This border identity stands for something other than a peripheral identity which only has to ensure security. The public discourse in Romania tries to find arguments for a comfortable

and speculative positioning in its own condition; thus, the border identity is always attributed mediation assignments and offers—without making any difference—resistance towards the separation, autarchy and homogenization phenomena. For a culture building its border identity, taking responsibility for the way it plans the relationships with its neighbors is vital. How does the periphery imagine the outside world, what are the benefits for its own economy, but also for the whole economy of the world it is part of? To ask such a question means to surpass the traditional articulation of the terms of center and periphery so as to shift the attention upon the relation between the periphery and the outside world, which the periphery necessarily is interested in and which, at some point, may become "central". Such exercises, by which one can imagine the vicinity relations symbolically shift the borders between cultures, facilitate the exchanges and provide suggestions for subsequent reterritorializations.

But where doesRomania stand in relation to Europe? For more than one century, Romania stands at the Eastern confinium of the European territory, at its Eastern and South-Eastern border. The analysis of the symbolic structures that have oriented the Romanian territories towards Europe once again enhances the relative character of placing any territory on a map, as the result of *choice*. Neither the cardinal points, nor the affiliation of the territories to a direction or another are certain within an inhabited geography. Edward W. Said [1] sustained that, in order to escape the terrors of a map, we must seriously consider Giambattista Vico's most important observation, namely that people build their own history, that what they can know is what they have done before, and to apply it to the field of geography. Both the geographic and the cultural entities—not to mention the historical ones—such as places, regions, geographic areas such as the Orient and the Occident, are man's creation. Following this strain of thought, the Romanian territories are, as regarded by the foreign travelers of the Western administration, either Oriental, or Occidental, either both Oriental and Occidental or neither Occidental nor quite Oriental. The territory called the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic space dilutes the oppositions, refuses a dichotomist way of thinking and risks dialectic on its own. The Romanian definition of the space inhabited by Romanians wants to escape the logic of the opposition Orient-Occident. It uses other two substitutive terms in order to represent the idea of belonging and, respectively, being different: the terminological pair *picturesque-exotic*. But how should we understand these terms within the Romanian identity discourse? Both terms recognize the difference between the Romanian (South-East-European) and the European (Central and Western European) identity. Nevertheless, *picturesque* seems the most convenient term, while *exotic* does not simply fit. There is, evidently, a positive component of the term "exotic". It can contain a little admiration, praises for the unknown, as Tzvetan Todorov would say. Understanding Romania as an "exotic" country might be a dangerous approach: it often gave birth to a "polar exotic" that has ostracized and isolated this world. In this latter case, the diversity, the difference are not seen as positive energies, as elements stimulating contacts of confrontations, but inducing fear, the need to retreat, to flee. One could also say that this exotic can be understood as the most brutal, uncontrolled and disorienting form of the picturesque, as an *inverted* picturesque. Erich Auerbach readily proclaimed in 1946 the death of exotism

not only in Europe after Mérimée, for whom the Spanish or the Corsicans still appeared exotic, but rather throughout the entire world, given Pearl Buck's writings.[2]

The first Romanian version of interpretation of the geographic situation of the Romanians belongs to the writer Alexandru Vlahuţă (1858 – 1919). Vlahuţă is the author of the country*brand* for the first half of the 20th century (for a critical consideration of the term see Coşovei 409)[3] with his travel memoirs called România *pitorească* [*Picturesque Romania*] (1901) (Coşovei 409). Except for the title, the term "picturesque" does not show up anywhere else during the text. It is still void of meaning, just about to be put to work in order for it to generate meanings and, most importantly, consensus. It is an imported term (a neologism) that still needs to be "translated" into Romanian. It is not an accident that Vlahuţă asked a well-travelled foreigner to admire his motherland:

> "— God, your country is beautiful... Your land is just like a nurturing mother: it gives you, almost for free — which is not necessarily a good thing — it gives you the tastiest fruits, the most sought-after grains in Europe and wines that we, in Paris, consider to be the stuff dreams are made of. (…) Say, don't you think your country — which I reckon you must love so much — inspire you to dream the dreams of one thousand and one nights? Anyhow, you must agree that you are a fortunate people" (Vlahuţă 141).

Picturesque is a word like a piece of luggage, filled with meanings but, at the same time, empty, available to take the most diverse forms and which we shall meet more and more often in different writings. It seems that, without needing to provide any elaborate explanations, those who use this word agree upon its meanings, by using it as a token of abstract value, still valid, yet without an adequate coverage. By retracing the history of this term, we still cannot get rid of its ambiguities, even more so since the different aesthetics denounce it for contrary reason. The picturesque is not pictorial, as the art historians say, who attach it far too easily to the more popular aesthetics of photography, postcards, illustrated geographic magazines or travel guides. The arts of the 20th century, the photography and the documentary accuse the term of having an author's aesthetics, of being subjective, of lacking objectivation, the illusionist moment, which alters the quality of the perception: the picturesque paints (i.e. "counterfeits") reality, it does not document it. The picturesque is a passage concept, very adaptable and which escapes the "canonical" canons. It needs to be looked for in other places than within the traditional aesthetics: it mixes mediums (painting and poetry, photography, film, architecture and urbanism, etc.), movements (baroque-romanticism), cultures (elitist-populist). It cannot be detached from the new habitudes of life: travel, tourism and the tendency of art to become the design of existence (Barthes 121).[4] It is the motor of the new advertising industry. The art to make anything seem extremely agreeable, yet not depicting the value of usage, sells everything, including the new states appearing on the European map during the 19th century. Nonetheless, we are interested in understanding what were the reasons and the results of adopting the term "picturesque" by the strategists of promoting

the Romanian territories inside, but mainly outside the country.

"Picturesque" is a strategic term, depicting the convenient position of Romania within Europe's political landscape. The picturesque is the definition of the line where the difference starts that can be overtaken: the world's horizon becomes broader, *noster mundus* expands by including an acceptable, likeable difference. Vlahuţă's "Picturesque Romania" corrects the exotic perspective people have with respect to this country, which pushes it far away and makes it not understandable to the Europeans. [5] Vlahuţă does not dismiss right away that exotic of the space—if you come to think of it, the world depicted by him by means of an intermediary is one of a paradisiacal opulence—yet he gradually adds a layer of exotic, hence foreshadowing a better future of prosperity and civilization, in which human and natural resources are well exploited. The picturesque discovers the beauty of the utilitarian. The translation of the exotic projection from the axis of space to the one of time is essential to the picturesque project. This operation corrects the differences between the East and the West, which can easily be observed by the travelers who are more empathic to the East. Obviously, there are some differences, yet they are not insurmountable, on the contrary, they are about to disappear. The picturesque represents the *brand* of a country with *potential*, of a developing country that has hopes and a future. Both the foreigners and the local people are flattered to assist to the birth of a new world. Another important feature of the picturesque can already be guessed: through this process of retracing the map, by means of which distances become shorter and shorter, the past has been neutralized. The picturesque does not remember anything. This new geography fights with history for getting into first place. The past does not guarantee the future: this is Vlahuţă's great discovery. We cannot take pride permanently in our glorious past, if a respectable present structure is absent. The past is treacherous and only complicates things. It will later also become picturesque and settle in a comfortable choreography, void of any conflict. The past of the changes, of the reconciliations, of the wise attitudes towards history and the neighbors shall be privileged.

The "picturesque Romania" does not only have enthusiastic promoters, but also opponents. It is no coincidence that the historian Nicolae Iorga numbers among the latter. What is not convenient for Iorga is the reduction of history, the decorative smoothing of the past. The historian's reaction was caused by the "commercialization" of Spain as a result of the implementation of the concept of *picturesque* that evidently helped Spain to fit successfully into Europe. Iorga asked the reader not to confuse Spain with the opera scenery of *Carmen*, "as nobody should confuse the real Romania with the mythic, idealized Romania based on the legend of the Curtea de Arge Monastery, whose image is decorated with needless luxury and accessories like a theatrical scenery. Romania is picturesque indeed, but no nation would agree only to be considered this" (Iorga 95). [6] Furthermore, we find ourselves in a state of elation in which we no longer need to have a promotional strategy for the whole territory. This concept of *picturesque* shall apply from now on to the predominating outlying areas, the peripheral provinces, which are insufficiently known but supposed to be regarded as likeable. When the literary critic Vladmimir Streinu claimed the necessity of devel-

oping a new understanding of the concept of "picturesque Romania", he thought of the way this concept had spread to the outlying provinces. After 1918, when the Old Romanian Kingdom overtook the new provinces of Bessarabia, Transylvania and Bukovina, the *picturesque* elements of Romania were sought "along the border" (Simionescu 1939, vol. 2), i. e. in the new provinces and in their bordering areas. This happened as a result of the progressive "normalization" of the national territory, whose image did not need a sustained, special promotional strategy—least of all for the natives. Therefore, the *picturesque* element was able to develop around the border areas for the following two reasons: first, because the outlying areas were mostly unknown (we refer to the border areas of the Old Romanian Kingdom) and, second, because the distances had become shorter, while the pleasures of diversity still had to be sought further away (yet not too far away, otherwise they would get uncomfortable). The locals did not feel anymore that the center was as picturesque as the (most amiable) foreigners considered it, yet with a healthy dose of *wishful* thinking, it remained European and modern, while maintaining a homogenous relation with the Western centers of decision, action and work. Anything that did not find its place in this ordered, efficient and perseverant world, which Romania took more and more part in, withdrew to the periphery of time and daily space.

On the other hand, Romania tried to push the border in another direction, in order to move it just a little bit further, yet not settle on the other side of the border, and to export this perspective, which showed all their differences, to the South, on the other side of the Danube and into the East, on the other sides of the rivers Pruth and Dnister. The picturesque in the Romanian culture is to be understood as an answer to the repeated social and historical exclusions, as well as their positivation (Muthu 66, 93). The interest for the picturesque South, for instance, made the others, as well as the Romanians themselves, think that they were "people of the North", as Mihail Sadoveanu called them in his notes about the journey to Bazargic (Dobrich), who brought their hats cars to a narrow-minded, monotonous local society (2). Finally, they are the "Europeans" who use the South of the Danube as an access point to the Balkans and to Asia, as the novelist Mihail Sebastian says while imagining the collision of these two worlds, which are neighboring and separated at the same time.

> In this dreamy world that rocks itself to sleep by singing old Turkish songs that are still sung today without having lost any of their sadness, in this run-down yet self-content Orient, the intrusion of*Europeans* must have seemed extremely loud. (Sebastian 648)

Certain characteristics of the picturesque concept are needed for this very important mission of reevaluation of the periphery. The picturesque canonizes non-classical characteristics, such as the baroque from which it descends, which have been reconfirmed by Romanticism. One of the most important characteristics is diversity of disorder. A picturesque landscape is not straight-forward, it lies in a graceful disarray. Moreover, the human landscape is not pure either, but mixes ages, status and differ-

ent ethnic groups in order to form a polite *tableaux vivant*. The picturesque beauty is hybrid, paradoxical, suggestive, weird, difficult and rare. It takes the shape of a mosaic, a kaleidoscope, a panorama or a fan. It is detached and, in limits, critical, tolerant and relaxed. When the memorialist Constantin Stere spoke of a "very picturesque incident" taking place in the Romanian Parliament, he referred to an unusual event, an unexpected occurrence, which resulted from the violation of the common law during a moment of protocol suspension, of rules interruption. The picturesque plays with the fall of the idea, it allows temptation to creep in, yet only during this period of suspension. The peripheries embraced it, because it allowed them to be different, by "humanly" criticizing the center. In Stere's opinion, Vienna is the one that is picturesque, since its Eastern suburbs fall on "the Asian border" (86). Stere likes the organic mixture of civilizations, which is considered to be "spontaneous" and "natural", but also the landscapes, intentionally recreational in order for the inhabitants of Vienna to take their vacation in or around the city. This is why Vienna is bright, comfortable and full of surprises (94 – 95), whereas Berlin seems military and grumpy. The crowds of wild ducks on the Spree river do not make it more attractive. Ultimately, Paris is not picturesque but pictorial:

> Every street portrays a different scenery, has its own shape, while every crossroad has an artistic concept and every palace and almost every old house show their special individuality, – while still coexisting in harmony like in the paintings of famous painters. (Stere 138)

Romania's capital city cannot compete with Paris, although it likes being called "Little Paris". Bucharest's best-kept secret and unfulfilled dream is to live comfortably like in Vienna—"You should go to Bucharest/Where living's good, to have a rest", says a Romanian children's folk song. Therefore, according to the Romanian perspective, Central Europe up to Vienna is picturesque (and hereby, very familiar).

The picturesqueis a *mixed fiction*, a hybrid of different perceptions and projections that discover and build a whole new world. The differences between the worlds is still visible, yet it has become accessible, communicative, without turning fragile or fatally isolated. The picturesque is another way to describe an unknown, intelligible and almost pleasant difference, as well as to describe a *small difference*, as opposed to the exotic. The picturesque Romania is against the exoticization and ostracization of South-Eastern Europe, and therefore its isolation. It chooses an open kind of geographic understanding. Although the term "picturesque" is considered to be old-fashioned and dated and cannot be used nowadays as an advertising slogan, it still works in every strategy aiming at promoting Romania in its neighborhood, as well as in the entire world.

Notes

1. See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
2. See Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* (*Bern*:

Francke. 1946).

3. Unfortunately, the second half of the 20th century abandons this successful export image of Romania. It did not fit the country's promotion ambitions that aspired to other dimensions, less modest, an expression of a ridiculous and damaging megalomania in a small, developing country, which was about to fight off great deficits: "Our road stretches from the unknown picturesque to the monumentality, to greatness and brilliance" (Coşovei 1978, 409). By giving up the picturesque, the self-image of the Romanians starts to become entirely different from the perspective shared by the others. The picturesque Romania had managed to create a balance between the two, to bring them to a common denominator.

4. The picturesque is, according to Roland Barthes, one of "the myths of everyday life"; modern tourist guides only know this landscape with a picturesque light thrown on it (Barthes 1957, 121). The picturesque landscape appears to allow for an ethics of effort and solitude in modern man's economy, through which proximity to places and people becomes both adventurous and agreeable. If picturesque geography requires a certain amount of effort made for one to conquer it, the picturesque landscape of the human usually compensates for that through agreeableness. To the monstrosities of the mountains, of the torrent and the dunes thus corresponds to a graceful novelistic décor made up of the inhabitants of the venue.

5. This is not the place to comment upon the contemporary attempts to create a country brand (as if none had existed until now). Nevertheless, we must note that three of the current formulas, "the eternal and fascinating Romania", "Romania, always surprising" and "fabulospirit" not only totally ignore the country advertising formula of the first half of the 20th century, which is still active on an imaginary level, but also ignore the incredibly important principle that also inspired Vlahuţă: making the difference between a Romania that lies in the East and is influenced by the Balkans, and the one that lacks elements of modernity as compared to the sociable Central and Western Europe. The first formula steals something from the brand of the "eternal" city of Rome, and has the special quality to remind us of the slogan "Romania (or: the Balkans, the East, the Orient), the eternal problem". Moreover, the fascination can also be aroused by ugly things, which are only attractive due to their fatidic, perverted features. Surprises can also be unpleasant (this is why, the Estonian brand clarifies: "Estonia. Positively surprising"). Something that always surprised is not always exciting, but also tiring. The third formula also has its inconveniences, one of them being that the grammatical hybrid, by being detached from the promoted object, aimlessly floats in search of an adequate product (who has the "fabulospirit"? The urban equipment provided by Jack Wolfskin and inspired by extreme sports, or Romania?). This formula transgressed by means of excesses towards the tradition unveiled by Vlahuţă; it may very well be translated by "shockingly picturesque"—the fabulous excessively expands the surprise element and pushes the promoted territory towards the limits of the exotic. The latest country brand, Romania as the Carpathian Garden: this is something well preserved and with relaxing qualities. We hereby return to the picturesque!

6. *Picturesqueness* is an idea against which Iorga fought also in direct relation to Romania. Actually Iorga sustains the concept of picturesque in his magazine "Sămănătorul" [The Sower]. The picturesque Romania is a rural Romania, a social fringe. More radically than Iorga, Constantin Stere repudiates the *picturesque* as being an arrangement with our past, promoting conservative values and the nostalgia for customs and traditions which survived with its help. In the East, Stere is a modernist without compromises. Whereas Stere admires the oriental *picturesqueness* in Vienna, he does not support the picturesque of Iassy. He is in favor of the city's modernization: "The old-fashioned, Turkish houses with their picturesque arches were teared down in order to rennovate the city (…) A splendid row of lime-trees grew at the periphery, hiding a row of new villas." (Stere 1935, vol. 7, 359).

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Post-1989 Romanian Literature and the Reframing of Cultural Identity

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Abstract The following article considers the reframing of cultural identity in post-1989 Romanian literature, in response to the growing pressures of globalization. Based on a careful analysis of a range of recent literary examples, the author argues that the reflection of cultural identity in Romanian literature has often been balanced, however precariously, between global and local interests. At its best, post-1989 literature emphasizes simultaneously transnational/intercultural aspirations and local specificity.
Key words cultural identity; globalization localism; regionalism; multicultural literature

Local, Regional, and Global Commitments in Recent Romanian Literary Culture

Any discussion of cultural identity is fraught with complexities, especially when identity is located in the uncertain space among the local, national, transnational, and the global. After the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, the traditional mapping of Europe into Eastern and Western spheres of influence was replaced with a contradictory mix of global and local delineations. In parts of the former Soviet block (especially in the Baltic and Balkan areas) a new ethnic separatism emerged in direct reaction not only to the earlier Soviet domination but also to the new trend of "globalization" that seemed to reinforce the "international division of labor and appropriation . . . benefiting First World countries at the expense of Third World" (Ebert 286) and, we should add, Second World post-communist societies. The lingering tensions between global interdependency and ethnocentric separatism, First World centers and Third World peripheries indicate an unresolved tension at the level of the ideological frames we use to relate to each other, with the policies of "reethnification" often vying with economic globalization.

As cultural theorists are quick to point out, neither an assimilative notion of globalism that recognizes the "unqualified multiplicity of cultures without positing ways for them to interact meaningfully" (Berry and Epstein 97), nor a defensive localism that unconditionally promotes one's own ethnicity or origins can ensure "a genuinely global consciousness" (Pratt 62). In fact, the "gestures of localism and globalism" may appear virtually synonymous insofar as they treat cultural difference in

an essentialist and idealized way, as something fixed and final (Chow 10). The mediating consciousness between native and foreign, global and local has to be sought elsewhere.

My contention is that, at its best, literature can perform that role, challenging monologic concepts of culture and emphasizing "interference" and "translation" between local and global, national and transnational. By interfacing cultures and messages, literature can help us rediscover and consolidate the middle ground between Eastern and Western, Northern and Southern, dominant and peripheral that we have neglected because of our polarized worldviews. As Gabriele Schwab has argued, most comprehensively in *The Mirror and the Killer-Queen: Otherness in Literary Language* (1996), literature's "imaginary ethnographies" mediate otherness for us through complex processes of "transference" and "translation." More specifically, literature enriches our cultural repertoire with unspoken emotions and alternative perspectives. The latter are most valuable when they occasion insights into the cultural imaginary of others. Literature can imagine encounters between different cultures, acting as a corrective to the ethnocentric/nationalistic concepts of culture and to the counter-theories of globalism.

We should be careful, however, not to idealize the mediating role of literature. Literary texts have operated both within and outside the national narrative, counterposing tradition and modernity, "national Self" and transnational "Other" (Cleary 54, 57). The concept of nation "regularly appeared [in literature] either as an all-encompassing value or as a total negative to be sacrificed at the altar of any and every alternative ideal" (Kiss 132). When the aspirations of nation-states were at its center, literary discourse took on certain defensive accents, responding to the uncertainties of identity and the presumption or reality of outside threat by reinforcing an exclusionary self-definition. However, literature has also had a certain degree of success reflecting the play of differences in the multiethnic space of East-Central Europe and proposing more flexible models of intercultural exchange.

As the contributors to the multi-volume *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* have argued, the literatures of the ECE area have often worked as interfaces rather than as competing entities, emphasizing the flow of information and cultural products across borders, physical and otherwise (see Cornis-Pope and Neubauer, 2004 – 2010). For example, during the 19th and 20th centuries Transylvania and the Banat regions developed forms of multiculturality, some conflictual others integrative, that rendered borders permeable. An attentive analysis, such as that undertaken by the contributors to the ECE project, can foreground the space of intercultural understanding often concealed by nationalist and imperial passions. In the words of a recent reviewer, the *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* "attempts to re-conceptualize literary traditions in the [East-Central European] region by deconstructing national myths and focusing on common themes, thereby opening up perspectives which are routinely overlooked in traditional national literary histories" (Baár 468 – 69).

The work of reconceptualizing the literary cultures of this region is far from finished. One of the questions we need to pose now is that of the relationship between

the growing trend of globalization and the specificity of a literature like the Romanian, its place in relation to regional, transnational, and global interests. As part of a new approach to Romanian literature, we need to develop a post-essentialist analytic practice that recognizes local specificities while emphasizing "multiple identity" and transcultural communication.

There are some encouraging signs that such a new approach is underway. A number of Romanian journals have devoted issues to the critical analysis of nationalism and ethnic essentialism, but also to the presentation of alternative models of Eastern European "multiculturalism," from the regional coexistence of parallel cultures in the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, to intercultural exchanges that demarginalize minority cultures. While this type of analysis has advanced our awareness of the causes of ethnic fundamentalism in pre- and postcommunist Eastern Europe, it still needs to achieve a more nuanced understanding of national identity, distinguishing between "open," or inclusive, and "closed" or exclusive national definitions. Once the multiple linguistic and communitarian roots of Eastern European cultures are recognized, national identity will no longer be viewed as monologic but rather as dialogic, a form of "multiple cultural identity" (Neumann 66). As the Romanian cultural sociologist Victor Neumann argues, this modified concept of national identity allows us simultaneously to recognize the "similitude of human values, their common origin," and to "assume pluralism by claiming participation in more cultural identities" (68). A similar dialogic understanding underlies Neumann's concept of multiculturalism: "Multiculturalism is legitimate when it accepts both the ideals derived from cultural specificities and those that refer to two or more cultures simultaneously" (62).

Crossing and Redefining Cultural Boundaries in post-1989 Romanian Literature

The Romanian literature published since 1989 has broached some of these issues, revising traditional definitions of national identity, gender, and race, and blurring the boundaries between highculture and low culture, politics and literature. At this point, it is still difficult to anticipate the directions that the creative work of Romanian writers will take. A common post-1989 complaint was that "literature" in the narrow, aesthetic sense, had been largely supplanted by event-oriented and market-driven writing. A retrospective of the editorial year 1990 in Romania began with a characteristic observation: "At no other time in our history have we experienced such a crisis in publications" (Ungureanu 10), and went on to explain that the pre-revolutionary literature was marked by an oppositional and recreative vocation: "the success of December 22 [1989] was also its own success." The post-revolutionary culture was by contrast plagued by a "self-devouring vocation" (Ungureanu 10). At the end of the 1990s, the poet and novelist Mircea Cărtărescu similarly noted that "nothing will be as before: the *system* has become unrecognizable, making impossible the reference to the same literary paradigm" (*Postmodernismul românesc* 462). According to Cărtărescu, his own 1980s generation "closed an important literary loop begun two centuries earlier that defined a system, that of modernity" (461). After the collapse of the Soviet-backed communist system, Eastern European cultures underwent "[a]

chaotic diversification and dissipation of texts, a hybridization of media, [. . .] an increasing virtualization of 'possible worlds' [that] will turn literature into a form of generalized *mind game*" (462). The main question on many critics' minds was whether this diversification led to a significant restructuring of our understanding of literature or if it simply represented the confusion that attended a prolonged period of transition.

Judging from the fact that much recent Romanian literature is still in a form of amorphous transition, there are no simpler answers to this question. After 1989, high literature has lost its privileged position, shielded from market forces (Wachtel 47). The very definition of literature has been diversified, split into conflicting cultural styles, high and low, experimental and traditionalist. Literature as a whole has been pushed to the periphery: while its "national tradition" has been turned into a list of compulsory school readings, its contemporary production has had to compete with versions of pulp literature and the "alternative worlds" of music and digital networks.

However, what some have perceived as incongruities, others have taken as signs of a new inclusiveness, proving the versatility and adaptability of contemporary literature. The present literary map is not only more diverse, but also richer in transitional and cross-genre forms (autobiographical nonfiction, docu-novels, graphic poetry, etc.). The growing editorial interest in previously censored manuscripts and translations from the work of the diaspora has filled important gaps, expanding and restructuring the corpus of Romanian (post) communist literature. More inclusive literary histories and critical dictionaries have been published, remedying the deficiencies of earlier works that ignored the literature of the diaspora. A good example is the four-volume *Dicţionarul scriitorilor români* (Dictionary of Romanian Writers, 1995 – 2002) coordinated by the same group of scholars who published an earlier version of the dictionary in 1978; this time, this massive work includes exiled writers. The reintegration of the exilic voices has moved forward in a faster way in the case of the performing arts: in addition to promoting the theatrical work of Eugène Ionesco and Mircea Eliade, previously forbidden by the Romanian Communist regime, a number of internationally prominent Romanian theater and film directors have been encouraged to return for longer or shorter periods to work in their country of origin.

As a result, Romanian literature has adopted a more internationalist or multicultural perspective, but this trend has been countered periodically by new nationalist and ethnocentric leanings. The battle for canonization was at times fierce in Romania, with the ultranationalist and anti-Semitic line promoted by *România Mare* (Greater Romania), published since June 1990, vying with the more liberal publications of the Writers' Union. Theater became an apt metaphor for the contradictory real-life drama of the Romanian Revolution and its aftermath. Drama critic Marian Popescu has linked what he calls the birth by "caesarian" of the new "democratic society" in Romania, to the political "happenings" in the streets and the climactic changes in the country's theaters and dramatic art (80 – 81). His observation, soon after 1989, that "Romanian theater is now the terrain of a confrontation between the laws of economics and those of art" (81), still rings true today. With all the social and cultural contradictions that continue to plague the country, we should not be surprised that

comedy in its varied forms of expression, from satire to tragicomedy, is thriving.

Dumitru Solomon's 1996 one act play, *Paradoxul* (The Paradox), is a good example of a "comic drama" about writing plays, acting and directing, but also the political theater that the country is caught in. The maddening confusion between playing and being, role and actor, appearance and essence hints to the state of things in post-revolutionary Romania. It is also a forceful metaphor for the state of art itself. Solomon's play questions all form of artistic authority including that of the author and of the stage director. In Solomon's play, one character raves against both the Monist and others like him, and against those who call themselves "dualists:" "These monists are everywhere. [. . .] [T]hey want to reduce the world to a single side! To destroy the other side. They must be apprehended, denounced! Do you realize what the world would be like, if it were reduced to one-sidedness, without dilemmas, without oppositions, without variants, without colors?" As for dualists, "they are even worse! They see double. [···] Everything has two sides, all phenomena have two sides. Dualists cause dissension among things and phenomena, until everything is destroyed, pounded, turned to dust" (27). One can recognize in this outcry a plea for a new kind of democracy that accommodates multi-sidedness and polychromatic dimensions.

The questioning of political and cultural agendas was central to the debates that emerged in the 1990s, challenging not only the vestiges of totalitarianism but also the limitations of oppositional trends of the 1970s and 1980s, including experimental and dissident writing. To Gheorghe Grigurcu, for example, postmodernism was a bastardly and "immodest" trend, especially in its programmatic manifestations (6 – 7). Across the Prut River, in the former Soviet Moldova that in the 1980s had its own group of innovative poets writing in Romanian (Ştefan Baştovoi, Emilian Galaicu-Păun, Dumitru Crudu, Vasile Gârbeţ), postmodernism was rejected in more strident terms, as the expression of a "pornographic" deviation from true cultural traditions. Leaving aside such intolerant reactions that were fortunately rare, the debate about postmodernism included a reexamination of the complicated strategies (metaphoric indirection, rhetorical mystification, etc.) that writers had to resort to in order to bypass communist censorship. By contrast, post-1989 literature broached many previously tabooed subjects with a direct, unadorned approach.

Entire thematic areas (such as the topic of the concentration camps, the postwar Soviet occupation, émigré issues) were rediscovered at the end of the eighties and the nineties. Some of these works exhibited a particularly poignant humor, like Nicolae Esinencu's *Un moldovean la închisoare* (A Moldavian in Prison; 1989) which insinuates ironically that life in prison was not any worse than life lived in the "freedom" allowed by the Soviets. Earlier narratives of the communist gulag had been published by Paul Goma, both through manuscripts smuggled abroad and in French, German, Swedish, and Dutch translations after his forced emigration to France in 1977. The most explicit of these semi-autobiographical narratives, documenting the extreme methods of Stalinist "reeducation" practiced in the Piteşti prison where the inmates were forced by the chief torturer Ţurcanu, himself a former prisoner, to participate in forms of "intertorture," was first published in French under the title *Les*

Chiens de mort, *ou*, *La passion selon Piteşti* (1981; The Dogs of Death, or The Passions in the Piteşti Version). The Romanian edition of this novel, *Patimile după Piteşti*, was printed in 1990 but distributed only in 1999. In 1989, Goma returned to a more "innocent" narrative point of view, exploring in *Le calidor* (subtitled "a Bessarabian Childhood" in its Romanian version) mid-century historical traumas as experienced by a young child. In spite of its broad autobiographical stretch, covering the troubled period of the 1940s, this novel offers a firmer narrative grip on history than some of Goma's previous works. The difference here is the consistency of the narrative point of view: from the privileged position offered by the "calidor" (house porch), the child is initiated into life and history during the Soviet occupation of Bessarabia, a period that brings about the destruction of the child's edenic vision of the world. *L'art de la fugue* (1990), published one year later under the Romanian title *Arta refugii: o copilărie transilvană* (The Art of Refuge/Taking Flight Again: A Transylvanian Childhood) continues the exploration begun in *Le calidor*, adopting the semi-autobiographical perspective of the slightly older boy as he witnesses a new act in the drama of his family, now committed to Transylvanian prisons. The boy's education in the terrors of history takes on a new ironic twist because this time the agents of persecution are not the Soviets but the Romanian "brethren." In the mid 1990s, Goma abandoned fiction altogether, focusing on the "hyperincendiary personal diary" (Piţu 131). This diary, which presents many contemporary Romanian writers and former associates in most unflattering terms, ruined the honeymoon that Goma's work enjoyed immediately after the fall of Ceauşescu regime, when several of his works were republished. After the publication of the first three volumes of his *Journal*, Goma became a *persona non grata* in many literary circles. Other exiles had slightly similar fates after the collapse of the communist regimes, being discouraged from returning home or being ignored after an initial flurry of articles about them.

Another topic that had to wait several decades for an honest representation was ethnic persecution under the Nazi and the Soviet totalitarian regimes. For example, both Mihail Sebastian's anti-Nazi Journal and Ion D. Sârbu's anti-Stalinistic memoirs, the latter describing the fate of a traditional socialist persecuted alternatively by the Nazis and the communists, could only be published after 1989. The representation of the tragic byproducts of World War Two in Eastern Europe did not fare any better, especially when it involved such tabooed subjects as the fate of Romanian peasants lost in the Soviet prison camps from where they emerged only much later, after Stalin's death. Alecu Ivan Ghilia's *Întoarcerea bărbaţilor* (*The Return of the Men*) on this theme was published only in 1991. World War Two was also treated by Matei Vişniec in a stark, unsparing way that did not distinguish between losers and victors. His short plays in *Caii la fereastră* (Horses at the Window, performed in Romania and France in 1992), and *Teatru descompus*, *sau*, *Omul-lada-de-gunoi*; *Femeia ca un câmp de luptă* (Decomposed Theater, or Man-as-a-Dumpster; Woman as a Battlefield; 1998) focus on heinous forms of behavior during war—cowardice, bestiality, greed, violence against women. The war is de-ideologized, presented in a light that deprives it of any justification. Patriotic slogans, national interests, and geopolitical reasons pale before the crude reality of carnage, persecution, and inhuman-

ity. The dramatic form itself underscores the extent to which individuals are victimized by history: Vişniec's texts unfold as anxious monologues addressed to interlocutors who are rarely identified and even more rarely respond. At the same time, Vişniec tries to engage us, viewers and readers, in a dialogue with his texts inviting us to reconstruct from textual splinters the "initial mirror" which once reflected "the sky, the world, and the human soul" (author's Foreword). We are helped in this enterprise by the dialogic pull of these texts, which share motifs, names of characters, and a more general aspiration to all-inclusive communication (several pieces associate devoted, talkative animals with the monologizing humans).

The same dialogic and polymorphic pull underscores Mircea Cărtărescu's recently translated novel, *Nostalgia* (2005), with its "*mixtum compositum* of antimodernism, [···] nonmodernism [···], late modernism, and postmodernism" that Cărtărescu himself attributes to post-World War Two Romanian literature (*Postmodernismul românesc* 137). But Cărtărescu's prose complicates/rewrites these earlier paradigms, illustrating the radical potential of hybridity and polymorphism. Each of the five interlaced novellas that compose *Nostalgia*—"The Roulette Player," "Mentardy," "The Twins," "REM," and the Epilogue ("The Architect")—dramatizes the liberating potential of innovative narration, but also the political and poetic constraints that regulate the work of narrators and their audiences. Rich and protean, mixing high and low styles (narrative of growth, autobiography, philosophic parable, science fiction, gothic horror, erotic narrative), these stories contribute to the post-communist/postmodern diversification of the Eastern European narrative production, calling into questions pre-1989 fictional categories.

Adding to the symbolism of this book, the first Romanian edition of*Nostalgia* (titled *Visul/* The Dream) was published in the cusp year 1989, after circulating in manuscript through the eighties. The book's various narrators dramatize the difficulties of creative narration under communism but also the new opportunities for a self-problematized concept of literature at a time when the grand ideological narrative of communism was approaching dissolution. The metaphor used by Cărtărescu to describe the narrative structure resulting from this conflict of conditions is that of a web of "chaotically placed loops and holes," created by "a spider under the influence of a drug" (263). In similar ways, the creator-writer "deforms matter, disturbs it under the influence of the demented wind of inspiration" (263). The spider web functions alternatively as a deterministic metaphor, suggesting the inescapable economy of destiny and plot; and as a metafictional metaphor emphasizing the self-propelled nature of narrative, with characters gaining provisional release from the constrictions of the web, but only to the extent they become weavers of their own stories. The other structuring metaphor comes from the new media. Given Cărtărescu's interest in fractal orders and virtual reality (he titled a recent volume of essays *Pururi tînăr înfăşurat în pixeli* (Forever Young, Wrapped in Pixels; 2003), we could speculate that the interlaced stories in *Nostalgia* behave like a digital hypertext, embedding each other, expanding their narrative ontology through a process of interlinking of situations and motifs, creating a virtual suprastory. The locale (Bucharest) and historical period (several decades, before and after World War II) are pieced together in

similar ways, through interlaced allusions that are part of a narrator's or a character's mental scape. Cărtărescu treats Bucharest itself as a web of contradictory messages, magic and squalid at the same time, circulating along paradoxical circuits, some stuck in premodern history, others connected to a virtual future.

Cultural and narrative polymorphism, and the attending problematization of national and ethnic/local identity, is central to the work of ethnic minority writers, especially when confronted with the drama of exile and uprooting. Consider the case of the Romanian-German writers rallied in the Aktionsgruppe Banat. They had to confront continually the issue of what it meant to write German language literature in "the cities of the East" (Bossert, *neuntöter* 60; trans. Fritz H. König). Culturally, RomanianGerman literature exhibited the characteristics of a marginal enclave. As a consequence, the "language [was] often slightly archaic, permeated with 'Romanianisms,' and geared mainly toward their own surroundings" (König 35); yet aesthetically it was a true hybrid, bridging Western and East-European literary practices. This literature achieved a "Brechtian *Verfrendungseffekt*—an effect of distancing and estrangement—through all means available to them. They want[ed] to disconnect themselves from official literature, from the literature of their predecessors, from the poetry that 'serves.' They [were] antilyrical, antisentimental, antitraditionalist" (Ungureanu, "Richard Wagner" 5). The Aktionsgruppe Banat was officially banned in 1975, and its members subsequently emigrated to Germany, where they faced the task of creating another problematic identity. This identity crisis produced some very good literature, particularly in Herta Müller's case, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature.

Müller's fiction, published after her forced emigration to Germany in 1987, represents the difficulties of life under both totalitarianism and the exilic condition, emphasizing the conflicting facets of the writer's identity. Most often Müller work illustrates the genre of fictionalized autobiography as in *The Land of Green Plums* (1996; German original, *Herztier*/Heart-Beast, 1993), focused primarily on the encounter of a group of ethnic German writers with the Securitate in the 1980s. However, around this political core, Müller builds a larger story that reexamines the twentieth-century history of the ethnic Germans (Swabians) in the Romanian Banat, their effort to resist assimilation but also their proud ethnocentrism that led at times to chauvinism and involvement with the Nazi regime. Müller's more recent work, for example the novel *In der Falle* (Trapped; 1996), continues to explore one of the darkest periods in the recent history of her native Romania, Ceauşescu's self-dubbed "golden epoch," demonstrating how a totalitarian state can impact the most intimate aspects of individual life. Müller's style is surrealistic-experimental, trying to represent the paradoxes of both totalitarianism and of the exilic condition, with the writer feeling "unhomed" both in her adoptive country and in her native Romania.

Herta Müller exemplifies also the strong focus on women's issues in recent Romanian literature. The contemporary story in *The Land of Green Plums* focuses on the fate of two women and the autobiographical narrator. At first glance, the two female characters seem destined to lead different lives: Tereza enjoys the privileges of being the daughter of a high-ranking party official, while Lola, who joins the party in order

to escape poverty, commits suicide after she is seduced by a party functionary. Soon afterwards Tereza herself dies, her life cut short by cancer. The narrator herself confronts ethnocentric prejudice and political persecution, which finally force her into self-exile. Thus, in spite of their different ethnic background and political choices, "[i]n the end, it becomes evident that all three female characters [···] are victims of the communist dictatorship" (Glajar 141) but also of gender exploitation. The sexploitation of women pervades all aspects of their life, from prostitution to sexualized interrogation methods performed by the male political police. Müller's novel portrays an "inherently patriarchal society" in which "gender roles are fixed and rooted in old-fashioned peasant values" (Marven 37), but at the same time challenges this patriarchal order by suggesting the possibility of strong female interpersonal relationships.

Women writers have had a notable presence in post-1989 literature, especially the literature of exile and emigration. The work of the Croat Slavenka Drakulić and Dubravka Ugrešić, of the Polish Kinga Dunin, the Russian Tatiana Tolstaya, and the Romanian Liliana Ursu, Gabriela Melinescu, Adina Kenereş, and Carmen-Francesca Banciu, to mention just a few, addresses a great mix of issues, both political and social, having to do with life under the defunct communist regimes as well as with gender and ethnic issues both at home and in the adoptive cultures. In the case of Romanian culture, its definition and boundaries have been stretched by the work of writers who, both before and especially after 1989, shuttled freely between East and West. In the recently published *Columbia Literary History of Eastern Europe since* 1945, Harold B. Segel devotes Chapter 10 ("Glimpses of Other Worlds") to Eastern European writers traveling abroad, especially to the United States. The chapter discusses briefly the literature of the Romanian Liliana Ursu and Daniela Crăsnaru, among other Eastern European writers who at different times before and after 1989 focused on "contact zones" and crosscultural experiences. Their works range from personal reportage and realistic fiction to poetry of reflection, but most often they mix genres and themes.

The poetry of Liliana Ursu, for example, draws parallels between America and Transylvania, an Eastern and a Western perspective, without glossing over their differences. Written in Romanian and self-translated into English, in a strong first-person autobiographical voice, Ursu's poetry interacts with both worlds, interpreting one from the perspective of the other. Not surprisingly, Ovid, the ancient poet banished to the edge of the Roman Empire, on the shores of the Black Sea, and who allegedly wrote two lost books in the language of the local Getae, functions in Ursu's poetry as an intercultural archetype, defining her own condition sandwiched uncomfortably between the two cultures:

> In the end I will meet Ovid
> Himself a sandwich man.
> At the end of the millennium I will be his analyst
> And he will be my shore of this sea I travel
> Which is called America.

("Heart Washed like a Brain, Europe for Sale," in *Angel Riding a Beast* 61)

Unlike the exiled Ovid, Liliana Rusu was able after 1989 to shuttle between her culture of origin and her adopted culture. In that sense, her condition is better described by the term "migration" rather than that of "exile," emphasizing the multidirectionality of her physical and cultural movement. She illustrates the similar back-and-forth movement of Eastern European writers not only after 1989 but also during earlier historical periods, for example at the turn of the 19th century when transplanted writers like Marthe Bibesco shuttled between Bucharest and Paris; or the interwar period when avant-garde writers and artists likewise shuttled between their home culture and Western avant-garde centers.

Equally intriguing in their effort to expand/interface their home culture with their adoptive one have been the Eastern European writers who migrated to the Mediterranean area after 1989 (see Mauceri, "Writing outside the Borders: Personal Experience and History in the Works of Helga Schneider and Helena Janeczek"; also her article on Mihai Mircea Butcovan). Maria Mauceri has also offered the first synthesis on Eastern European émigré writing in Italy, "L'Europa venuta dall'Europa (dall'Albania alla Russia)" (The Europe Arrived from Europe [from Albania to Russia]), published in Armando Gnisci's *Nuovo Planetario Italiano* (New Italian Planetarium). Subtitled, *Geografia e antologia della letteratura della migrazione in Italia e in Europa* (Geography and Anthology of Migration Literature in Italy and Europe; 2006), Gnisci's historical-theoretical anthology attempts to canonize the new migrant literature but also to redefine Italian literature as multicultural. Drawing on multicultural authors like Salman Rushdie, Joseph Brodsky, and Derek Walcott, Gnisci's general introduction emphasizes a number of favorite themes: the poetics of worlds, the creolization and decolonization of Europe (see also Gnisci's other work, *Creolizzare l'Europa/* The Creolization of Europe), and the anthropological nature of migration and its literary expression (*Nuovo Planetario Italiano* 13-39). Gnisci's entire discussion is framed by the concepts of "dispatrio" (dispatriation) as the defining condition of being human in the twentieth- and twenty-first century, and of "Patrie imaginarie" (imagined homelands) borrowed from Salman Rushdie, as an antidote to uprooting.

The poetry of Mircea Butcovan illustrates well aspects of this paradoxical dialectic, negotiating in *Allunaggio di un immigrato inamorato* (*The Moon Landing of an Immigrant in Love*; 2006) the uncertain spaces between movement and rest, boundary-crossing and imaginary homelands. His poetry situates itself into what Franca Sinopoli has described as a Euro-Mediterranean "trans-continentality," an alternative model of European identity that resists both undifferentiated globalism and disconnected localism. Migrant writers like the Romanian Butcovan expand and virtualize both the space of their culture of origin and that of their adoptive culture (in this case Italian), inhabiting the porous literary spaces shaped by intercultural messages. The literary production contributed by such writers hybridizes the host culture, calling into question the concept of a stable monolingual national tradition based upon the coinci-

dence of language, people, and a national state. Straddling languages and geopolitical boundaries, such "translingual" Eastern European writers promote what Andrei Codrescu describes as "a new map of the world," bringing together "countries of memory" with real and imaginary homes at the intersection of several languages (*The Disappearance of the Outside* 57). The map recreated by exiled writers promises to "send shoots and wedges through the surfaces of the authorized world" (91), pluralizing it. Against the authorized text, multicultural and migrant mobilize a whole range of devices, from invention to imaginative memory ("ontological remembering" not mere "quotas of nostalgia"—*Disappearance* 103). Codrescu's own poetry illustrates this clearly, announcing through a semi-autobiographical speaker in *Comrade Past & Mister Present* (49) that his great discovery after thirty was Plurality:

> …In other
> Words, all other words, not just tolerance
> Of difference, but the joyful welcoming of differences
> Into one's heart spread out like the pages
> Of a newspaper…

Not all Romanian writers have viewed this pluralization of ethnic and national identity with the same celebratory attitude. We are reminded of Emil Cioran's association of the exile with the figure of the renegade and the deserter. Yet, as he argues in *Anathemas and Admirations*, the recourse to a new, borrowed language is a heroic betrayal that represents simultaneously a "terrible ordeal" and an "exalting" conquest of new territory, a self-construction and an escape (126, 204). The writers we have discussed in this essay seem to understand this all too well, as they respond to the pressures of globalization both by expanding the multicultural reach of their art, and by balancing the global pull of contemporary culture with a creative rethinking of local specificity.

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Romanian Cultural Identity: Remembered, Recorded, Invented

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Abstract This contribution points to one of the main turning points in the cultural representation of Romanian identity: national communism. For Ceausescu's national dictatorship the landmarks of Romanian identity were both products of a cultural effort and canny political instruments. Our analysis aim to highlight the main part assigned to the intellectual and artistic discourses of the time (para-science, history, film, fiction, poetry, fine arts) in the construction of a fake collective memory meant to distort the public perception of the present and to legitimize the existing political power. The staunch communist campaign for the construction of a Dacian homeland was based mostly on an integrated dictatorial memory, unselfconscious, commanding, all powerful, spontaneously actualizing, a memory without a past that ceaselessly reinvents tradition. From Ceausescu's perspective, the Master Trope of the "Dacian paradise lost" was designed to create a space for intellectual production and to become literally constitutive for academic disciplines such as history, geography, ethnology, philosophy and linguistics but first and foremost for the artistic associated practices as well as for the production of a nationalistic oriented literature.
Key words cultural identity; memory; spatial landmarks; commissioned literature

A Communist Master Trope of Romanian Cultural Identity

Linking the present to bygone times, memory currently enhances, extends and prolongs history, even when openly contesting and challenging its meanings and its acknowledged interpretations. Therefore recollection has an overall engineering function and sometimes it can even take on the main functions of history(Lewis 89). In addition there are highly significant occasions when memory deliberately falsifies history. This is a particular type of fake memory that does not want to reconstruct but to create a non-existent past, ignoring historical data, compelling official history to comply with its counterfeit "evidence". In such cases, the purpose of reconstructing the past is to distort the public perception of the present and to manipulate cultural memory.

In what follows I will analyze this issue explicitly and systematically. Unveiling its ideological and symbolical strategies my contribution focuses on the process of building ancient Thrace and a particular area of it called *Dacia* as the spatial mould of Romanianess, through fake and commissioned memories.

In 106 AD Dacia was annexed by Trajan as a province of the Roman Empire. Following this historical event, the Romans became Romania's main and best-known ancestors and Romanian developed as a Romance language. The main goal of the counterfeiting process initiated by the communist dictator Ceausescu was to remove imperial Rome from its paradigmatic position and, subsequently, to cut the traditional cultural ties between Romania and contemporary Western Europe. Presented as the pre-Roman primeval mold of the Romanians, the "Dacian realm" was overloaded with a specific type of symbolic meaning: national-communist ideology.

In Ceausescu's Romania the nation was a master symbol with structuring properties on all possible levels: ideological, scientific, economic, moral, aesthetic, etc. (*Programul Partidului Comunist Român* [*The Program of the Romanian Communist Party*] 1975) During Ceausescu's dictatorship national ideology became an aggressive superiority complex known as "proto-chrononism" (" temporal priority ", in old Greek). Its main cultural expression was an arrogant rejection of any sources, models or forerunners, in almost all intellectual spheres, for benefit of a paradoxical theory of local priority, which claimed to have been ignored by Europe because of Romania's peripheral status. Over the last decades of communism and especially in the early eighties being a Romanian became a privilege, a miracle and bliss(Verderey 152 – 204).

For Ceausescu's national communism the spatial landmarks of Romanian identity were both products of cultural effort and political instruments. The theory that saw the ancient Dacian pattern prevailing over Rome, the central model of Romanian civilization, was one of many Ceausescu's means of celebrating his own victory over Romania's prestigious European relatives.

The following paragraphs illustrate this interplay between history and memory in this falsifying process and the multiple faces of memory it involves.

What History Had to Say

Unfortunately, history has very little to say about the mentality, the language, the social lifeand the political structures, the food, the architecture and the habits, the culture, the religion, the army and even the looks of ancient Dacians. Accurate historical information about the semi-mythical pre-roman cradle of Romania is poor, scattered and above all doubtful(Boia 172 – 179).

A few names of allegedly brave and fearsome kings such as Dromichet, Burebista and Decebal have survived. A series of relieves are preserved on the famous*Trajan's Column*, the monument erected by the emperor in Rome after his conquests north of the Danube. Plenty of beautiful golden pieces of jewelry and not so many old coins coveted by smugglers are scattered beneath the ruins of the presumed capital city Sarmisegetusa, fully destroyed and later rebuilt by the Romans. Last but not least there is the evidence, mostly derived from myth and poetry, provided by Mircea Eliade in a study about the worship of the war god Zalmoxis in the area(Eliade 35 – 37).

In pre-communist Romania, such attempts to reconstruct the presumed Dacian matrix were promptly relegated to the realm of national mythology. Between the two world wars, a few far right ideologists and members of the *Iron Guard* endeavored to

manipulate this kind of mythology for political ends but without great success. Only after his ascent to dictatorship Ceausescu initiated a well-orchestrated campaign to promote Dacia as the ideal paradigm of national identity. As it often happens in such cases, the far right and the far left wings meet in a convergent totalitarian effort and become instruments of nationalism(Connerton 42 – 43).

The Institute of History of the Romanian Communist Party took the first step in this direction. A programmatic study published in its official review *Analele de istorie The* 142 – 1520 stubbornly maintained that the existence of a flourishing complex Dacian civilization in the central area of European Thrace was not a hypothesis but a fact. The marks of the Roman conquest on this sophisticated and well-articulated civilization and culture were thus late and limited imprints on a much earlier and more prestigious fabric(Boia 134 – 135).

As a second step on the same path, political history stimulated a series of para scientific initiatives. A so-called "new science" was born in Romania: *thracology*. Iosif Constantin Dragan, a former member of the *Iron Guard* who settled in Italy after the war, as a prosperous businessman, became the pillar of this communist initiative (further proof of the fruitful collaboration and similarity between communist and Nazi totalitarian doctrines). At his own expense he launched, in Romania, the "academic" review *We, the Thracians*, published a homonym book and sponsored a scholarly association whose ambitious aim was to aggrandize the part played by the inhabitants of Thrace in the European history. The core area of the fabulous imaginary Thrace was of course Dacia: meaning the present day Romania.

According to the worshipers of the Thracian cult, the inhabitants of this fantasy space were the creators of a civilization dating back 100 000 years, making the Romanian people the oldest ethnic European community. In this way, thracology was manipulated by the communist power as a reaction to Romance Studies, which had been an area central to Romanian cultural tradition in the same way as Byzantine studies and patristics.

In its turn, linguistics had to be sensitive to the political command. Scientists did their best in pretending to reconstruct "old Dacian", starting from seven words at the most, and using a hypothetical Thracian dialect as their source. Huge piles of linguistic studies dedicated to the Thraco-Dacian substratum were systematically published and even a project to fund a department of Dacian language at the University of Bucharest was ongoing by 1989.

What Memory was Commissioned to Say

As Pierre Nora puts it, the above-mentioned type of official national history relied on a dictatorial form of memory, in other words a memory without a past. Its basic strategy was the complex interweaving of three different levels of remembrance: public memory, collective memory and individual memory("Les lieux de mémoire", *Representations*, 7 – 25). Nation-states are territorially extensive societies most of whose members cannot know each other personally. That is why the reconstruction of the fake homeland begun in the public sphere and only as a follow up it was introduced by means of mass culture into the collective area and eventually into the individual

sphere of personal recollection.

On a public level, the counterfeit "Dacian" concept was more than just history or a told story. It was an "enacted cult", which displayed a strong "performative" dimension. During Ceausescu's dictatorship the Communist Party organized an extravagant, costly and ostentatious national celebration of 2050 years from the foundation of the first Dacian "independent kingdom" ruled by Burebista, although all trustworthy information about both he event and its outcome was missing.

According to Paul Connerton, the same dimension of memory had previously been instrumentalized by the Nazis:

> "The subjects of the third Reich were constantly reminded of the National Socialist Party and its ideology by a series of commemorative ceremonies. It was a rite fixed and performed. Its story was told not unequivocally in the past tense but in the tense of a metaphysical present. It reminded the participants of quasi-mythic events but even more due to its mnemonic power the sacred event was represented." (Connerton 43)

In communist Romania the impact of this newly invented canonic sequence pervaded all spheres of collective life, including entertainment and sports. Among similar ritual events, the national competition called "Daciada", a local brand of "Olympics", is worthy of mention. First and foremost "Daciada" was another step backwards, overlooking the traditional European sports rituals, such as the Greek Olympics, towards a local primeval model.

It is worth noticing that "Daciada" was envisaged as a "mass competition" in which people of all professions, ages and standards were encouraged if not simply compelled to enroll. None of the top Romanian sportsmen and women would have been allowed to attend the "real" Olympics without taking part at least once in the national traditional contest. Participation was sought for its symbolic value rather than for high performance. A so-called "Dacian badge" and similar paraphernalia were created for the event. Year after year, in a typical atmosphere of popular carnival, between the parades at the opening and the closing ceremonies, the ritual evocation of Ceausescu's exceptional personality was the real high point of the occasion.

We are entitled to interpret such political rituals as operating within political contexts in which power is distributed in a systematically unequal way, so that rituals may be understood as exercising cognitive control by providing the official version of the political structure with symbolic representations such as the Empire, the Nation and in our particular case "the Dacian homeland".

Emile Durkheim sees ritual as representing social reality by making it intelligible, even if the cognitive content of it must be encoded in a metaphorical and symbolic form. One may thus view rituals as systems of ideas in which the individuals represent to themselves the society of which they are members, and the obscure but intimate relations, which they have within it(Connerton 50).

It is in this way that the strategy of the communist party succeeded in taking full advantage of the confusion between "collecting memories" and "collective memo-

ries", picking out every possible detail available and patching them all together. One of the main actors on this level was fine art in all its forms, especially the monumental (Mosse 167 – 182).

Even nowadays in Bucharest, in front of the Romanian Military Museum, among the forefathers of the nation, three statues of Dacian ancestors are visible (the presumed kings Dromichet, Burebista and Decebal) and only one of a Roman: the emperor Trajan.

An amazing Romanian museum, dedicated after 1989 to the overflowing manufacture of the communist commissioned art, gathers numerous pieces of sculpture, tapestry, painting, banners, frescos, relieves, jewelry etc. dedicated to the Dacian realm, with the obvious aim to introduce the figure of Ceausescu himself right in their middle, like a "Figure in the carpet". This type of cheap and transparent allegorical representations explicitly instated Ceausescu as the direct heir of a long line of glorious symbolical figures, descending straight from Burebista: the Dacian king who had the unique privilege of never being defeated by the Romans.

Fiction, Poetry, Film and "*The Dacian Project*"

Ultimately, Ceausescu's falsifying project targeted the level of individual consciousness. According toPierre Nora, it is upon the individual and upon the individual alone that the constraint of memory weights insistently as well as imperceptibly. The less memory is experienced collectively, the more it will require individuals to undertake to become themselves memory-individuals("Les lieux de mémoire", *Representations* 7 – 25).

The emblems and articulations of memory in flags and films, memorials, museums etc. operate in a distinct register of memory different from that of the individual's recollection of his own life, although the two may interconnect: "The collapsing of personal and public registers is one of the most prominent features of the turn to memory" (Hodgine and Radstone 8).

Endeavoring to transpose this fake collective memory to the levelof individual consciousness, mass culture—fiction, popular poetry of film—was granted a privileged mission.

From the early seventies onwards, the movie industry was the most humble and enthusiastic servant of the political leadership. Producers, directors and scriptwriters hit upon a simple and efficient "Dacian propaganda recipe". The titles were short and highly evocative: *The Column*, *The Dacians*, *Burebista*, etc. The props were constantly recycled and the actors passed on from one movie to another. The narrative fabric obsessively played on three main tacks: the bravery of the Dacian ancestors in their fierce fight against the Roman aggressor; the idyllic local family life and its strong moral values and, last but not least, the heavenly beauty of the Dacian nest.

Due to the total lack of information on the subject, the costumes, and the architectural details, the social habits and the structures of the family, the food and the music, the wedding and funeral rituals were borrowed from archaic Romanian folklore. Only a few details of the local army such as clothing, weapons and the ancient Dacian flag, a terrifying wolf's head with a snake tongue, were copied after *Columna*

Trajana in Rome.

In old blessed Dacia, women were always young, beautiful andhard working, men were brave and devoted to their leader, the countryside was as breathtaking as a tourist trap, the children were angelic, the elderly were exceptionally wise and the kings were brave and devoted to the independence of their homeland. Even the domestic animals cleverly hated the foreign invaders. On every occasion, the overarching lesson aimed at contemporary Romanians was bluntly reiterated: the praiseworthy devotion of the Dacian inhabitants towards their "Conducator" and the faultless self-sacrifice to the benefit of the national community.

When compared to the movie production, literature seems to have been more defiant of the political command. Apart from a collection of extremely poor and propagandistic poetry, only one novel endeavored to promote "the Dacian Master Trope": *Saruta pamintul acesta*(*Kiss this Sacred Land*), written by Ileana Vulpescu, a scholar, a researcher at the Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy of Science.

The book is a typical novel*à thèse*. It revolves around the moment of the Dacian-Roman war and around the staunch campaign of the conquerors to subdue the bold natives. The author insists on the family life of the royal dynasty, on their bravery, on their deep religious and spiritual commitment and on their spectacular collective suicide to avoid Roman captivity. In the post-conquest period, when Dacia became a Roman province, the author emphatically underlines the endurance of the Dacian substratum beneath the Roman cultural coating.

This process culminates in the ascent of several Dacian men to the status of acclaimed Roman senators. Needless to say that they all cherished the memory of their homeland and of their non Roman ethnic roots and usually sent their sons back to Dacia to get "real" military training and to marry local women. Every detail in this novel emphatically sends anti-Roman and anti-imperial messages, dwelling on the persistence of the Dacian cultural pattern down to the communist present.

There is hardly any epic structure in this novel, suffocated by the conventional stereotypes of the fearless natives who were defying foreign intrusion, intensely circulated in Ceausescu's time by history textbooks and through all the official channels. The communist-nationalist dogma was projected onto the remote past and vested in a pompous ancient coat. Everything in this piece of poor literature, printed in a luxury edition, sounds pathetic, meaningless and above all boring. Nonetheless the book was a compulsory reading in literature textbooks in the same way as large groups of school children escorted by their teachers were ritually presented several times a year with films such as *The Dacians*, *The Column* or *Burebista*.

A Few Concluding Remarks

From Ceausescu's perspective, the Master Tropeof the "Dacian paradise lost" was designed to create a space for intellectual production and to become literally constitutive for academic disciplines such as history, geography, ethnology, philosophy and linguistics but first and foremost for the artistic associated practices.

Beginning with the take-over of Romania by the Soviet Union in the late forties, the Nation as a socio-symbolic construct was constantly reworked by underground in-

tellectuals in a counter-discourse to the exercise of rule. Ceausescu's ambitious target was to force the two, rule and discourse, to come together. A hard currency of false recollections was launched on the market and by means of its representations the communist power tried to legitimate the present social order.

However, due to the poor quality of the cultural material involved in this program, the "Dacian Project" was a total failure.

In Pierre Nora's terms, we might conclude that the staunch communist campaign for the Revival of the Dacian homeland was based mostly on an integrated dictatorial memory, unselfconscious, commanding, all powerful, spontaneously actualizing, a memory without a past that ceaselessly reinvents tradition. An irrefutable proof is that the hierarchy of power largely benefits from the control of collective memory.

Recreating the national past by means of the construction of places worshipped by popular memory is not a singular process. Erich Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger dedicated their well-known book *The Invention of Tradition* to this type of cultural manufacture. However, the Romanian example represents a well-articulated political scenario, targeting various areas of the public and of the individual spheres and aiming to overpower with its weighty ideological significance. In such cases the most common form of signifying practices through which ideological processes occur is culture. In communist Romania, to be a creator of culture has long meant having a central role in defining the nation to itself and to the world.

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Introduction: *Homage to Brazil*

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We dedicate this special column on Brazil to José Newton de Seixas Pereira Filho, who graduated from the Purdue University Comparative Literature Program in December 2008, after defending his dissertation titled "The Non-violent and Violent Mimetic Desires of Street Orphans in Anglo-American and Luso-Brazilian Literatures."

After graduating, Newton entered the concorso for academic appointments in Brazil and was named an assistant professor in his hometown of Salvador at the University of Bahia, a state in east central Brazil. A little later he became chair of Germanic Languages. He then organized a conference titled "Translation, Cinema Translation, and Cinema" during the XI Seminar of Applied Linguistics and Literature and the VII Seminar of Translation Studies. The conference was held in the Institute of Letters, in Milton Santos Auditorium—Pavilion III, Campus Ondina, at the Universidade Federal da Bahia, from November 12 – 15.

He found funding to invite four members of the Comparative Literature Program—Charles Ross, Beate Allert, Shaun Hughes, and Patrice Rankin—plus Margie Berns from the English Department to the 2010 conference. Their revised papers are presented here under the title "Homage to Brazil," as we salute Brazil, which will host the World Football Championship in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016.

Juliet's Brazilian Mother[1]

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Abstract Shakespeare's Juliet is arguably the first woman of tragic stature to appear in Western literature, since Greek tragedy or the death of Dido in the fourth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Our first glimpse of Juliet's active moral agency occurs when she coyly answers her mother's attempt to persuade her to base her decision to marry Paris by looking him over at the party that night. By contrast, her mother, Lady Capulet, comes across as a uneducated, even bitter woman who struggles to explain the facts of life to her daughter. But in the Brazilian movie version, "O Casamento do Romeu e Julieta" (directed by Bruno Barreto, 2005), Lady Capulet is no longer shallow. As in several other adaptations of Shakespeare, the Brazilian version of Shakespeare's most popular play solves problems gender by updating them into a realistic setting where women are active moral agents despite living in a world where men are men.
Key Words Brazil; Shakespeare; Juliet; Lady Montague; moral action; agency

Shakespeare's Juliet is arguably the first woman of tragic stature, in the Aristotelian sense, to appear in Western literature since Greek tragedy or the death of Dido in the fourth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*. By Aristotelian I mean that she is a moral agent, someone whose actions are based on decisions based on thought. Of course, she is also a victim of circumstances. Friar John's letter never reaches Romeo, for example, but such plot twists are the least intellectually interesting parts of *Romeo and Juliet*. Because coincidences and uncontrollable circumstances may seem somehow intentional to the common eye, Shakespeare associates them with fate and the stars. But in our role as thinkers, we are interested in what characters do based on their decisions. What Aristotle in the *Poetics* calls character (ethos) is based on thought (dianoia), and we can know what characters think by listening to what they say. Decisions based on thought makes characters moral agents, what we call fully developed "characters," not mere stage figures. One way of defining plot or *mythos* is as chains of decisions by moral agents, not just a sequence of events. No one creates chains of moral decisions better than Shakespeare, who uses them to define the structure of scenes.

We first glimpse Juliet's active moral agency when she coyly answers her mother 's attempt to persuade her to base her decision to marry Paris by using her eyes, not her brain: "I' ll look to like, if looking liking move" (1.3.97). Lady Capulet, by contrast, comes across as a uneducated, even bitter woman who struggles to explain the facts of life to her daughter as she gives an outwardly persuasive but troubling out-

line of how Juliet should evaluate Paris at the Capulet party that evening in her speech that compares Paris first to a book, then to a fish.[2]

The reverse is true in "O Casamento do Romeu e Julieta" ("The Marriage of Romeo and Juliet," dir. Bruno Barreto 2005), a Brazilian film version of Shakespeare's play. This rather adult production of Shakespeare's most popular play solves gender problems by updating them into a realistic setting where women are active moral agents despite living in a world where men are men. Julieta is a "strong woman," not a thirteen-year old (Alcantara 222). She coaches soccer (a trope for powerful women in Shakespeare films), but she struggles against the board of directors of Palmeiras, the club where she plays, because they believe that soccer is not a sport for women.[3] Nonetheless, perhaps because she is meant to reflect a certain twenty-something generational attitude, Julieta never really takes control of her destiny. The contrast with her mother, the Brazilian Lady Capulet, is instructive. Isabella, as Lady Capulet is called, is no longer shallow. Instead she is a fount of motherly wisdom. She helps her daughter solve the problem of Romeo's sexual disfunctionality. She stands up to circumstances by using language to mask her true meaning. She defies her husband's insane passion for soccer. Ultimately she turns a potential tragedy into a movie with a happy ending. In short, Isabella is the most active moral agent in the movie "O Casamento do Romeu e Julieta."

To show how the Brazilian version shifts the portrait of a female agency from Juliet to her mother, I want first to look at the initial conversation between Shakespeare's Juliet and her mother in a way that I think serves as a model for classroom discussion of character and moral agency. Shakespeare's language can be difficult, whether one is studying in America, China, or Brazil, but students and teachers find his plays stimulating, particularly *Romeo and Juliet*, and he helps to relieve the tedium of language lessons.

Let us start, then, with the conversation in act one, scene three, of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* where Lady Capulet asks her daughter to consider marrying Paris. Here we see the weakness of Juliet's mother that the Brazilian film will correct, and we see the strength of Juliet's mind, that the Brazilian film will transfer to Isabella. Again, a moral action is different from the action of the plot or story. It is the result of thought, not chance. Because a moral action results from deliberate choice, it gives us insight into the character or *ethos* of a person. We can only understand Juliet by analyzing not what happens to her, but what she does as a result. At the same time, by looking closely at the language of Juliet's mother, we can see how she thinks, or does not think.

In the third scene of *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet's mother visits her daughter to break the news to her that her father has arrange for Juliet to marry Paris, even though she is not yet fourteen years old. She explains that Juliet will be able to see Paris at a party to be given that night at the Capulet house. We know that Juliet will see Paris at the party and fall in love with him, renouncing her father's choice of Paris. But at this point the only issue is whether Juliet will accept her mother's persuasions that she prepare herself to become a wife. This persuasion comes in the form of a very odd speech by Juliet's mother. First she compares Paris to a book (or "vol-

ume"): "Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face" (1.3.81). Her idea is that what the book of Paris needs, more than anything, is a cover to lie on it, and that cover is Juliet. Uncomfortable with the sexual innuendo of her own imagery, she digresses to talk about fish: "The fish lives in the sea" (1.3.89). Then she resumes the development of her book imagery—"That book in many's eyes doth share the glory" (1.3.91)—till she concludes that by marrying Paris, Juliet will share his possessions.

Lady Capulet's speech is very difficult even for native speakers of English. It helps to keep in mind that the speech moves from the outside of the book ("volume"), to the lines written there ("writ," "lineament"), to the hidden meaning ("obscured"). It makes sense to Lady Capulet that the meaning is "obscured" because she herself probably cannot read—we know that her servant cannot read the guest list he is given for her party—even though she expects Juliet to make sense of Paris as a book. She therefore does not refer to Paris as a collection of words (it is not obvious to illiterate people that writing is a collection of individual words; similarly, many of my students are surprised to learn that Chinese has words and sentences). Instead, Lady Capulet tells Juliet to focus on his good looks, the beauty of his face. I have underline the words that derive from the metaphor of the book, which Lady Capulet imagines not as printed but as a bound manuscript written with a quill pen:

> What say you? Can you love the gentleman?
> This night you shall behold him at our feast;
> Read o'er the volume of young Paris' face,
> And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
> Examine every married lineament
> And see how one another lends content.
> And what obscured in this fair volume lies
> Find written in the margent of his eyes.
> (1.3.79 – 86)

Notice that her phrase "married lineament" refers to the lines on the page. These lines ("lineament") pair off ("married"), like couples, and form a harmony that is the "content" of the book. The word "content" has a double sense. It refers to the harmony makes a couple contént (meaning happy). But it also refers to the book is about, its cóntent. And the content of a book, for Lady Capulet, is "obscured." She doesn't expect to understand writing, and she doesn't really expect Juliet to understand Paris.

Lady Capulet's speech continues in a vein of uncertainty. Like all parents, she finds it difficult to talk to her daughter about sex. Lady Capulet gropes for a solution and comes up with two rather unrelated sets of images. First, she rather daringly compares Juliet to the cover of a book, then she compares Paris to a fish in the sea:

> This precious book of love, this unbound lover

To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
The fish lives in the sea, and tis much pride
For fair without the fair within to hide:
(1.3.87 – 90)

Both images are indirect and perhaps indecent. Usually the man is said to "cover" the woman (women were known as "femmes covert" in English law), and again, traditionally the man is on top during sex. Still groping for a way to broach the issue of marriage, Lady Capulet rather astoundingly brings in a fish. One would think that as a young girl Juliet can only be confused. In Italian, but also in Shakespeare's play, "fish" is slang for that which the man normally keeps hidden, or boasts about the size of, as Sampson does in his conversation with Gregory that opens the play ("Tis well thou are not fish; if thou hadst, thou hadst been poor-John," 1.1.30 – 31). Lady Capulet never really talks directly to Juliet about sex; instead she says that Juliet can be the "fair without" (that is, the beautiful [thing] on the outside).

Like the sea, the cover of a book hides what is inside. But just as sex is confusing, and Lady Capulet never really confronts it directly, so is the role of wealth in marriage, which enters her speech, again indirectly, when she talks about the gold clasps of a book. After losing her way in the fish image, Lady Capulet resumes her theme of ornamentationion by comparing Juliet to the golden clasps that people used to bind great books during the Renaissance:

That book in many's eyes doth share the glory
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;
So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.
(1.3.91 – 94)

I think people usually regard Paris as the "gold clasp," but it may well be that Juliet is the rich one. What Lady Capulet is saying is that Paris is the kind of man who will share his wife's wealth with her. Although he will legally control her money, he will not stint her, as so many husbands did when they weren't beating or otherwise mistreating their wives. It was not uncommon for husbands to gamble away a wife's wealth rather than invest it wisely. The law gave them that power, so all Lady Capulet can do is hope for her daughter that Paris will not be mean to her.

Probably impatient with Lady Capulet's failure to mention sex, Juliet's nurse picks up Lady Capulet's last two words ("no less") and insists that Juliet can expect Paris to get her pregnant. Ignoring Lady Capulet's rather obvious meaning that Juliet will increase her social statute by marrying Count Paris, the nurse instead says that Paris will make her physcially bigger, not less: "No less! nay, bigger; women grow by men." 1.3.95).

What does Juliet learn from her mother? The upshot of Lady Capulet's speech is that Juliet is told very little about men. She learns: 1) that she is to use her eyes only (I think she finds this appalling); 2) that men cannot be known; 3) that marriage

must quickly follow (she will be very quick in asking Romeo to marry her on the balcony ["If that thy bent of love be honorable, / Thy purpose marriage" 2.2.143 – 144]); and 4) that pregnancy follows unavoidably, something Romeo also believes (1.1.220; Albright 47).

Now let us ask, what exactly does Juliet do this scene. What is the moral action? That is, what is the action taken as the result of deliberate thought about one's immediate circumstances? Is the action something that Lady Capulet does? Well, what she does is prepare her daughter to meet Paris, but that is not something that develops during the scene. She enters act one, scene three with that thought in mind. She only does what she had already planned to do earlier. An action, in order to have dramatic power, has to be something that results from the shape of what we see before us in a scene.

Therefore let us look instead at what Juliet does in response to her mother's speech, which she had not expected to hear:

Lady Capulet:
Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?
Juliet:
I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
But no more deep will I endart mine eye
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly.

The key to Juliet's response is her use of the conditional word "if" and the way she imitates an obedient daughter. She understands, from what she has heard, that what her mother is having trouble saying, or does not or cannot admit, is that there's more to a man than his looks. Thus her use of the conditional "if" summarizes and to an extent corrects her mother's overt meaning, that a man can be judge by his looks. Juliet says that to the extent a man can be so judged, so she will look; then as if to correct the impression that she is correcting her mother, she says something subservient, that without further permission, she will do no more than look. We know that subservience is an act for Juliet, one she will show again when she lies to her nurse, saying she will submit to her father in act four.

Juliet's careful words suggest that she finds the logic, imagery, and lessons of her mother's speech about the facts of life to be odd, if not appalling. She understands her mothing is having trouble admitting that there is more to a man than his looks. She may not even know there is more to love. So what does Juliet do? She gently corrects her mother by using the conditional "if." Then, to correct any impression that she might be arguing with her mother, she says something subservient. She plays a social role, as women often did.

Juliet's character dominates this scene, as it does through most of the play, where in fact Romeo rarely is the main moral agent. Throughout the play Juliet is more thoughtful than Romeo. Where he is swept along by passions, she takes action based on thought. Juliet recognizes that her parents' world does not make sense, and that her mother gives her questionable advice about marriage. This same independ-

ence will soon let her decide that her family's hatred should not stop her from loving Romeo.

By contrast to Juliet, Lady Capulet in the play seems to be in an unhappy marriage to a much older man. We know Lady Capulet was about Juliet's age when she became a mother ("I was a mother much upon these years / That you are now a maid," 1. 3. 73 – 74), and that Capulet says to Paris that young women are "marred" when they become mothers that early (1. 2. 12). Many productions suggest that Lady Capulet is having an affair with Tybalt, as Franco Zeffirelli does in his 1968 film version. When Romeo kills Tybalt, Lady Capulet screams for Romeo's death ("Romeo must not live," 3. 1. 181); she even tells Juliet that she intends to hire someone to poison Romeo in Mantua (3. 5. 89), showing a surprising initiative that, in fact, the Brazilian film picks up very well.

In "O Casamento do Romeu e Julieta" Isabella begins, as Lady Capulet does in Shakespeare's play, as a woman who conforms to her husband's ways—here, his crazy passion for the Palmeiros football team. But in contrast to Shakespeare's Lady Capulet, who has difficulty talking to her daughter about men, in a brief but telling scene Isabella shows that she is wise even in the ways of men. After Romeo fails to perform sexually, Isabella calmly assures her grief-stricken daughter that these things happen. The actual reason is that Romeu feels inhibited by the Palmieros soccer paraphenalia in Julieta's bedroom. Isabella cannot know this; he consolation is a bit comic, like Lady Capulet's comparison of Paris to a book. Nonetheless Isabella is given a very adult moment, and this Brazilian shift in perspective from Juliet to her mother is unlike any other version of *Romeo and Juliet* that I know.

> *Julieta*: Meu Deus!
> *Isabella*: Homem que è homem brocha. Normal.
> *Julieta*: Normal quando acontece com os outros, não com a gente, nè mãe?
> *Isabella*: Minha filha, talvez seja amor. Eu li: "a maior homenagem que um homem pode fazer . . . para uma mulher, è não conseguir logo da primeira vez."
>
> *Julieta*: Mas essa já foi a segunda![4]
> *Julieta*: Oh, my God!
> *Isabella*: Sometimes men can't get it up. It's normal.
> *Julieta*: Normal when it happens to other people, not to us.
> *Isabella*: Maybe it's love. I read: "When a man can't perform the first time . . . it's because he cares too much".
> *Julieta*: But this was the second time!

Isabella's stature increases most in the movie's version of act three, scene five, where we can best see how the makers of "O Casamento" transformed her character. In Shakespeare's play, Lady Capulet consoles her daughter, who she believes is weeping for the death of her cousin Tybalt. In fact, Juliet weeps for the banishment of Romeo, to whom she is now married, but she hides her situation from her mother. As in their conversation about Paris, Juliet pretends to agree with her, saying that she wishes to

see Romeo dead ("behold him dead"). What she really means is that she wishes to see Romeo ("behold him") and that his banishment has stopped her heart: "dead / is my poor heart":

> *Juliet*: Indeed I never shall be satisfied
> With Romeo, till I behold him—dead—
> Is my poor heart, so for a kinsman vex'd.
> (3.5.93 – 95)

It takes a very skilled actress to get both senses across. None of the movie versions I know manages this double meaning. But in "O Casamento," after Isabella learns, as Lady Capulet never does, the truth about Romeo, Isabella uses double meanings to help make Juliet's father think that Romeo is a Palmeiros football fan when she knows he is not. As Alfredo Baragatti revels that his daughter is in love, Isabella reminds him that Julieta will have to leave the house—a metaphor for marrying out of the family, perhaps even to a fan of the Corinthians football team. It doesn't really work, although it shows her character, just as Juliet's deception of her mother only gets her deeper into trouble. But it works temporarily, giving Julieta time to get pregnant and setting up Isabella's final confrontation with her husband:

Isabella's deception falls into two parts. First she has a premonition (and common thing in Shakespeare's play) that she knows Romeu; then she is about to identify him as a rapid Corinthians fan, when she switches in midstream:

> *Julieta*: Tava aqui te olhando. … Você estudou medicina onde?
> *Romeu*: Na USP.
> *Julieta*: Ah, eu fiz Psicologia lá! … Ah, lembrei! Claro, você era aquele calouro fanático por futebol... que só ia à aula vestido com aquela camiseta do ... [Julieta kicks her mother under the table] … Palmeiras![5]

> *Isabella*: Funny ... I feel like I know you. Where did you study?
> *Romeu*: University of São Paulo.
> *Isabella*: I studied psychology there. … I remember! You were that soccer fanatic freshmen … that always came to class wearing the jersey of the ...
> [*Julieta kicks her mother under the table*] … Palmeiras!
> Then Isabella takes her stand with her daughter, against her husband:
> *Isabella* - Mas justo um corinthiano, filha?
> *Julieta*: Mãe, eu não escolhi. Aconteceu!
> *Isabella*: Não quero saber o que vai acontecer quando o seu pai descobrir.
> *Julieta*: Você não, nòs! A senhora também entrou neste jogo. Entrei de susto!
> *Isabella*: Mas essa mentira não pode continuar. Quer matar o seu pai de desgosto?
> *Julieta*: Mãe, è a primeira vez que ... eu me interesso de verdade por alguém. Me ajuda!

Isabella: Mas eu nunca menti pro seu pai.[6]

Isabella: A Corinthians fan, Juliet?
Julieta: I didn't choose. It happened.
Isabella: What's gonna happen when your father finds out?
Julieta: You're a part of this too.
Isabella: Only because of you. Juliet this lying can't go on. Your dad will never like that.
Julieta: Mom, this is the first time … I really love someone. Help me!
Isabella: But I've never lied to your father.

The third scene is this tryptich of Isabella's agency reveals her ability to say one thing and mean another. She does not lie, but she avois the truth:

Alfredo Baragatti: Belinha, o dia que eu tanto temia chegou!
Isabella: Como assim? Que dia?
Alfredo: Você não percebeu, Isabela?
Isabella: Percebi o quê?
Alfredo: A nossa "bambina" ... se apaixonou! Você não viu o jeito que ela olha pra ele? Logo, logo, vamos ficar os doissozinhos aqui nesta casa.
Isabella: Deus te ouça! Tomara que tudo dê certo! Que ela possa seguir o caminho dela, não è?
Alfredo: Tô te desconhecendo! Você, querendo ver tua filha nica pelas costas?[7]
Alfredo: The day I feared so much has come.
Isbella: What do you mean? What day?
Alfredo: Didn't you notice, Isabella?
Isabella: What was there to notice?
Alfredo: Our "bambina" ... She's in love! Didn't you see the way she looks at him? Soon, it will be just the two of us in this house.
Isabella: May God hear you! I hope she follows her heart!
Alfredo: I don't get it. You want your only daughter to leave?

Unlike Lady Capulet, Isabella wants her daughter to follow her heart, not the money or position. Her final act of agency is a combination of Juliet and Lady Capulet. It occurs when Isabella finally explodes on a basketball court, saying how much she has always hated her husband's crazy passion for football.

Alfredo: Mulher nenhuma pode ser feliz ao lado de um corinthiano.
Isbella: Muito menos ao lado de um palmeirense!
Alfredo: Que Θ isso agora, Belinha?
Isbella: Só o que te importa é o futebol, não é? Sua grande paixão. Vocês não sabem o que é ser casada com esse homem. Eu vivo a base de calmantes. Eu odeio futebol! Eu odeio! Odeio! … Só o que te interessa é a tua opinião e o teu

time! Ju, esquece que você tem pai e vai viver a tua vida! Ele não merece a tua consideração!
Alfredo: Belinha, não faz isso comigo! Olha o meu coração!
Isabella: Deixa de cena, Alfredo! Se você tem mesmo corção … perdoa tua filha e deixa ela ser feliz!
Alfredo: No woman can be happy with a Corinthians fan.
Isabella: Much less with a Palmeiras fan!
Alfredo: What's this, Isabella?
Isabella: All you care about is soccer. You don't know what it's like to be married to this man! I'm constantly on sedatives! I hate soccer! Hate it! Hate it! Hate it! All that matters is your team! Forget your father and live your life. He doesn't deserve any consideration!
Alfredo: Don't do this to me! To my heart!
Isbella: Stop making a scene! If you really have a heart... forgive your daughter and let her be happy!

Here Isabella she shows a bit of the spark that Lady Capulet showed when she offered to poison Romeo in Mantua. She risks all for her daughter in the climax of the Brazilian version. She defies her husband, shaming everyone into recognizing the craziness of the hatred that everyone's soccer obsession has caused. Unlike Juliet, Isabella solves the plot, without anyone getting killed. The result is a sophisticated, adult comedy typical of the mature, modern way that Brazilian cinema and television has adopted Shakespeare to Brazilian culture.

Notes

1. This article is based on a talk titled "Juliet's Mother" given at the University of Bahía, Salvador, Brazi, November 14, 2010.
2. Albright (39) says Lady Capulet stresses Paris's good looks; "trying to cast an erotic halo around Paris for pragmatic reasons" she uses "veiled, metaphorical, even lascivious" language, but does not comment on the difficulty of what she is doing and the resulting strain on her.
3. Monique Pittman notes that *She's the Man* (2006), a version of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, "pulses with the Title IX Girl Power that found cinematic voice and financial reward in *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002)" (p. 114). In 10 *Things I Hate about You*, the update of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, Cat also plays soccer.
4. Transcripts of the English and Portuguese text of "O Casamento" was downloaded from http://subscene.com/brazillian-portuguese/casamento-de-romeu-e-julieta-o/subtitle-44958.aspx. This scene starts at 00:24:41 in the movie.
5. This scene starts at 00:28:02 in the movie.
6. This scene starts at 00:28:38 in the movie.
7. This scene starts at 00:29:19 in the movie.

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Postcolonial Plagiarisms: Yambo Ouloguem, Calixthe Beyala, and Witi Ihimaera

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Abstract This essay considers three cases of alleged plagiarism by three prominent postcolonial authors: Witi Ihimaera (a Māori from New Zealand, also called Aotearoa) and two Francophone authors, Yambo Ouologuem (from Mali, the former French Equitorial Africa) and Calixthe Beyala (from Cameroon, who now lives in France). Whereas the case against Ihimaera is a straightforward one of the misuse of intellectual property, the more serious offence in the case of Ouologuem and Beyala was the failure to deliver works sufficiently authentic to please their critics.
Key Words Plagiarism; Ihimaera; Ouologuem; Beyala

Introduction — Witi Ihimaera (1)

In November 2009, the New Zealand literary world was convulsed in the manner peculiar to literary worlds by the revelation that Witi Ihimaera, the prominent Māori novelist and Academician, was guilty of plagiarism in his most recent novel, *The Trowenna Sea*, which tells the story of Hohepa Te Umuroa (c. 1825 - 1847). In May 1846, Te Umuroa took part in a notorious attack on Boulcott's farm in the Hutt Valley near Wellington (Ihimaera 162 - 66).[1] Arrested in August the same year, he and six companions were sentenced to be "transported for life" after a court martial of dubious legality: the defendents had no Māori-speaking representation and were directed that their only option was to plead guilty. They were sent to Australia to a penal colony on Tasmania, or as it was then called, Van Diemen's Land. There Te Umuroa died shortly afterwards of tuberculosis. The case had generated an outpouring of outrage in the Australian press. Te Umuroa was buried in a public rather than a convict cemetery and a headstone was raised on his grave with inscriptions in both Māori and English. Te Umuroa's fellow prisoners were returned to New Zealand in 1848, but Te Umuroa's body was not repatriated until 1988 when the remains were identified and returned to New Zealand with impressive public ceremony to be buried among his people on Patiarero Marae on the Whanganui River.[2]

Witi Ihimaera had been the doyen of Māori letters. He published his first volume of short stories, *Pounamu*, *Pounamu* in 1972 and his first novel, *Tangi*, in 1973. *The Trowenna Sea* is his eleventh novel. He has published six volumes of short stories, a play, and substantially revised and republished his first three works.[3] He is

Professor and Distinguished Creative Fellow in Māori Literature at the University of Auckland where he established and continues to run a flourishing Masters program in Creative Writing. The same month the plagiarism charges surfaced, Ihimaera was named one of five Arts Laureates by the New Zealand Arts Foundation.

This now seemed to be the replay of a script that had been aired before, once in the late sixties and again in the middle nineties. The first had involved Yambo Ouloguem, a Francophone novelist from Mali, then French Equatorial Africa. The second, a generation later, occurred in early 1996 when Calixthe Beyala, a Francophone novelist from Cameroon, was convicted of plagiarism in a case she did not contest. Later on in the same year she was subject to another plagiarism scandal relating to another of her novels.

Plagiarism—that is, the appropriation of someone else's (here) written text, either deliberately or inadvertently—is probably more common than most people realize.[4] When it comes to light it is usually settled amicably without much of a fuss being made. When the perpetrators involved are political figures, the results can be far more serious.[5] But when a plagiarism case sends a literary world into a tizzy with respected intellectuals lining up on opposing sides of the ensuing debate, then it is clear that something else is going on. Marilyn Randall has stated that plagiarism involves "two fundamental axioms": "*plagiarism is in the eye of the beholder*, and … *plagiarism is power*" (vii; emphasis in original). This is certainly true in all three of the cases examined here, and it is interesting that the circumstances surrounding these three cases reveal their conforming to a predictable pattern of accusation, defense, and finally inaction. All three writers under consideration may be classified as postcolonial novelists; that is, they are writers from a region that was formerly a European colony, although Ihimaera is properly to be regarded as a First Nations writer, someone whose peoples were dispossessed of their ancestral lands by the arriving settlers and who survive as a minority and marginalized population in the newly independent nation. All three writers are accused of plagiarism in their novels, and all three are in a sense redefining the novel in terms of their own cultural appropriation of the form, because in neither Mali, nor Cameroon, nor in Polynesian New Zealand is the novel an indigenous form of expression. One way of looking at the three cases is to claim that all three writers are accused of improprieties more against the form of the novel than in defense of somebody else's intellectual property.

Because the emphasis in this paper is on how plagiarism is resented in the eye of the beholder rather than on what the nature of the plagiarism was or any discussion of whether plagiarism did or did not take place, I will not be getting involved in the various issues involving copyright and the definitions of intellectual property, although these are obviously essential aspects of any discussion of plagiarism (these issues are dealt with thoroughly in Johns' study). As the digitalization of books proceeds apace there will be no end of discussion on these matters and the ramifications resulting from how the definition of these terms continues to evolve. There is already some suggestion that an electronic copy of a book may be copyright by the entity that places it on the web if it is out of copyright in print. We have certainly come a long way from 1772 when Voltaire in his *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie* stated: "It is hereby permitted

to any bookseller to [re]print my silliness, be it true or false, at his risk, peril and profit" (quoted in Darnton 4).

Yambo Ouologuem

Yambo Ouologuem, thesubject of the first case study here, was born in 1940 in Bandiagara in the Dogon region of south-central Mali into one of the most prominent families in the region (Ouédraogo 425). His privileged origin accounts for what must have been a superior education in French Colonial schools and the opportunity to go to Paris to study at the École Normale Supérieure. There he took degrees in English and philosophy and began his doctoral studies in sociology. In 1968 the prestigious publishing house Éditions de Seuil issued a novel, under his name, entitled *Le Devoir de Violence* (DV), subsequently translated into English by the prominent translator Ralph Manheim under the title *Bound to Violence* (BV) and appearing as number 99 in the prestigious African Writers Series published by Heinemann. This was a novel like no other African novel which had appeared to date. It was immediately hailed as "the first African novel worthy of the name" and an example of "authentic Africanness."[6] Soon after the novel's appearance it was awarded the prestigious Prix Renaudot, which numbers among its prior laureates Marcel Aymé, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Louis Aragon, and Édouard Glissant.

Le Devoir de violence deals with the history of the fictional central African kingdom of Nakem from its founding in 1202 to the late 1940s (Ngate 61 – 66). The early history of the kingdom is a chronicle of violence, including a deep involvement in the slave trade, first eastwards towards Arab lands and subsequently westwards, involving the Atlantic slave trade. Much of the narrative concerns the kingdom's last traditional ruler, the Saïf ben Isaac al-Héït, who comes to power towards the end of the nineteenth century and is still ruling at the novel's conclusion. It portrays him as a cunning and ruthless leader who does everything possible to protect his own interests and those of his class at the expense of the majority of the people who are in effect sacrificed to the whims of their new colonial masters in much the same way as their ancestors had been sacrificed to the slavers' gold and guns. A decade was to pass before there was a similar searing indictment of traditional African elites, this time in the 1979 novel *Two Thousand Seasons* by the Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah. Here Africa is depicted as torn apart by the depredations of what are referred to as the "predators" (Arab Muslims) and the "destroyers" (European Christians), both operating with the connivance of traditional chiefs and leading headmen who have no qualms about sending their own people off to slavery in the Arab world or to experience the horrors of the Middle Passage.[7] But what made Ouologuem's novel particularly sensational in France is that it was a frontal attack on and a repudiation of the Francophone conception of *négritude*. As espoused by the Martinician Aimé Césaire and the Senagalese Léopold Senghor, this concept postulated an idealized and undifferentiated Africa before the arrival of the Europeans. Ouologuem (and Armah after him), by contrast, attempted to demonstrate that the African elites did not need to wait until the arrival of the Europeans to discover corruption.[8] From the very first appearance of the novel, various African intellectuals attacked it for its inauthentic por-

trayal of traditional African Society, while the European intellectual elite was obsessed with discovering what it thought was the truth about Africa. In lauding *Le Devoir de Violence* as the very text they were looking for, they demonstrated that they had not read the novel attentively, because Ouologuem had laid out for them the folly and delusion of such an enterprise. Parts 4 – 5 of section three of the novel, "La nuit des géants" (DV, 100 – 12; new ed., 137 – 52; BV, 85 – 96), recounts the sojourn in Nekem of the German anthropologist Fritz Shrobenius (a lightly disguised Leo Frobenius [1873 – 1938], the German anthropologist admired by Senghor)[9] and his party who have arrived to uncover the "real" Africa, "frappée de la manie tâtonnante de vouloir ressusciter, sous coleur d'autonomie culturelle, un univers africain qui ne corerespondait à plus rien de vivant" (DV, 192; new ed. 140).[10] Saïf ben Isaac al-Héït was only too willing to be helpful, spinning fantastic stories about the significance of African symbols: "Saïf donc —et la practique est courant de nos jours encores—fit enterrer des quintaux de masques hâtivement executes â la ressamblance des originaux, les engloutissant dans les mares, marais, étangs, marécages, lacs, limons — quitte â les exhumer quelque temps après, les venduant aux curieux et profanes à prix d'or" (DV, 112; new ed., 152).[11]

Shrobenius returns to Europe, making himself very wealthy by selling the pieces he has collected and establishing "[u]ne école africaniste ainsi accrochée aux nues du symbolisme magico-religieux, cosmologique et mythique" (DV 112; new ed., 152).[12] If the European quest for authentic African art was a fraud, it should stand to reason that the quest for an authentic African novel should be just as fruitless.

The plagiarism controversy surrounding*Le Devoir de Violence* has been minutely documented.[13] Ouologuem claimed that the targeted sections had been offset by quotation marks in his manuscript but that these and the references to non-African writers had been removed by the publisher who, however, denied that this was the case. It stands to reason that Ouologuem's version is the correct one, the publisher had a vested interest in promoting an "authentic" African novel, not the author. References to historical seventeenth century Arabic works on the Songhay Empire such as Timbukti's *Tarikh al-fattāsh* and Sa'di's *Tarikh es-Soudan* could stay, but references to André Schwartz-Bart or Graham Green could not.[14]

When the scandal broke over Ouologuem´s alleged plagiarism, those who had earlier been loudest in praise of the novel now moved to the forefront of condemning it. They were not amused to discover that *Le Devoir de violence*, which is indeed an authentic African novel, was not authentic in their meaning of the word, that is, not content with describing an Africa as these critics would wish to have it described. Instead the novel is a reflection on a contemporary Africa, a product of colonial and traditional influences that gives a critical and unflinching appraisal of the strengths and, particularly, the weaknesses of both.

Ouologuem tried to defend himself, but his protestations of innocence were shouted down.[15] As in all three cases discussed here, the so-called plagiarism occurred in an insignificant portion of the work as a whole, but its existence was sufficient in some quarters to call for the repudiation of the author and the damning of the novel.

Although there were always those who spoke in his defense, [16] the controversy had serious consequences for Ouologuem as it appeared to mean that his literary career was finished and his reputation as a writer and scholar forever tarnished. He retreated to Mali around 1975 to devote himself to religious matters and turned his back on the French literary world. [17] But *Le Devoir de violence* refused to go away and over the years its reputation increased in both the Anglophone and Francophone worlds. Finally after having been unavailable for more than thirty years, it was republished in 2003 with an introduction by Christopher Wise, who discusses the plagiarism affair (14 – 29) but whose edition follows the original edition of 1968 without any indication of which passages are in dispute. [18] Thus in the end the controversy has run into the sand. Readers are interested in the work as a whole, not whether this bit comes from here and that bit from there. In a work of scholarship, plagiarism is still a very serious offence and can have nasty political and social consequences. But in a work of fiction it is subsumed under the heading of pastiche, bricolage, hybridism, or dialogism. [19] This blurring of lines will become apparent when we examine the accusations of plagiarism made against works by Beyala and Ihimaera, both of whom, and their works, were rehabilitated after a short period of time.

Calixthe Beyala

Calixthe Beyala was born in Douala, Cameroon, in 1961, the sixth of twelve children. In 1978 she migrated to France and nine years later published her first novel, *C' est le soleil qui m' a brulée* (Ekotto 68 – 69). This and *Tu t' appelleras Tanga* were published by the venerable publishing house, Éditions Stock. *Seul le diable le savait* ("Only the devil knew it") appeared in 1990 under the imprint of Le Pré aux Clercs, a publisher specializing in fantasy and esoterica. With her fourth novel, *Le Petit prince de Belleville* (1992) she switched to the major publishing house of Albin Michel, and since then her career has never looked back. [20] She is one of the few African authors who can support herself by her writing, receiving substantial advances on her work and achieving sales in the mid 1990s of 150,000 copies in trade paperback and another 150,000 copies in reprint editions (Hitchcott, *Beyala* 2). She has published fifteen novels to date, and her most recent work, a history of the Cameroonian soccer team (*Les lions indomptables*), appeared in 2010. She makes frequent television appearances both in France and in Cameroon and is a media celebrity, a role she takes full advantage of: Her 2007 novel, *L' homme qui m' offerait le ciel* ("The Man who Offered Me the Sky") is a thinly disguised account of her affair with French Television personality, Michel Drucker. [21] Her behavior raised the hackles of some of the old guard of the anticolonial struggle, like the late Mongo Beti (1932 – 2001), who had been forced into a life of exile in France. It led them to regard Beyala, who moves easily between France and Cameroon, as an arrivist, a panderer to right-wing prejudices and a trivializer (Beti 43 – 46).

Only three of her early works have appeared in English, all three appearing 1995 – 1996 in Heinemann's prestigious African Writers Series. But this neglect also says something about Beyala's early work. By the middle 1990s the African Writers Series had shrunk its list. The editors appear to have been only interested in those titles that

might appeal to the series' core constituency, a reading public that was still interested in encountering "authentic" Africa and revealing "some of the characteristic preoccupations of the anthropological exotic: the desire for authenticity, projected onto the screen of a 'real" Africa; … the attempt to co-opt African literature into a Euro-American morality play centering on the need to understand 'foreign' cultures; the further co-option of this educative process for the purpose of lending moral credence to a self-serving romantic quest" (Huggan 54).[22] Even though they had published an English translation of Ouologuem's *Le Devoir de violence*, the editors of the African Writers Series favored novels that dealt less with the realities of contemporary African life, especially urban life (unless there is plenty of sex and violence), but rather those that highlighted the exoticism of African village life. (Many of the novels of Buchi Emecheta and Flora Nwapa come to mind.) The prime example of such a work is Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, first published in 1958, and still considered by many not only to be the epitome of African fiction, but the only African novel that is worth reading. While Beyala's early novels are not novels set in rural villages, they either have plenty of sex and violence or they deal with children and their difficulties growing up in Africa in a world of urban violence.

During her time publishing with Albin Michel, Beyala has turned away from African exoticism and writes now more about the experiences of the African diaspora in France and this new focus, too, has earned her criticism with charges that she has turned her back on Africa.[23] But Beyala follows her own instincts, and it appears that the reading public approves of her choices.[24]

The year 1996 must have been an interesting one for Beyala. The previous year the venerable left-wing satirical magazine, *Le Canard enchaîné*, had published an exposé of Beyala's *Le petit prince de Belleville*, suggesting that significant portions of the novel had been adapted silently from a popular book—about an autistic boy and his difficulties in coping with adult authorit—called *Quand j' avais 5 ans, je m' ai tué*, by the American writer Howard Buten.[25] On the strength of this article, Buten's French publisher, Éditions du Seuil (Ouologuem's publisher no less), sued Beyala's publisher Albin Michel for damages. The High Court in Paris found in favor of the plaintiffs. Beyala on the advice of her publishers chose not to contest the case and a substantial fine and costs were assessed (Hitchcott, "Prizes" 103). In acquiescing to the Court's ruling, Beyala neither admitted having plagiarized Buten's work nor defended herself against the charges. The incident attracted little media attention (Hitchcott, *Beyala* 15).[26]

In October of the same year Beyala published her novel *Les honneurs perdus*, which contrasts the tension between tradition (exemplified by Saïda Bénérafa from the Douala shanty town of Couscousville) and modernity (her Senegalese friend Ngaremba) in the immigrant community in the Parisian suburb of Belleville (Hitchcott, *Women* 143 – 44). Upon its appearance the novel was awarded the Grand Prix du roman de l' Académie Française, one of France's most important literary awards.[27] One month later the biographer and journalist Pierre Assouline went public with an accusation in the prestigious literary monthly *Lire*, of which he was the editor, that Beyala had plagiarized Ben Okri's Booker Prize winning novel of 1991, *The Famished Road*,

translated into French in 1994.[28] (Although the only substantial similarity between both works is that each has a road in it). He also attacked the French Academy for giving its prestigious prize to a second-rate writer. In subsequent articles he added other authors whom he claimed that she had plagiarized from, and he resurrected the successful Éditions du Seuil suit against Beyala. The ensuing uproar, "L'affair Beyala," seems to have been motivated primarily by professional and political rivalry, and it is significant that Okri's French publisher declined to pursue the matter (Hitchcott, "Prizes" 103). Beyala never formally replied to the accusations, but she defended herself by manipulating skillfully her position as a media celebrity in newspaper articles and on television (Hitchcott, "Prizes" 103 – 07). It is clear that Assouline's charges of plagiarism were very much in the eye of the beholder. It was also very much an issue of power, expressed as resentment at the popularity and high public profile of Beyala, resentment over her not behaving as an African writer should behave, nor as a woman, nor as an African living in France. The only response Beyala made can be found on the concluding page of her autobiographical novel, *La petite fille du réverbère* ("The Little Girl of the Streetlamp"): "Je revins sur mes pas, pour alimenter les Missiés[29] Riene Poussalire [= Pierre Assouline], ces critiques envieux, et leur permettre de continuer une carrière infertile qui, selon Alexandre Dumas, n'apporte au monde littéraire que ces couronnes de ronces qu'ils ont tressées et qu'ils enfoncent en riant sur la tête du poète vainqueur ou vaincu" (233).[30]

By standing firm and compromising none of her principles, Beyala weathered this tempest in a teapot. She continues to write her novels as she sees fit, and people line up to buy them. She flourishes under the media spotlight and continues to bait her left wing critics with outrageous statements, such as her public support for the Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi (in 2007) and her support of the bid of the defeated President of the Ivory Coast, Laurent Koudou Gbagbo, to remain in power during the civil war (2010 – 2011). She equally annoys the French right wing and in particular singles out President Nicholas Sarkozy, whom she blames for blocking her election to the Secretary-Generalship of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) in 2010. She serves as a role model for other immigrants to not give in to the pressures exerted on them by a society still heavily racist and sexist, no matter how much this may annoy some members of the literary and political establishments.

Witi Ihimaera (2)

Witi Ihimaera, with whom this essay began, was born in Gisborne, New Zealand, in 1944. He went to university, worked as a journalist and also served many years in the diplomatic corps. Although gaining a significant reputation as the "first Māori novelist," he stopped published for more than ten years after the appearance of *The New Net Goes Fishing* in 1977 because he felt that audience expectations trapped him in his rural narratives. His publishers were a branch of the same Heinemann Company responsible for the African Writers Series, although they had no equivalent series for the Pacific region.[31] Ihimaera felt stifled by his self-censorship and the reluctance of his editors to approve anything political or controversial. Since 2003 he has been revising and rewriting his early work according to what he claims is the way he had origi-

nally imagined these texts. He took up his current academic post at the University of Auckland in 1993 and in 1995 published *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, a thinly disguised, semi-autobiographical work which marked his official anouncement that he was gay. [32]

The first novel Ihimaera published after his ten year silence was*The Matriarch* (1986). This work was everything the earlier writings were not: violent, political, and suffused with anger at the injustices of a century and a half of colonization. In terms of narrative technique it was also very different. There are three paragraphs of acknowledgments to other published works on the gutter page following the title. [33] Other sources are mentioned in the body of the text. But not all. There was a bit of a stir when it was noticed that some sections of the novel appropriated previously published work without acknowledgment. Although Mackay's *Historic Poverty Bay* is mentioned in the acknowledgments, in the body of the novel there is nothing to indicate that a long paragraph on page 242 is in fact lifted from Mackay's history, page 307, where it is indented and set in smaller type as an excerpt from the local newspaper, "The Standard." [34] Equally problematic was the way Ihimaera appropriated parts of Keith Sorrenson's article on the "Effects of the Wars on the Maori People," which appeared in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand.* [35] It is not that Ihimaera copies the encyclopaedia text verbatim; rather, he appropriates the text as the occasion for comments of his own. [36] This sampling may perhaps be compared to the way hip-hop artists use the work of others, a practice that has kept the copyright lawyers busy trying to make sure that no royalty payment is ever missed. [37] Ihimaera apologized to Sorrenson with the rather lame excuse that he thought that, since it was an encyclopaedia, it was in the public domain (which reminds one of the early years of Wikipedia when great chunks of the 11th edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* where presented as current material without acknowledgment, a practice which seems no longer tolerated). But probably the reality is that Ihimaera is a novelist, not an historian.

Publishers of fiction are reluctant to burden their works with footnotes or references, as they believe that the reading public will not put up with it (as the cinema going public is supposed to be put off by films with subtitles). While Sorrenson's complaint made it into a newspaper article in 1989, it caused no reaction whatsoever and was promptly forgotten, resurfacing only as a result of the controversy surrounding *The Trowenna Sea.*

This particular novel is an ambitiouswork, 521 pages in length. The author's acknowledgements and thank-yous run seven pages, including two full pages which begin: "Texts consulted include" (524). Almost immediately after the novel appeared, Jolisa Gracewood published a critical review in *The Listener*, a New Zealand weekly, and later, on line, identified some sixteen instances where work had been copied without acknowledgment, especially from Karen Sinclair's *Maori Times*, *Maori Place*, a title which was not listed among those consulted. [38] The controversy was already fairly heated when Ihimaera was named an Arts Laureate, an acknowledgment as prestigious as Ouologuem's Prix Renaudot or Beyala's Grand Prix du roman de l'Académie Française. Once again here was a plagiarism case in which the misdeed lay in the eye of the beholder: it appears that the total amount of text involved was

around one thousand words out of 521 pages. And then there were the issues of power. Ihimaera is a prominent public figure in the literary world and a high profile University Professor. But he had annoyed some people with his support of Māori land rights and other radical causes[39] and with his public homosexuality. For them this was not the way a decent person is supposed to behave, nor a Māori, if he wants to be respected. Ihimaera apologized profusely and offered to buy back the remaining stock. The publisher, Penguin, New Zealand, said it would withdraw unsold copies from the bookstores and promised a new revised edition of the novel in 2010. It is not clear if Ihimaera bought many extra copies. The book remained on book store shelves, and in September of 2010 Penguin announced that there would be no revised reprint. In sum, although some bloggers continue to foam, Ihimaera, like Beyala still seems to have his reputation intact. On the other hand sales of the book seem not to have been particularly robust as the general tenor of reviews was not very favorable for reasons having nothing to do with the accusations of plagiarism. This I suspect was the principal reason for Penguin's decision in November 2010 not to reprint the book in a revised or any other form. Ihimaera is due to release another novel, *The Parihaka Woman*, in October 2011, not with his longtime publisher, Reed/Raupo/Penguin, but with Vintage, an imprint of Random House (New Zealand), a Rupert Murdoch company.

Conclusion

Whereas many other writers such as Brion Gysin with his cut-up method and Kathy Acker with her pastiches seem to be immune from charges of plagiarism, the postcolonial writer faces a double-bind. Such a writer must find a voice in the novel, a form that is ultimately alien to any indigenous tradition, and such a writer must find a voice that challenges the traditions or run the risk of being accused of colonial mimicry. Some scholars have tried to identify an important feature of the postcolonial novel as this very colonial mimicry, part of which is expressed by resorting to textual bricolage without worrying too much about the claims of copyright laws and the defense of "intellectual property" (both of which is seen as a neo-colonial ploy). Part of the problem is the pressure on the postcolonial writer by publishers and reading public to deliver authentic texts, usually in terms of what Huggan has termed the "anthropological exotic" (34 – 57, 269 – 75). Hitchcott in reference to "L'affaire Beyala" comments that: "Through being almost simultaneously identified as both authentic and fake, Beyala and her texts are symptomatic of what Huggan calls the 'post-colonial exotic', where the postcolonial meets the demands of the global marketplace" ("Prizes" 107).

On one level, Ouologuem, Beyala, and Ihimaera are vulnerable to charges of plagiarism. But external factors have also played a role: publishing houses intent on capitalizing on indigenous authenticity, carelessness, pressure to met deadlines, sloppiness about sources (since the work being prepared is a novel, not a history text where scrupulousness about sources is required). The offending passages are transferred into a new environment, where they shine very differently. For some authors this method a measure of their artistic achievement. For others it opens the floodgates

of vilification for light-fingeredness and failure to respect private property.

Yet as these three cases show, if a writer has power equivalent or greater to the power of those bringing the charges, it is possible to weather the storm and to lay bare the inadequacy of the grounds from which their opponents prepare these charges. Postcolonial plagiarism, while it appears on the surface to be the same a plagiarism in general, is often subtly different revealing strands of racism and gender discrimination, and the sometimes not so subtle desire to put the native in his place. These cases have become high profile events because in a very real sense these writers are judged by a different set of standards than those applied to non-postcolonial writers. Nor is this pressure restricted to the postcolonial writer in the metropolis, for it is not just the postcolonial exotic which has been under pressure to produce authentic texts and which has responded, not this time with plagiarism, but with outright fakery. Although Australia is a settler colony with all the attendant privileges, the path to an Australian literary identity has not been easy, and the way is littered with literary fakes. Each one of these has precipitated a major scandal and caused much soul-searching, such as was involved in the unmasking of "Ern Malley," "B. Wongar," and "Helen Demidenko."[40] Then there is the case of Colin Johnson, author of ten novels and numerous other works, known since 1988 as "Mudrooroo" ("Paperbark Tree") and celebrated as Australia's most prominent and prolific aboriginal writer.[41] His career collapsed and his reputation evaporated when he was shown in 1996 to be of African-American, not indigenous, descent.

Perhaps these cases help bring us closer to resolving the problem of what distinguishes fair use from plagiarism. Ihimaera and his publishers ignored the complaints made about borrowings in *The Matriarch* when it was reprinted, revised, and expanded, for the evisions did not extent to acknowledging the use of other's intellectual property. The cases of Ouologuem and Beyala are a little different, for there the accusations of plagiarism were attempts to punish the authors' inauthenticity. Ouologuem suffered the most, but when his work was republished in 2003 it appeared in its original form with no indication, apart from references in the introduction, that any of the text had been adapted from other works. Beyala and her publishers were sued and paid a heavy fine, but the controversies did not affect her popularity or the availability of her works. The ultimate criteria seems to be: Are the works well written and entertaining? If so, they will survive and continue to be commented upon. If not, like *The Trowenna Sea*, they will be allowed to go out of print and sink into oblivion.

Notes

1. On this episode in which a band of some two hundred supporters of the Ngati Toa chieftain, Te Rangihaeata (? –1855) led by the Ngati Haua-te-rangi (Whanganui region) chieftain, Topine Te Mamaku (? –1887) attacked a contingent of fifty-five regular troops (58th Regiment) stationed at Boulcott's farm, a stockaded post in the disputed central Hutt valley, see James Cowan, *The New Zealand Wars and Pioneering Period*, 3rd ed. (rev.) 2 vols. (Wellington: Government Printer, 1983) 1: 104 –11

2. Known to the outside world as Hiruhārama ("Jerusalem"). See Karen Sinclair, *Maori Times*,

Maori Place (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003; first published: Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2002).

3. Ihimaera during 2003 – 2005 re-issued in revised form his early "village fiction": *Pounamu, Pounamu* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1972), *Tangi* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1973), and *Whanau* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1974) as *Pounamu, Pounamu* Rev. ed. (Birkenhead, Auckland: Reed, 2003), *The Rope of Man* (Birkenhead, Auckland: Reed, 2005) and *Whanau II* (Birkenhead, Auckland: Reed, 2004), the first and last under the aegis of "The Anniversary Collection," a series title that appears to have been dropped during a period of rapid change in the publishing industry. The imprint of the venerable publishing house founded by A. H. Reed has disappeared, and Ihimaera's publisher is now a subsidiary of Penguin Group (NZ) it self a part of the Pearson conglomerate. The revised version of *The Matriarch* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1986) was re-issued under the same title in 2009 (North Shore, Auckland: Penguin Books — Raupo, 2009), the same year as *The Trowenna Sea* appeared. According to the "Author's Note" to this later volume (497), a revised version of his first urban novel, *The New Net Goes Fishing* (Auckland: Heinemann, 1977), is underway.

4. Another definition might be "the appropriation of someone else's 'intellectual property'," which is also defined as piracy. On piracy, see Adrian Johns, *Piracy. The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

5. In March 2011 the German Defense Minister, Karl-Theodor Freiherr zu Guttenberg was forced to resign from political office when it became clear that he had plagiarized significant sections of his (published) doctoral dissertation. Similar fates awaited other German politicians such as Silvana Koch-Mehrin, Member of the European Parliament (resigned her committee and leadership positions, doctorate revoked, June 2011, Georgios ("Jorgo") Chatzimarkakis, Member of the European Parliament (doctorate revoked, July 2011) while the doctoral dissertations of several other prominent politicians are still under review. In 1991, the *Journal of American History* published a special issue (28.1) on the revelation that Martin Luther King, Jr, has plagiarized in his unpublished doctoral work, but while this caused a brief media flurry, it appears to have had no impact on King's reputation. See Randall, *Pragmatic Plagiarism*, 208 – 11.

6. Matthieu Galey, "Un grand roman Africain," *Le Monde* (October 12, 1968) quoted in Christopher Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985) 219.

7. While Armah, Ayi Kwei Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1979) is very different in style and approach from Ouologuem's, both deal with the history of the great empires of the Western Sudan. See Derek Wright, "Orality in the African Historical Novel: Yambo Ouologuem's *Bound to Violence* and Ayi Kwei Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons*," *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 23 (1988): 99 – 101, for the way in which they have used the oral sources at their disposal.

8. While exposé of the involvement of the African elite classes in the slave trade by Ouologuem and Armah may have been controversial when they first appeared, the soundness of their opinions has been confirmed by the work of subsequent scholars such as Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: The Womb of Iron and Gold*, trans. Alide Dasnois (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991; first published as: *Anthropologie de l'esclavage: Le ventre de fer et d'argent*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986).

9. See further Christopher Miller, *Theories of Africans: Francophone Literature and Anthropology in Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) 16 – 21.

10. "[A]fflicted with a groping mania for resuscitating an African universe—cultural autonomy, he called it—which had lost all living reality" (BV, 87).

11. "And so Saif — and the practice is still current — had "slapdash copies [of African artifacts] buried by the hundredweight, or sunk into ponds, lakes, marshes, and mud holes, to be exhumed

later on and sold at exorbitant prices to unsuspecting curio hunters" (BV, 96).

12. "An Africanist school harnessed to the vapors of magico-religious, cosmological, and mythical symbolism" (BV, 95). On this passage see Kwame Appiah, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 60 – 61.

13. See, for example, Kofi Anynefa, "Scandales: Littérature francophone et identité," *Cahiers d´Etudes Africaines* 191 (2008): 460 – 63. See also Appiah, *In My Father's House*, 150 – 33; Miller, *Blank Darkness*, 216 – 45. See Marilyn Randall, "The Context of Decolonization and the Poetics of Plagiarism," *Comparative Literature East and West: Traditions and Trends* (Honolulu: College of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, University of Hawaii, 1989) 196 – 99; "Appropriate (d) Discourse: Plagiarism and Decolonization," *New Literary History* 22. 3 (Summer 1991): 536 – 39; and *Pragmatic Plagiarism*, 238 – 41. See also Eric Sellin, "The Unknown Voice of Yambo Ouologuem," Christopher Wise, ed. *Yambo Ouologuem: Postcolonial Writer, Islamic Militant* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999) 67 – 87 (First published *Yale French Studies* 53 [1976]: 137 – 62); Antoine Marie Zacharie Hambumukiza, *Le Devoir de violence de Yambo Ouologuem* (Saarbrücken: Éditions Universitaires Européennes, 2010).

14. The *Tarikh al-fattāsh fi akhbār al-buldān wa-al-juyûsh wa-akābir al-nās* ("Chronicle of the Searcher to aid as the history of the towns, armies and the leaders of Takrur" — Takrur was an ancient empire on the middle and lower Senegal River which collapsed in the thirteenth century) attributed to Mahmoûd Kāti ibn al Hādj al-Motawakkil Kāti Timbukti (c. 1468 – ?), ed. and trans. Octave Victor Houdas and Maurice Delafosse, 2 vols., Documents arabes relatifs à l'histoire du Soudan, Publications de l'Ecole des langues orientales vivantes, 5th Series, 9 – 10 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1913) and the *Tarikh es-Soudan* ("Chronicle of the Sudan") of 'Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Abd Allah Sa'di (1596 – 1656), ed. and trans. Octave Victor Houdas and Edmond Benoist, 2 vols., Documents arabes relatifs à l'histoire du Soudan, Publications de l'École des langues orientales vivantes, 4th series, 12 – 14 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898 – 1900) are mentioned in the opening section of the novel ("*Taril el Fatach* et le *Tarik el Sudan*" (DV, 19; new ed., 26; BV, 4) (both texts were reprinted under the sponsorship of UNESCO, Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1964). The *Tarikh al-fattāsh* in its current form appears to be the work of Ibn al-Mukhtar (*fl.* 1664) a grandson of Timbukti. Ouologuem's form of the titles suggests he is referring to the French rather than the Arabic version. An English translation of Timbukti's Cgronicle is: *Ta'rikh al fattāsh = The Timbuktu chronicles*, 1493 – 1599: *English Translation of the Original Works in Arabic by Al Hajj Mahmud Kati*. trans. Christopher Wise and Hala Anu Taleb (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011).

15. His major defense was his *Lettre à la France nègre*, Collection Motifs 178, (Paris: Le Serpent à Plumes, 2003; first published: Paris: Éditions Nalis, 1969), a polemic hardly designed to appease anyone including his most ardent supporters (for details, see Caroline Mohsen, "Yambo Ouologuem, Satirist and Pamphleteer: Irony and Revolt in *Lettre à la France nègre*," in Wise, *Yambo Ouologuem* 121 – 37), especially the section "Lettre aux pisse-copie nègres d'écrivains célèbres" (181 – 92) which suggests that best-selling novels can be cobbled together from plagiarized passages (see Randall, *Pragmatic Plagiarism* 238 – 39 for a caution against the argument of Eric Sellin, "The Unknown Voice of Yambo Ouologuem" in Wise, *Yambo Ouologuem* 67 – 87 at 82 – 83 that in DV, Ouologuem was following his own advice — Sellin's article was first published in *Yale French Studies* 53 [1976] 137 – 62). Most commentators avoid attempting to translate the title of this section. Randall, "Context 199," "Discourse" 537 suggested: "[A letter] to hack nigger-writers of famous authors," but in *Pragmatic Plagiarism* 297 declares "[t]his title defies my abilities of translation" but does note that in addition to its reference to "race," "nègre" may also be translated "ghost-writer."

16. Among his earliest defenders was Nwoga who confessed to not having read DV but who nevertheless insisted: "My consideration is that borrowing is not the issue. Originality, in African tradition,

has not much to do with where the artist derived his material. The essence of originality is the use to which the artist put his material, both borrowed and invented". See Donatus Nwoga, "Plagiarism and Authentic Creativity in West Africa" *Critical Perspectives on Nigerian Literatures*, Ed. Bernth Lindfors (Washington, D. C.: Three Continents Press, 1976)159 – 67 at 166. In reference to the supposed borrowing from Guy de Maupassant's *Boule de suif* (Miller, *Blank Darkness* 235 – 36; Hambumukiza 81 – 82), Appiah expostulates: "if this latter is a theft, it is the adventurous theft of a kleptomaniac, who dares us to catch him at it" (*In My Father's House* 151, "Yambo Ouologuem and the Meaning of Postcoloniality," in Wise, *Yambo Ouologuem* 55 – 63 at 57). Hambumukiza (107 – 20) also attempts to show extensive borrowing from another Maupassant story, "Le Port" about a man who visits a brothel to discover in the morning the prostitute with whom he has slept is his sister. For Jean-Louis Joubert, *Les voleurs de langue: Traversée de la francophonie littéraire* (Paris: Éditions Philippe Rey, 2006), the mere act of writing in French constitutes a form of plagiarism (69 – 70).

17. For his subsequent career see Part 4: "Yambo Ouologuem Today" in Wise, *Yambo Ouologuem*, 198 – 241.

18. On the gutter page of the English translation (first published in 1971) is the following note: "The Publishers acknowledge the use of certain passages on pages 54 – 56 from *It's a Battlefield* by Graham Greene." The "publishers" in this case are Heinemann themselves who published both BV and *It's a Battlefield* (London: Heinemann, 1934). This statement is a little odd as the research of Hambumukiza demonstrates (103 – 06) that Ouologuem drew upon the French version, *C'est un champ de bataille*, trans. Marcelle Sibon (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1957), not the English original. Miller, *Blank Darkness* 220 – 21 made his comparisons using the English text.

19. Perhaps the most extreme form of this is the popular "mash-up" in which the work of an author long out of copyright is interspersed with narrative themes from contemporary popular culture such as Jane Austen and Seth Grahame-Smith, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (Philadelphia: Quirk Books. 2009) and Jane Austen and Ben. H. Winters, *Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monster* (Philadelphia: Quirk Books, 2009).

20. *Seul le diable le savait* (Paris: Pré aux Clercs, 1990; republished as: *La Négresse rousse*, Paris: J'ai Lu, 1997) is not available in English. *C'est le soleil qui m'a br ? lée* (Paris: Stock, 1987), *Tu t'appelleras Tanga* (Paris Stock, 1988) and *Le petit prince de Belleville* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992) have appeared as *The Sun has Looked Upon Me* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1996), *Your Name Shall be Tanga* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1996), *Loukoum: The 'Little Prince' of Belleville* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1995) respectively, all three translated by Marjolijn de Jager and appearing Heinemann's African Writers Series before Heinemann was bought out by a multi-national conglomerate. The series became moribund and was finally closed down in 2003. See James Currey, *Africa Writes Back: The African Writers Series and the Launch of African Literature* (Oxford: James Currey, 2008), 300.

21. *Les lions indomptables: cinquante ans de bonheur* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2010); *L'homme qui m'offerait le ciel* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007). She has also produced two sharply worded missives regarding racial and gender politics in France, using a forceful style reminiscent of Ouologuem's *Lettre à la France nègre*, the first *Lettre d'une africaine à ses sœurs occidentales* (Paris: Spengler, 1995) and the second *Lettre d'une Afro-française à ses compatriotes* (Paris: Éditions Mango, 2000).

22. For a celebratory account of the series by the series' editor 1967 – 1984, see Currey, *Africa Writes Back*. Michael Okyerefo, *The Cultural Crisis of Sub-Saharan Africa as Depicted in the African Writers' Series: A Sociological Approach*, European University Studies 22: Sociology 348(Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2001) presents a positive analysis of the contribution the series to African literature (179) while a more critical evaluation of the series and its marketing procedures is provided by Camille Lizarríbar Buxó, "Something Else Will Stand Beside It: The African Writers Series and

the Development of African Literature," Unpublished Dissertation, Harvard University, 1998, and Graham Huggan, *Postcolonial Exotic*, 50 – 57.

23. *Le Petit prince de Belleville* (1992), whose English translation appeared before the plagiarism scandal broke, is set in Belleville, a Parisian suburb whose inhabitants are predominantly African immigrants. For whatever reason the sequel, *Maman a un amant* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993), has yet to appear in English along with her eleven other subsequent novels. A similar fate has befallen Mariètou Mbaye Biléoma who writes under the pseudonym "Ken Bugul" (See Wangar wa Nyatetû-Waigwa, "Bugul, Ken," in Simon Gikandi, ed., *Encyclopedia of African Literature* [London: Routledge, 2003] 83 – 84). Her autobiographical first novel, *Le baobab fou* (Dakar: Les Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1982) which appeared as *The Abandoned Baobab: The Autobiography of a Senegalese Woman*. trans. Marjolijn de Jager (New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1991; new ed., Afterword Jeanne Garane, Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008), tells of the tribulations of a young African woman who immigrates to Belgium. Neither the two volumes which continue the narrative nor any other of Bugul's five subsequent novels, all published 1994 – 2008, have appeared in English although finally with the publication of Ada Uzoamaka Azodo and Jeanne-Sarah de Larquier, eds., *Emerging Perspectives on Ken Bugul: From Alternative Choices to Oppositional Practices* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2009), there is now available a volume of essays on her work. Her marriage in 1980 to a man who already had 27 wives did not help her cause especially with Anglophone feminists. She now lives in Porto-Novo, Benin.

24. Scholarly interest in English with a few notable exceptions has been largely concerned with the early novels. Kenneth W. Harrow, *Less than One and Double: A Feminist Reading of African Women's Fiction* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002), devotes a chapter each to *Tu t' appelleras Tanga* and *Le petit prince de Belleville* (43 – 155). See also the discussions in Richard Bjornson, *An African Quest for Freedom and Identity: Cameroonian Writing and the National Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991)416 – 20; Odile Cazenave, *Rebellious Women: The New Generation of African Female Novelists* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000)152 – 61, 173 – 90, 202 – 12, 230 – 36; Irène Assiba D' Almeida, *Francophone African Women's Writing: Destroying the Emptiness of Silence* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994)72 – 87; Chantal Kalisa, *Violence in francophone African and Caribbean Women's Literature* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009)77 – 96, 107 – 113, 130 – 50; Juliana Makuchi Nfah-Abbenyi, *Gender in African Women's Writing: Identity, Sexuality and Difference* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997)84 – 96. The leading Anglophone Beyala scholar is Nicki Hitchcott, see her *Calixthe Beyala* and *Women Writers* 129 – 51. Major contributions in French are by Rangira Béatric Gallimore, *L' éuvre romanesque de Calixthe Beyala: le renouveau de l' écriture féminine en Afrique francophone subsaharienne* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 1997), who discusses the first plagiarism affair in an appendix 205 – 10, and Drocella Mwisha Rwanika, *Sexualité volcanique* (Paris: L' Harmattan, 2006)109 – 24, 153 – 47, 195 – 207.

25. First published in English in 1981 under the title *Burt* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981) and re-released as *When I was Five I Killed Myself* (New York: Overlook, 2000). While it has made few waves in the Anglophone world, the book in its French translation, *Quand j' avais 5 ans, je m' ai tué*, trans. Jean-Pierre Carasso (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1981), has been a major best seller and inspiration for film and television shows.

26. As is the case with Ouologuem, Beyala's plagiarism problems have been extensively documented and commented upon. See Mongo Beti, "L' Affaire Calixthe Beyala"; Suzanne Gauch, "Sampling Globalization in Calixthe Beyala's *Le petit prince de Belleville*," *Research in African Literatures* 41 (2010): 203 – 21; Harrow, *Less than One and Double* 103 – 21; Nicki Hitchcott, "Calixthe Beyala: Prizes, Plagiarism, and 'Authenticity'," *Research in African Literatures* 37 (1996): 100 – 09; Hitchcott, *Calixthe Beyala* 15 – 23, 31 – 33, 128 – 29, 134 – 36; Randal, *Pragmatic Plagiarism* 183 – 88; Veronique Porra, "'Moi, Calixthe Beyala, la plagiaire!' ou ambiguites d' une 'Defense

et illustrations' du plagiat," *Palabres* 1.3 – 4 (1997): 25 – 39.

27. *Les honneurs purdus* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996). Previously she had won the Grand Prix Littèraire de l' Afrique Noire for *Maman a un amant* (1993), the Prix Tropique and the Prix François Mauriac de l' Académie française for *Assèze l' Africaine* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994). She was to win the Grand Prix de l' Unicef for *La petite fille du réverbère* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998).

28. Ben Okri, *The Famished Road* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), translated by Aline Weill as *La route de la faim* (Paris; Laffont, 1994).

29. Hitchcott, "Prizes" 108, note 1, draws attention to the use of the "'petit-nègre' 'pidgin' word, 'Missié' 'Mister'" which puts Assouline in the position of a colonial subject and therefore not authorized to speak for the French metropolitan center. This has a wicked bite to it as Assouline was born in Casablanca, Morocco, in 1953 while it was still a French colony and is therefore also an African.

30. "I retraced my steps to give food for thought to those Mister Nothing Makeshimreads, those jealous critics, and to allow them to carry on their sterile careers which, as Alexander Dumas said, bring nothing to the literary world apart from the crowns of thorns they've woven to push deep on the head of the conquering or conquered poet, laughing as they go" Hitchcott, "Prizes" 101; see also Hitchcott, *Calixthe Beyala* 40 and footnote 6, p. 158).

31. Ihimaera was not the only Polynesian writer to be published by an international company. Albert Wendt (Sāmoa) and Patricia Grace (Māori) had their first volumes published in the 1970s by Longman Paul, the New Zealand branch of Heinemann's arch-rival Longman Group. Longman had two African series, first "Drumbeat" and then "Longman African Classics." Although both series published many important writers, they had neither the scope nor prestige of the African Writers series.

32. Witi Ihimaera, *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (Birkenhead, Auckland: Secker and Warburg, 1995).

33. This list of acknowledgments is omitted from the revised version of *The Matriarch* (2009), but is included in an expanded form in the sequel, *The Dream Swimmer* (Albany, Auckland: Penguin Books, 1997)7 – 8.

34. To complicate matters Ihimaera introduces the quotation with: "A journalist at the sitting later wrote of the protest: …" but there is no indication of the newspaper in which the excerpt appears and Ihimaera's text word for word the account found in Joseph Angus Mackay, *Historic Poverty Bay and the East Cost*, *N*[*orth*]. *I*[*sland*]., *N*[*ew*]. *Z*[*ealand*] (Gisborne: J. G. Mackay, 1949), 307. At this point the 2009 revision (233 – 34) follows the 1986 text without either modification or acknowledgment

35. Keith Sorrenson, "Effects of the Wars on the Maori People," *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, ed. A. H. McLintock, 3 vols. (Wellington: Government Printer, 1966)2: 483 – 87. Some on-line contributors to the latest controversy insist that the article in question is the one on "Maori Land Tenure," *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, 2: 434 – 36, but that section is signed "I. H. K."; i. e., Ian Hugh Kawharu.

36. Even a casual examination of *The Matriarch* (1986) 239 reveals that phrases and whole sentences have been lifted from Sorenson 483, col. 1 and 484, col. 2. This section is reprinted without change or commentary in *The Matriarch* (2009)229 – 30.

37. Gauch, "Sampling Globalization," uses the same image of "sampling" as her explanation of the way in which Beyala appears to have appropriated the writings of others.

38. Thus in *The Trowenna Sea* (512 – 13), the description of the exhumation of Hohepa Te Umuroa 's remains on Maria Island, Tasmania follows closely the account given in Sinclair, *Maori Times*, *Maori Places* 188 – 89, including details from Hoana Amanita's unpublished diary of the event which Ihimaera could not have had access to (see Sinclair 254, fn. 5). Hoana died in 1995 (Sinclair 178). Sinclair, on the other hand has the grace to refer to Ihimaera's *The Matriarch* and *The Dream*

Swimmer (235, chap. 1, fn. 5).

39. He proudly lists some of these causes in his "Author's Note" to *The Martriarch* (2009):495 – 97 at 497.

40. For a survey of literary fakes in general, see K. K. Ruthven, *Faking Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) and for Australia in particular, the essays in Maggie Nolan and Carrie Dawson, eds., *Hoaxes, Imposture and Identity Crises in Australian Literature* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2004; = *Australian Literary Studies* 21.4). "The Darkening Ecliptic," a suite of sixteen poems by the supposedly deceased "Ern Malley" was published in the Autumn 1944 edition of *Angry Penguins* to great acclaim. The poems turned out to be pastiches (including part of a tract on mosquito eradication) put together by James McCauley and Harold Stewartas an attack on modernist tendencies in literature. The Serbian immigrant Street Boil wrote a series of novels under the aboriginal pseudonym, "B. Wongar." "Helen Demidenko" turned out to be Helen Danville, of English, not Ukrainian descent and whose family had nothing to do with the Holocaust as claimed in *The Hand that Signed the Paper* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994), which had won the Vogel Literary Award in 1993 for a work by an author under 35, the Miles Franklin award in 1995, and the Association for the Study of Australian Literature Gold Medal in the same year.

41. See Adam Shoemaker, "Mudrooroo and the Curse of Authenticity" in *Mongrel Signatures: Reflections on the Work of Mudrooroo*, ed. Annalisa Oboe, Cross/Cultures 64 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003)1 – 23 as well as other essays in the same volume.

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The Poignant Moment: From G. E. Lessing to Film Theory

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Abstract This essay connects a minimalist approach to Ekphrasis, the transfer from the visual to the textual as proposed by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, an eighteenth century playwright, poet, and theorist of the image. He influenced Bertolt Brecht's approach to cutting devices for the sake of montage in the epic theatre of the 20th century and Eisenstein's stills in film, as discussed in the context of theoretical statements by Roland Barthes. Lessing's minimalist approach to the visual can further be linked to condensation in film, such as discussed by Christian Metz and most recently Anton Kaes whose observations on the omission of the traumatic in post WWII cinema is reminiscent of Lessing's motto "The more we see the more we must be able to imagine."
Key Words Laokoön; Ekphrasis; poignant moment; minimalist visuality; film

> *Dasjenige aber nur allein ist fruchtbar, was der Einbildungskraft freies Spiel läßt. Je mehr wir sehen, desto mehr müssen wir hinzu denken können*
> —*Lessing, Laokoön* [1]

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729 - 81) is an eighteenth-century playwright, poet, and Enlightenment critic whose approach to the presentation of the visual has become path-breaking for theater, film production, and theories of timing images until today. Similar to his contemporary Denis Diderot (1713 - 1784), Lessing preferred sketches over finished paintings. Moreover, he developed an important new approach to visuality and experimented with it in his plays*Miss Sara Sampson*, *Emilia Galotti*, *Minna von Barnhelm* or *Nathan the Wise*. Lessing's theory of the poignant moment in visual representation as elaborated in his theoretical writings and letters had an impact on Bertolt Brecht's 20th century approach to epic theater. Brecht's theory of montage shows the traces of Lessing's idea to choose the most effective moment of action for the stage, the "pregnant moment" or the "fruitful moment" (Xu in *Comparative Cinema*, ed Allert 33 - 46). Also Roland Barthes' rhetoric of the image is related to what Lessing called the "obtuse meaning" which "disturbs or sterilizes any metalanguage" (Barthes 61) and which Barthes identified with "the crucial instant" (73) in his book *Image-Music-Text*. Barthes has also linked Lessing's approach with Sergei Eis-

enstein's filmic "stills" (69 – 78) which, for example turn the fist of an old woman into an icon for an entire era. Also, Christian Metz's concept of "the spilling over of the image" in film (289 – 92) could very well be traced back to Lessing's approach to ekphrastic condensation. Anton Kaes' interpretations of post WWII films such as Lang's *Metropolis* that may not be a "war film proper" yet, I think, reminiscent of Lessing. Kaes claims in his book *Shell Shock Cinema* that these films are "therefore doubly evocative" and he is correct to state in the same vein that in Lang's film *M* "trauma is present, yet invisible" (209). Kaes refers not only to cutting techniques and styles of abbreviation for practical purposes or for the sake of beauty, elegance, and art. Nor does he think of the spectators' "freedom" which Lessing first had in mind; Kaes argues that the only viable and artful way to "show the invisible wounds that remain when war has ended" can be presented via such significant reductions. It is convincing that one cannot always share pain, trauma, and violence on the screen in order to get spectators interested and think. More levels of metaphoric, metonymic, or indirect "showing" (or omission) may be needed.

Lessing wanted to establish an audience and chose a subtle approach to visuality as best summarized in his dictum: "But only what gives free reign to the imagination is effective. The more we see, the more we must be able to imagine." He suggested that in order to liberate the imagination of the onlookers during the performance of a play, especially a bourgeois drama, the artist must adhere to a minimalist approach to visuality. Ekphrasis is the process of narrating or textualizing the visual, the translation so to speak from visuality to textuality. Lessing suggested that any verbal portrayal of significant physical action as performed in a play or as described in a narrative should be similar to what a sculptor or a painter must do: they must limit themselves only to depict the most "poignant" (or pregnant, fruitful) moments of an entire action and cut the presentation before its climax.

Although Lessing acknowledges differences between the various disciplines and media, he insists on a common need of all effective languages of visuality: scarceness or minimalism.[2] He commented on those scenes as the most meaningful which had the most potential for action implied, were most compact. In his fables he cut any didactic comments or motto and made the story speak for itself. His parables were open-ended and his plays aimed at providing a selection of significant scenes rather than complete narratives or finished actions. As a literary critic he rejected what he believed was too much pictorialism in literature and he warned against expressions that appear overstated. He argued that they often become counter-productive and take away from the suggestive power of the visual arts.

Lessing explained this approach which I call in a book manuscript in process "Lessing's art of understatement" in his 1766 essay*Laokoön*, subtitled "On the Limits between Painting and Poetry" where he claims that visual art is the medium of space whereas music is the medium of time. Positioned between them is poetry or poetic writing ("Dichtung"), including all genres of literature. The artist must not only "translate" the visual into the verbal — as is expected in all Ekphrasis— but also deal with the problem of temporality, as music does.[3] Lessing carefully defines images as best when they are "almost" timeless, focusing on the most significant aspects

of inner actions (emotions) or outer actions (events). The artist should avoid the simultaneity of signs as typical for music by restricting its signs to sequences in space as in painting. It is best by avoiding temporality, or at least by condensing everything into poignant moments. Since according to Lessing the visual belongs to the dimension of space, whereas the acoustic or music belong to time, all languages of visuality must bracket, exclude, or postpone temporality and rely on sequential signs in space. Only then can they achieve an effective visual-verbal transfer, Ekphrasis.

When composing the*Laokoön* Lessing had to negotiate between rationalist and empiricist influences. He chose to avoid the empiricist approach to art associated with the work of the philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714 - 62) who in 1730 for the first time introduced and defined the word "Ästhetik." [4] Baumgarten understood aesthetics as a concept of knowledge, an activity derived from the senses, specifically the sense-perception of beauty, as opposed to knowledge exclusively acquired in a logical fashion through reason. His approach, treated in his two volumes of *Aesthetica* (1750 - 58), was then developed by the philosophy professor Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) in his *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790, *Critique of Judgment*). Kant's innovative student, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744 - 1803) pursuing also ideas by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646 - 1716) and while drawing insights from the famous Molyneux debate surrounding a blind person as reported by Etienne Bonnot de Condillac (1715 - 80), shifted attention away from the eyes more to the ears and then especially to touch in his *Kritische Wälder*. Lessing's approach in *Laokoön* was instrumental for Herder and for Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749 - 1832) who acknowledged how path breaking it was for a better understanding of the limits between painting and poetry but, as I argue in this essay, also for a more effective approach to textualize the visual.

Lessing chose not to use the word "Ästhetik" as Baumgarten had introduced it. In fact that word is only mentioned once by Lessing in the preface to*Laokoön* and somewhat dismissively. He did not share the idea that images in art should only present the beautiful, in part because of two other influences on him. In 1757 Moses Mendelssohn (1729 - 86) published an essay Lessing read as a student. In this essay, "Betrachtungen über die Quellen und die Verbindungen der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften" (Reflections on the Sources and the Links between the Belles-Lettres and the Sciences), [5] Mendelssohn raised the issue of how to define the relationship between the visual and the verbal arts in terms of poetic language and its ability to make use of various rhetorical devices to stimulate the imagination. Moreover, Lessing adopted ideas by Giambattista Vico (1668 - 1744), who considered metaphors not as secondary or derived language structures or shortened similes, as in antiquity Quintilian had done, but instead as primary language structures, an idea later recast by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 - 1900) for whom metaphors in language are "unhintergehbar" (unavoidable) (Bode 649).

It was important to Lessing as he explored "the broad fields of art theory" and what was then called aesthetics that spectators should have a sense of freedom. Images should not be imposed on them but appear as if "natural." He developed a semiotics how to achieve such apparent naturalness so that the signs appear "comfortable"

and not only "arbitrary as he puts it, a matter of rhetoric which is being achieved by suggested leaving plenty of space for thinking.[6] His rationalist approach was part of his didactic efforts to educate an audience by liberating people so that they might imagine and think on their own. Second, Lessing's approach to cutting wordiness and integrating silence in the rhetoric of the image involved metaphor and rhetorical devices including irony, dialogue, and stichomythia. He distilled his critical approach in his praise of statue of Laokoön, now in the Roman Vatican. This statue portrays a scene from Virgil's *Aeneid* (Brilliant 44 – 45).[7] Lessing paid attention to the restriction implied in the medium of the visual and performing arts. Language is much more flexible than stone; nonetheless, effective written descriptions need in his opinion to be as compressed as sculpture is. Moments depicted also have to be very well chosen.

Lessing's *Laokoön* offers a philosophy of the fine arts and the beautiful (which includes the horrible), investigating the poetics of numerous writers. It contains much that Lessing later incorporated in work as a playwright and poet, where he tested certain rules, features, and applications of so-called "Poesie."[8] Lessing was more of a writer than a painter but he strongly believed in textual visuality.[9] His fables, parables, and plays include dialogues, metaphors, and references that from various perspectives raise issues of visuality.

Bertolt Brecht later rediscovered Lessing in his own approach to the epic theatre, raising the audience to the same level as the stage. Also in film he makes use of montage, the technique of combining two clips to express some third thing which neither one nor the other element alone could have achieved. It qualitatively differs from the sum of these elements by involving an imaginary dynamic, a creative spark.

Very similar ideas are expressed by the film expert Christian Metz in *The Imaginary Signifier* when he writes about the technique of condensation in film which he links with Sigmund Freud's notion of "Verdichtung" or contraction, a thickening of experience or action as it often happens in dreams and as it has to be unraveled in order to understand their meaning. One must be able to read certain cues that have led to an "Entstellung" or displacement in the process in order to avoid certain psychological mechanisms, such as internal censorship. He finds that even in general there is a need of compression since: "The primary energetic of condensation is also a symbolic matrix: in order to say things more quickly, one has to say them differently and use different ideational paths (itineraries of discharge)" (236).[10] Metz argues that sometimes condensation is a temporary displacement or distortion in order to get to the most important message across, either in a dream or in a film.

The film producer and theorist Sergei Eisenstein refers to Lessing in his book *Film Form* and emphatically shares his awareness of the limits of the medium, as well as Lessing's rejection of "imitative limitations" of the arts (183). His approach to create stills in film that capture symbolic moments and symbolize an entire action or specific time in history draws consciously from Lessing's theoretical concepts of "prägnanter Moment" (poignant moment) and "stummer Schrei" (silent scream). To him, such moments are associated with "instants in which water becomes a new substance — steam, or ice — water, or pig-iron— steel." (172). Eisenstein com-

ments: "And from this — for the structure of the work we are analyzing as well as for the structure of any construction of pathos — we can say that a pathetic structure is one that compels us, echoing its movement, to re-live the moments of culmination and substantiation that are in the canon of all dialectical processes" (173). He similarly insists on engaging the audience or spectatorship in that subtle way.

In what follows I would like to suggest that an understanding of the temporality of film emerges for us if we look more closely at *Laokoön*, where Lessing addressed the problem of space and time and questioned temporality in art by positioning it with music. Lessing's *Laokoön* is composed of numerous dialogues and digressions and it offers an outline of the complexities of the various disciplines of art. It includes also the representation of suffering in art. Humans experience pain and horror, and the visual arts, literature and film, have always documented that, whether it was theoretically welcome or not.[11] Lessing used the more inclusive word "Poesie" in referring to the various poetic arts and literary genres and he claims they all have a life force.

As Herder had written, this force ("Kraft") works through all literary genres but according to Lessing with a difference in each. He argued that written images are often more impressive and leave a much stronger impact on the reader than the images on a canvas can do. The poetic image entices the spectators' imagination intensely; often calling for sympathy and making the public actively participate in the semiotic process; that is, the production of making meaning.[12] Herder's work also stressed the power of "Poesie." He called for "Synästhesie perception" and the fluid translatability among the senses but did not emphasize, as Lessing did, the differences between the senses. Lessing drew attention to the specific media differences and gaps between the visual, the acoustic, and the verbal. In doing so, he became a forerunner for Marshall McLuhan for whom the medium is not only inseparable from the message but the message itself (McLuhan 8).

Some critics have noticed in*Laokoön* a concession to time, an attempt to allow temporality and simultaneity of meaning not only in music but also in poetic texts. Lessing appears to indicate that images or pictures are also to some extent poetic and that they cannot, as other critics have argued, be banned from the verbal.[13] Critics have therefore interpreted this as a move to combine the visual and the verbal and to allow all aspects of temporality in the verbal and visual arts, not as any sort of concession but as one of Lessing's most important discoveries.[14]

In*Laokoön* Lessing proposed two related concepts that are particularly important to our modern conceptions of time in art which have in my understanding interesting resonances and consequences for film theory, montage techniques, and cinematography and are relevant in other practices of image sharing. The first he called the "prägnanter Moment" (pregnant or poignant moment) and the second "stummer Schrei" (silent scream) which he finds in the facial expression of the famous Laokoön statue. The father does not have his mouth wide open screaming for pain but only slightly open, merely as if sighing. This subdued expression is exemplary for effective visual art in Lessing's view since it does not impose too much upon the spectators but instead leaves much open, thus inviting "Mitleid" or compassion.

Whereas sculpture and painting exist in space, music exists only in time and has

the advantage of the simultaneity of its signs. Notions of "der prägnante Moment" (the poignant moment), and "der stumme Schrei" (the silent scream have had far-reaching theoretical consequences for later theorists, even those working with quite different media.[15] Lessing argues that since a painting can only depict one single moment in time, such a select moment must be chosen very carefully so that the implied potential of the entire action can be seen in a nutshell. The painter must think of the most poignant moment without giving away too much and thereby restricting the imagination.

By questioning the limitations between the visual and the verbal Lessing not only tried to establish dividing lines between them but inserted new meanings into the discussion. The art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717 – 68) had seen the statute during a visit to Rome in 1760. His response to the statue is found in*Gedanken über die Nachahmung Griechischer Werke in Malerei und Skulptur* (1755, Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture). Winckelmann had commented that the mouth of Laocoön — who is entwined in the coils of the dangerous serpents and has already been bitten — is only slightly ajar and not, as might be expected in real life, open and screaming. But whereas Winckelmann saw this in terms of the attributes representing the Classical ideals of "edle Einfalt" (noble simplicity) and "stille Größe" (silent grandeur) (32), Lessing naturally shifted attention away from the statue *per se* to the spectators. He argued that the artist must be aware of the medium being used, in this case, sculpture, and insists that it is the effect of what is being seen that matters. We are invited to think about the "silent scream," in terms of the signifiers, the attributes of the work of art, the medium of sculpture, and the process of reception."[16] Lessing recommends a mental experiment: "[M]an reiße dem Laokoön in Gedanken nur den Mund auf, und urteile. Man lasse ihn schreien und sehe."[17] The thing itself or the person represented in an artwork does not carry any predetermined meaning; what matters is the interaction with the observer.[18] Lessing stresses that the process of production of meaning detaches itself from the intentions of the artist and becomes instead a matter of reception.

Timing is crucial in these*pars pro toto* relations and requires the choice of the most poignant moment for the scene the work of art represents. The painter and the sculptor can only choose one moment in time to depict, and this moment must be the one that will most engage the imagination of the viewer (*Laokoön*, ch. 3; 5/2, 32). Lessing does not simply declare that there is polarity or an unbridgeable gap between painting and poetic writing.[19] He distinguishes between the means by which the visual and the textual signify.[20] There could be signs as "figures and color in space" and signs he calls "articulated sounds in time." He indirectly questions what he calls "suitable relations" or "comfortable relations" between signs and signified, thus entering the realm of more "unbequeme Zeichen" ("uncomfortable signs"). He draws attention to a gap in the signification process and asserts that bodies exist in space and time: "Doch alle Körper existieren nicht allein in dem Raume, sondern auch in der Zeit" (5/2, 116).[21] Here Lessing seems to question his earlier argument that the temporal and the spatial belong each to a different order. He brings them together by using the word "bodies" in a figurative sense. He shifts the level of his own discourse

by drawing attention to the fact that language can go beyond its own limits and that meanings are never entirely given. Lessing goes even further and raises the question of what is visible and what is invisible.[22] Since painting and the visual arts must be content with the visible, there is a problem, he argues, in that "die Körper" or the figures in space continue to have meaning beyond that limit of visibility:

> Sie dauern fort und können in jedem Augenblicke ihrer Dauer anders erscheinen, und in anderer Verbindung stehen. Jede dieser augenblicklichen Erscheinungen und Verbindungen ist die Wirkung einer vorhergehenden, und kann die Ursache einer folgenden, und sonach gleichsam das Centrum einer Handlung sein. Folglich kann die Malerei auch Handlungen nachahmen, aber nur andeutungsweise durch Körper... Die Malerei kann in ihren coexistierenden Compositionen nur einen einzigen Augenblick der Handlung nutzen, und muß daher den prägnantesten wählen, aus welchem das Vorhergehende und Folgende am begreiflichsten wird.[23]

The continuation of movements changes meanings constantly. Since each appearance and each moment of an impression can become the center of a new action, the artist must choose among all the possible coexisting compositions that may be implied. The most pregnant moment would suggest as many possibilities as possible. Since the choice of such an apparent frozen image out of the flux of time is not a way to control real time, it is a way to use fiction in order to make sense of a complex and changing reality which, nevertheless, as Lessing is fully aware, always depends on processes of reception, not only of production.

*Laokoön*is most often debated as if Lessing were asserting a strict dividing line determining the boundaries between painting and literature, the visual and the verbal. On the other hand, if understanding imagination and images means transposing them into a narrative, then visual art and metaphor must first be translated into discursive language before their meaning can be deciphered. However, Lessing does not necessarily propose a translation between media, a textualizing of the statue into narrative. Visualization of an artwork may be simulated by reading about it, yet there is no friction-free transfer of the visual into the verbal. In *Laokoön*, chapter 14, Lessing points out that a poetic picture is not necessarily something that can be converted into a material painting (5/2, 112). There is a residue, something that is not entirely translatable in the process. Metaphors, metonymies, and elements of Ekphrasis remain unconverted. On the other hand, the poet makes the subject so concrete for us that we become more conscious of the subject referred to than of his words. Benjamin Bennett's reading of *Laokoön* as a poetics shows how Lessing goes "beyond theory" by initiating moments of reflection. These cannot simply be reduced to a comparison of painting and poetry. Instead they allow us an experience of multiple senses best achieved by poetry, including music (128). Carol Jacobs has emphasized the significant "performative" features of Lessing's essay that depend primarily on the attentiveness of readers and spectators. In her interpretation, Lessing's *Laokoön* is not only an art-theoretical treatise; it also invites interaction and experience. There are indeed

features of Lessing's text that seem to subvert or to undercut his major argument about the borders between painting and poetry, because Lessing inserts more than one layer of meaning to his arguments, drawing attention to the exceptional, and thus suggesting multiple sense perceptions and multiple relationships between painting and poetry.

Notes

1. Lessing, *Laokoön*, ch. 3 (5/2, 32) ("But only that which gives free rein to the imagination is effective. The more we see, the more we must be able to imagine" [Lessing as translated into English by McCormick 19]). All subsequent citations throughout my essay will be from the Frankfurt edition of Lessing citing volume and page numbers. The translations of Lessing's *Laokoön* are from McCormick's translation cited as "McCormick." All other translations in this essay are mine.
2. Beate Allert, ed. *Languages of Visuality. Crossings between Science, Art, Politics, and Literature*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996) 1 – 25.
3. For an elaborate presentation of the history of the term "Ekphrasis" which is initially based on Homer's lively description of the shield of Achilles in book 18 of the *Iliad* and for a range of debates surrounding it, see Murray Krieger, *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1992).
4. " §. CXVI. Sunt ergo noētá cognoscenda facultate superiore obiectum logices, asthētá episēmēs aisthētikēs siueaestheticae." See Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus*, (Halle: Literis Ioannis Henrici Grunerti, 1739) 39; "Therefore things known are to be known by the superior faculty as the object of logic; things perceived [are to be known by the inferior faculty, as the object] of the science of perception, or aesthetic" (Baumgarten 78); See also Baumgarten, *Aesthetica*, 2 vols. (Trajectum cis Viadrum [Frankfurt an der Oder]: Johann Christian Kleyb, 1750 – 1758). Reprinted from edition of 1961, (Hildesheim: Olms, 1986). His concept of "aesthetica" is a neo-Latin coinage. For a brief history of the issues involved, see Alan Goldman, "The Aesthetic," *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*, Ed. Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes, (London: Routledge, 2001) 181 – 92; Luc Ferry, *Homo Aestheticus: The Development of Taste in the Democratic Age*, Trans. Robert de Laoiza, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993). Rev. trans. of *Le Sens de beau: aux origines de la culture contemporaine*, (Paris: Cercle de l'Art, 1998); Allert Beate, "Lessing's Poetics as an Approach to Aesthetics," *A Companion to the Works of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing*, Ed. Barbara Fischer and Thomas C. Fox, (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005) 104 – 30, to which this essay is very much in debt. See further Immanuel Kant, *Werke*. 6 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998); Johann Gottfried Herder, *Kritische Wälder*. In *Werke*, ed. Günther Arnold et al. 10 vols. in 11, (Stuttgart: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985 – 2000), Vol. 2 (1993), ed. Gunther E. Grimm: 9 – 442, 812 – 1105.
5. This essay was revised as "Ueber die Hauptgrundsätze."
6. Lessing asserts that he will draw the evidence for his arguments from the original texts, and not, like Baumgarten did in his *Aesthetica* rely on a dictionary of quotations.
7. Catterson claims that the statue was a forgery foisted on Pope Julius II by Michelangelo. This generated considerable controversy but the weight of opinion seems to be on the side of Richard Brilliant who is of the opinion that Catterson's claim is "noncredible on any count" (Kathryn Shuttuck, "An Ancient Masterpiece or a Master's Forgery?" *New York Times* [April 18, 2005]: E7).
8. Such an approach has already been suggested by Bennett, chapter 3: "Lessing's Laokoön: The Poetics of Experience" (See Benjamin Bennett, *Beyond Theory: Eighteenth-Century German Literature and the Poetics of Irony*, [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993] 116 – 61, esp. 154 – 58).

9. This is one of my arguments in response to Mitchell, *Iconology* and *Picture Theory*, who in my reading correctly links poetics with politics but unfortunately does not realize Lessing's important contribution to the visual-verbal debate. For more on this see Allert Beate, "Horaz-Lessing-Mitchell: Ansätze zu Bild-Text Relationen und kritische Reflexionen zur weiteren Ekphrasis-Debatte," In *Visual Culture*, Ed. Monika Schmitz-Emans and Gertrud Lehnert, (Heidelberg: Synchron-Verlag, 2008) 37 – 49; See also Louis Rose, *The Survival of Images*, *Art Historians*, *Psychoanalysis*, *and the Ancients*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2001).

10. Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Pyschoanalysis and the Cinema*, Trans. Celia Britton et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982). First published as: *Le Signifiant imaginaire: Psychoanalyse et cinéma*, (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1977) 236 – 244. Also useful in this context are the essays in Linda Williams, *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995).

11. While the term "Poesie" is often translated as "Poetry," that term in English is too restrictive, as it is clear from the text that Lessing includes lyric, epic, and drama under that heading. Therefore the term is translated here as "poetic arts."

12. Lessing has been considered a semiotician. See, for example Gunter Gebauer, "Die Beziehungen von Bild und Text in Lessings*Laokoön*," In *Texte-Image*, *Bild-Text*, Ed. Sybil Dümchen and Michael Nerlich, (Berlin: Institut für Romanische Literaturwissenschaft, Technische Universität Berlin, 1990) 17 – 27; Gebauer, ed. *Das Laokoon-Projekt: Pläne einer semiotischen Ästhetik*, (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984); and David E. Wellbery, *Lessing's Laocoon: Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

13. See further Allert Beate, "Lessing im Kontext kunsttheoretischer Debatten," *Lessing Yearbook* 32 (2000): 371 – 87; Jeoraldean McClain, "Time in the Visual Arts: Lessing and Visual Criticism," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 44 (1985): 41 – 58; Michael Cohen, "Lessing on Time and Space in the Sister Arts: The Artist's Refutation," *Lessing and the Enlightenment*, Ed. Alexej Ugrinsky, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1986) 13 – 23.

14. Burgard's reading involves an equation, a textualizing of the visual.

15. Among them are the filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein (1898 – 1948) and the art theorist Roland Barthes (1915 – 80). Also see Beate Allert, "Lessing im Kontext" and "Reconceptualizing a Pictorial Turn: Lessing, Hoffmann, Klee and Elements of Avant-Garde Language," *Breaking the Disciplines: Reconceptions in Knowledge*, *Art & Culture*, Ed. Martin L. Davies and Marsha Meskimmon, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003) 187 – 222, esp. 195 – 200.

16. Lessing, *Laokoön*, ch. 2; 5/2, 29. "The scream had to be softened to a sigh, not because screaming betrays an ignoble soul, but because it distorts the features in a disgusting manner" (Lessing as translated into English by McCormick 17).

17. Lessing, *Laokoön*, ch. 2; 5/2, 29. "Simply imagine Laocoön's mouth forced wide open, and then judge! Imagine him screaming, and then look!" (McCormick 17). See further Reinhart Meyer-Kalka, "Schreit Laokoon? Zur Diskussion pathetischerhabener Darstellungsformen im 18. Jahrhundert," *Von der Rhetorik zur Ästhetik: Studien zur Entstehung der Moderne Ästhetik im* 18. *Jahrhunderts*, Ed. Gérard Raulet, (Rennes: Centre de Récherche Philia, Université de Rennes 2, 1995)67 – 110.

18. This may not necessarily be the case, as demonstrated by the counter-examples in Astrid Guderian-Driesen, *Die Stimme in der Kunst*, (Bad Rappenau: Kulturhaus Forum Fränkischer Hof, 1989), esp. "Der Schrei," 86 – 107. See also Simon Richter, *Laocoon's Body and the Aesthetics of Pain: Winckelmann*, *Lessing*, *Herder*, *Moritz*, *Goethe*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992).

19. See Peter Utz, *Das Auge und das Ohr im Text: Literarische Sinneswahrnehmung in der Goethezeit*, (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1990). In summarizing what he refers to as Lessing's aesthetics in chapter 3 (39 – 53), Utz draws upon the words of the Templar in Lessing's *Nathan*

der Weise as he addresses Nathan's daughter, Recha: "Wie ist doch meine Seele zwischen Auge / Und Ohr geteilt" (Act 3, sc. 2; 9, 545) ("How indeed is my soul split between eye and ear"). Utz connects this splitting of the senses with the historic division of labor in the nascent industrial age and also associates Lessing's *Laokoon* with a "Territorialisierung der Künste" (42) ("territorializing of the arts") and "eine Kolonialisierung des Körpers" (42) ("a colonizing of the body").

20. "[I]f it is true that in its imitations painting uses completely different means or signs than does poetry, namely figures and colors in space rather than articulated sounds in time, and if these signs must indisputably bear a suitable relation to the thing signified, then signs existing in space can express only objects whose wholes or parts coexist, while signs that follow one another can express only objects whose wholes or parts are consecutive" (Lessing, *Laokoön*, as trans by McCormick 78).

21. "However, bodies do not exist in space only, but also in time" (Lessing as translated into English by McCormick 78).

22. This question was much later raised again and developed further by the painter Paul Klee (1879 – 1940); see "Reconceptualizing a Pictorial Turn: Lessing, Hoffmann, Klee and Elements of Avant-Garde Language," *Breaking the Disciplines: Reconceptions in Knowledge, Art & Culture*, ed. Martin L. Davies and Marsha Meskimmon, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003) 186 – 222.

23. *Laokoön*, ch. 16; 5/2, 116 – 17. "They persist in time and in each moment of their duration they may assume a different appearance or stand in a different combination. Each of these momentary appearances and combinations is the result of the preceding one and can be the cause of the subsequent one, which means that it can be, as it were, the center of an action. Consequently, painting too can imitate actions. [⋯] Painting can use only a single moment of an action in its coexisting compositions and must therefore choose the one that is most suggestive and from which the preceding and the succeeding actions are most easily comprehensible" (Lessing as translated into English by McCormick 78). On the implications of "der prägnanteste Augenblick," see further Norbert Christian Wolf, "'Fruchtbarer Augenblick' — 'prägnanter Moment': Zur medienspezifischen Funktion einer ästhetischen Kategorie in Aufklärung und Klassik," in *Prägnanter Moment: Studien zur deutschen Literatur der Aufklärung und Klassik: Festschrift für Hans-Jürgen Schings*, Ed. Peter-André Alt, et al. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002) 373 – 404.

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English in the Expanding Circle: the Differences Do Make a Difference

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Abstract Generalizations can be made about the role and status of English in sociocultural contexts, in which this language has long been considered the sole property of native speakers, has been taught English as a foreign language, has relied on external linguistic norms, and privileged the canons of American and British literature. In sociolinguistic literature these contexts are referred to as the expanding circle of world Englishes. However, a closer look at individual contexts — whether defined along national (e.g., English in Brazil) or regional lines (English in Europe) — shows that not only are these broad generalizations often inaccurate characterizations of the expanding circle as a whole, but also that each context — although indeed similar in some respects to one another — has characteristics that distinguish it from another. Differences can be seen, for example, with respect to the history of contact with English speakers, the status of English vis-à-vis local languages, or the role of English in various domains of use. In many respects, the differences are a consequence of changes introduced by processes of globalization. This paper following overviews differences between and among three expanding circle contexts (Brazil, China, and Germany) and outlines the significance of their distinctiveness for implications of the world Englishes paradigm for teaching not only the English language but for other areas of English studies as well.
Key words world Englishes; English as a foreign language; pedagogy

It is important at the outset of this exploration of key issues relating to the world contexts in which the use, learning, and development of new varieties of English are expanding to make clear what the "differences" and "difference" in my subtitle "The Differences Do Make a Difference" refer to. There are two. One is in the context of a comparison between countries a contact with and use of English. The other refers to differences between native speaker and non-native speaker Englishes. That is, how do countries differ with respect to various characteristics of the presence of English and what is salient about the Englishes of two groups of users?

The theoretical model informing this examination is known as "world Englishes" developed by Braj Kachru,[1] a key principle of which is according those varieties of English that have developed/are developing since the colonial period and in the course of globalization outside of North America, the United Kingdom, Australia,

Canada, and New Zealand a status equal to these native varieties. The relationship of the countries to this development is depicted by a set of three concentric circles (see figure 1). The long established Englishes of these locales are called "inner circle Englishes" due, in part, to the role their particular English plays as a national variety and as norm and model providers for learners and users. The developed and developing Englishes are of two types: "outer circle" Englishes are represented by, for example, the Englishes of South Asia and parts of Africa which acquired English through processes of colonization, and "expanding circle" Englishes represented by, for example, the varieties of English found in East Asia, Europe, and South America, regions which acquired the language less by processes of colonization and more so through other means, for example, globalization, military occupation, or international trade. It is in such countries that the number of those using the language and the number of purposes it serves are growing; thus, the choice of "expanding" as a label. This conceptualization of the world's Englishes in terms of concentric circles articulates salient differences between and among three broad contexts of English language learning and use. But it does more than that. It also differentiates the historical context of the spread of English to and within each circle, the functional distribution of English in various contexts, and the status of English for each. In this regard, the model is helpful in understanding how English has come to be as it is linguistically, culturally, and socially, and why we can no longer (if we ever could have in any meaningful way) speak of a unitary English language, of THE English language. Thus, from the world Englishes perspective, the Englishes of the world share equal standing (linguistically, if not attitudinally). That is, Indian English is no more an illegitimate offspring of British English (or more precisely, English English) than is American English.

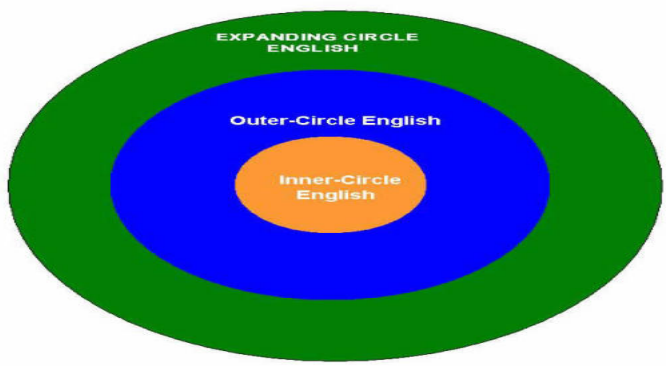

Figure 1. Kachru's Concentric Circles Model of World Englishes
Source: Crystal, David. *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 54. 1997.

1. The Expanding Circle and Its Englishes

The Englishes of the expanding circle have only fairly recently been recognized as worthy of study in their own right.[2] Outer circle Englishes at one time were neglected

as well, but the past 30 years or so have seen a marked increase in both an examination of their stable linguistic properties and their sociolinguistic realities as well as in their recognition as stand-alone varieties.[3] Generally the distinctiveness of the outer circle varieties is identified by the same formula used to label inner circle varieties (e.g., Australian English), with the result that the English of Nigeria is referred to as Nigerian English, the English of India as Indian English, and so forth. Expanding circle Englishes follow the same formula. Thus German English or Chinese English generally is used to describe instances of phonological, morphological, syntactic, or lexical transference from a user's native language. The use of the labels recognizes that these Englishes represent a unique world view and set of values—a distinct identity—that are expressed in a unique form of English.

Table 1 Sociolinguistic features of English in Brazil, China, and Germany

Feature /*Country*	Brazil (South America)	China (East Asia)	Germany (Western Europe)
Means of spread	Globalization Neo-imperialism	Globalization	Globalization Military occupation
History of contact with English speakers	19th century Mid-20th century to present	18th century Mid to late 20th century to present	19th century Mid-20th century to present
Norms guiding use	Inner Circle dependent Norm developing	Inner Circle dependent Norm developing(?)	Inner Circle dependent Norm developing
Teaching tradition	English as a foreign language (EFL) English as an inter-national language (EIL)	English as a foreign language (EFL) English as an inter-national language (EIL)	English as a foreign language (EFL) English as an inter-national language (EIL)
Contexts of use	International	International Regional	International Regional
Acknowledged varieties	Educated variety	Educated variety Pidgin variety	Educated variety
Functional range	Interpersonal Innovative	Interpersonal Innovative (literary and linguistic)	Interpersonal Innovative
Presence in society	Moderate	Limited	Extensive

Table 1 provides a set of sociolinguistic features for three expanding circle countries. These features highlight differences in the context of English in each location, differences that contribute to the individual identities of the Englishes. This is not to suggest that expanding circle contexts have no shared characteristics; they do, and these include a tradition of teaching English for interaction with native speakers, choosing inner circle Englishes as classroom models, using English in a limited range of functions, and a history with the language that is other than colonial.

Elaboration upon each of these features is available in a growing body of literature, [4] and I cannot claim that this small table, which highlights selected features of particular relevance to the present discussion, does justice to the complex realities of English in these countries, whether past or present. Nevertheless, in spite of these shortcomings, the features described can illustrate key differences and suggest implications for pedagogy.

2. The Sociolinguistics of English in Brazil and Germany

In Brazil, English has spread primarily by means of interaction with other speakers of English, initially inner circle speakers for business and trade and with written texts in science and technology. It does not share a colonial past with English as it has with Portuguese. Although the political contexts for contact have not always been positive, an increasingly globalized world has increased not only contact with users of the language but also wide and open access to such English language medium cultural products as pop music, film, television, and the internet. Brazil, however, is surrounded by speakers of Spanish, and thus its opportunities for regional use are more limited. At earlier stages of contact English was taught to prepare learners for interaction with inner circle, primarily British and later American speakers and the cultural orientation was likewise British and American. The processes and practices of globalization have introduced Brazilians to other expanding as well as outer circle users of English and to other varieties. As a result of more users making more use of English in professional situations, a Brazilian English, that used by educated speakers, is gaining ground and thereby acceptance among its users. [5] This is not to say that all instances of English produced by Brazilians would be seen as conforming to an educated standard; such cases might be the innovations found in advertising and marketing, domains in which word play and linguistic creativity are highly valued, exploited and, often, ephemeral.

English functions as means of communication within the Asian region more for Chinese users than it does for Brazilians across South and Central America. Although learning of Chinese is growing among Japanese and Koreans, English plays a large role in regional interactions. China, as distinguished from Brazil and Germany, has its own literary figures who write in English. The Chinese writer Ha Jin, for example, has produced novels and short stories in English with settings and situations unique to the experience of a native Chinese for whom English is not a first language. China is further distinguished from Brazil in its caution toward acceptance of an English that deviates too far from an inner circle model. Great care is given to differentiating various Englishes associated with Chinese users along a cline, or continuum of Englishes.

Chinese Pidgin English, considered at the lower end of the cline, originated in the eighteenth century. The stigma associated with it carries over to the variety next up on the cline: Chinglish (a blend of Chinese and English). While Chinese English is regarded as a descriptively neutral term among most sociolinguists, the variation associated with this variety is no higher in acceptability among some prominent Chinese scholars than is what is called Chinglish. The highest point on the cline is accorded China English. This is the variety of English spoken by Chinese that is based in standard inner circle English, yet is able to express Chinese ways of being and thinking, and thus is acceptable for international communication. [6]

The sociolinguistic features of English in Germany provide yet another profile. As for Brazil and China, globalization plays a significant role in expanding Germans opportunities for contact with English and the need for its learning and use. Yet, Germany's twentieth-century history with English, especially the American variety, marks it from past experiences with English in the other two countries. Prior to the mid-twentieth century, English was part of an elite education. After 1940, contact with the language and speakers increased for other members of society due to the presence of the American military who participated in the local economy and interacted with the general populace. Consequently, American English became a competitor for British English. As globalization of entertainment and media products as well as business and technological innovations advances to a generally receptive German population, Germany's already extensive exposure to English increases. The use of English for official purposes among member state representatives of the European Union makes it of regional importance for expressing German-ness. Acceptance of German English as an acceptable and appropriate label for the English spoken by educated Germans is more common than it was in the mid-20th century[7], when anything but adherence to a native speaker standard was considered "Denglish." [8]

3. Pedagogy and the Englishes of the Expanding Circle

The foregoing profiles of English in three expanding circle countries illustrate features of variation in a particular context's experience with English as a foreign and international language. The only direct reference to pedagogical concerns in table 1 is to the teaching of the language, which traditionally has been as a foreign language, that is, with the goal of interacting with native speakers or appreciating a culture through the reading of original texts. More recently attention has turned to teaching for international communication, yet still to some extent with focus on inner circle Englishes norms for learning and use as the classroom models. But interest in a nationally-identifiable standard variety as a local model is increasing. The description and acceptance of the local varieties is a chief concern for classroom teachers and materials developers as the numbers of learners of all ages increase. The value placed on the learning of English is evident in its role in the schools. In most areas of China English is the only language option in the school curriculum. English is Mandatory from primary through the first two years of college or university. Even those engaging in PhD research find their English proficiency tested and their scores playing a role in their future. China is not alone in promoting early learning of English. Italy, Taiwan,

Mexico, Spain, Turkey, South Korea, Egypt, France, Vietnam, and Bulgaria for example, require it from third grade. [9] Entry into a good university can depend upon good scores on the English part of the entrance exam as in Japan and China, but not in Germany or Hungary.

Each country's pedagogical responses to English relate to the needs—perceived or real —that this language serves for society and of the domains in which it is used. International diplomacy and international relations, business and commerce have an impact on the use of English in the workplace and the media. Developments in research and technology are to a very large extent disseminated through English. Good paying jobs and prestigious careers are associated with knowledge of English. Economic and social advancement on the national as well as personal level are also linked with proficiency in the language; an example of the latter is Hungary in the 1990s, when English was a means of achieving the goal of "catching up with Europe" (Petzold and Berns 113). This push led to a proliferation of language schools and to lucrative side incomes for English teachers as private tutors.

China, as a result of the national fever for English, has teaching positions that cannot yet be filled by Chinese teachers of English. Inner circle imports—and their varieties of English—are in great demand. Nevertheless, there are many teachers in Chinese classrooms who have had no experience living in or travelling to an English speaking country. Their English is the product of the textbooks they learned from, of the media they access, and of the proficiency and communicative competence of their teachers, who like them, were non-native speakers. Compounding the effects of these influences, which may or may not have contributed to outcomes that measure up to the native speaker standard, is the availability of media and materials in English heard or read in various inner circle or outer circle Englishes. Important in discussions of local varieties in any context — China is not alone in this respect — the impact of different varieties, standards, and proficiency levels as well as degrees of competence on the English of teachers and learners cannot be ignored. Those varieties, as a mixture of all these influences, contribute to the distinctiveness of new varieties from inner circle models, which give a variety its Brazilian-ness or Hungarian-ness.

Are these problems serious? Is it the task of language teaching to prevent or eradicate them? An affirmative reply to both questions comes from those who fear that tolerance of local variation in English creates a barrier to intelligibility and thus to effective and successful international communication. This concern is not new. It has long given rise to the dream of a stable form of English for use as a lingua franca in international settings. In the 1930s, C. K. Ogden's Basic English was proposed as the realization of this dream. [10] A simplified form of English, it comprises a selection of 850 English words used in simple structural patterns and reduces spelling and pronunciation irregularities. A more recent attempt to simplify the learning of English for international communication is represented by the English as Lingua Franca Movement (e. g. , Jenkins 2006; Seidlhofer, 2001), which seeks to identify core features of English as it is used in non-native speaker—non-native speaker interactions with an eye not only toward description but also to teaching these features to learners of

what they label "English as Lingua Franca", or ELF. [11]

Such attempts are futile of course and will have no long lasting effect on the teaching of English simply because the way English is used—how it sounds, how it makes meaning—are markers of identity and reflections of the dynamics of language contact and change. Such change and variation demands of all users (inner, outer, or expanding circles) that they negotiate their own common forms and norms for their purposes and needs. This constant renewal and creation of meanings and structures among users from diverse language and cultural backgrounds militate against development of a stable, universally used variety restricted to international communication. The failure of attempts to simplify language is also demonstrated by the ways in which literature enriches language through highlighting linguistic creativity and introducing new idioms. Similarly, the translation of literature into Basic also compromises the integrity of the original work. Reading*Gulliver's Travels* in Basic (which has been done) is not quite the same experience as reading Swift's prose; fiction is not simply the telling of a story, but the telling of it in an interesting way.

4. Goals for the Teaching of English

As already discussed, in places like Brazil and Germany the traditional classroom model for learners is shifting from an inner circle English to a local model. Part of this shift is due to the recognition that the use of English is no longer limited to interaction with native speakers. Without British English or American English as the common denominator and native-like control of one of these varieties as the goal, what is it that learners are to achievement?

Goals for the language classroom can be redirected in three closely related ways[12]. The first is toward intelligibility, which replaces native-like pronunciation in spoken English. That is, can the speaker be understood in spite of deviations from a native speaker norm? For instance, can (\kəm-′puw-tər\ be recognized as the device known in American English as a computer (phonologically \kəm-′pyü-tər\)? The second is toward comprehensibility, as opposed to flawless syntax. That is, are the meanings of the words and utterances recognizable? For example, is "How does he look like" recognizable as an alternate formulation of "What does he look like" And third, redirection toward interpretability rather than adoption of cultural norms foreign to the local context. That is, are the meanings behind the words and utterances recognizable? For instance, is the utterance "I see you've put on weight" recognized as a comment on one's well-being and apparent good health [13] and not an inappropriate statement better left unsaid? When the criteria of intelligibility, comprehensibility and interpretability are met for the context, for the situation, and for the setting, then the differences in Englishes do not have to make a difference. Learners do not have to ashamed of what they do not know, but instead confident of what they can do in English, with English, and to English, to make themselves understood through negotiation of meaning and adjustment to one another's variety. Furthermore, they can see the language they are learning as a new means of expressing themselves, their cultural values and ways of being. Learners can take pride in being a linguistic deviant and know that they are in good company with everyone else in the expanding circle.

Up to this point I have focused on pedagogy with reference to standards and norms and models for the classroom, to the teaching of what is needed to be a competent user of the language. Part of this task, as pointed out, is the choice of a variety of English to teach, but this is clearly not all that is required for communicative competence in the English language milieu of the twenty-first century. Learners also benefit from contact with an array of varieties, inner, outer and expanding circle, not only because it prepares them for interaction with English speakers beyond their immediate environment but also because it provides a means for appreciating their own varieties of English as natural products of social and linguistic processes. Classroom exposure to Englishes from around the world for these purposes (and not for the testing of learners' comprehension of each variety or their ability to produce these varieties), also encourages tolerance of variation as difference (not deficiency) and acceptance of the presence of English as a global phenomenon with local interpretations and not as the sole province of the inner circle speaker.

More broadly, the world Englishes paradigm has implications for the field of English studies beyond the teaching of English as a foreign language. For example, English linguistics can draw upon spoken as well as written texts in an examination of the history of the English language and sociolinguistics courses have in world Englishes material for the study of language attitudes, language change, and language policy. Descriptive linguistics can give attention to the documentation of the features of the various new varieties. Descriptions of the forms and functions of the particular varieties are interesting not only as grammatical reference points, but also as evidence for the recognition of these varieties as systematic and legitimate Englishes.

Insights from a world Englishes perspective are relevant to the exploitation of the innovative function of English in literary (poetry and fiction) as well as linguistic (vocabulary, pronunciation, and the like) terms. Among the three countries examined here, China has an advantage over Brazil and Germany with respect to literary creativity because it has established writers whose fiction provides effective expressions of an author's experience as a Chinese who uses English as the medium.[14] These writers provide learners not only with examples of effective writing, but also with illustrations of how Chinese-ness can be expressed through a language other than their own language or dialect. These new literatures have a place in English literature courses, as well, as examples of literary excellence on all levels.

The question posed at the outset of this study asked, first, how countries of the expanding circle differ with respect to various characteristics of the presence of English and, second, how these differences impact the Englishes associated with the countries of this circle. The foregoing discussion has highlighted salient differences on both aspects and how the distinctions affect a variety of issues. This include how to name the varieties that are developing, whether or not there is a literature available that captures the cultural as well as linguistic dimensions of the variety and its context of use, and the extent to which those inside and outside the particular expanding circle context are ready to accept a variety that expresses the sociolinguistic realities of speakers other than those of the so-called native speakers. The teaching of English and the teaching of world Englishes within the boundaries of these realities will de-

pend upon the resolution of these issues on a case by case basis.

Notes

1. This theory of world Englishes has been developed over 40 decades through the work of the linguist Braj B. Kachru and scholars working within the paradigm associated with his views. Acomprehensive documentation and discussion is available in Braj Kachru, Yamuna Kachru, and Cecil L. Nelson, eds. *Handbook of World Englishes* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006).
2. This situation is changing, as documented in an increasing number of publications, including books and numerous articles papers in the journal *World Englishes* of which the following are just a few examples Berns, 2005; Berns and Friedrich, 2003; Hilgendorf, 2007; and Smith, 2005.
3. The primary focus of world Englishes study was the sociolinguistic contexts of English-speaking Africa and South Asia and earlier publications reflected this due to the goal of demonstrating that the standard varieties of outer circle Englishes were not deficient, but as legitimate as any inner circle variety.
4. See note 2 above.
5. Sávio Siqueira, personal communication, 20 November 2010.
6. See Yajun Jiang. "China English: Issues, Studies, and Features." *Asian Englishes*, 5, 1 (2002): 4 – 23.
7. On this point see, for example, Ammon, 2000.
8. Discussions of Denglish continue; see, for example, Zabel, 2001.
9. For insights into teaching in these countries, see McCloskey et al., 2006. ,
10. See C. K. Ogden. *Basic English: A General Introduction with Rules and Grammar*. London: Paul Treber & Co., 1930.
11. For accounts of the start and direction of this movement, see Jenkins, 2006, and Seidlhofer, 2001.
12. This three part model, introduced by Larry Smith, is elaborated upon in Smith and Nelson, 2006.
13. This is the meaning of the utterance as explained by a Zambian friend after greeting me with this statement.
14. Ha Jin is just one example. For a review of Jin's work and a response to its foreignness, see Updike, 2007, and Jin, 2010.

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Orpheus and the Racialized Body in Brazilian Film and Literature of the Twentieth Century

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Abstract This paper argues for the significance of Orpheus as a racialized body in Brazil. A consistent feature of Orpheus in Brazil throughout the twentieth century is his blackness. This is the case in each of the three variations of the Orpheus myth in twentieth – century Brazilian drama and literature: Vinicius de Moraes' play, *Orfeu da Conceição* (*Orpheus of Conception*), Marcel Camus' *Black Orpheus*, and Carlos Diegues's *Orfeu*. Thus Brazilian Orpheus fit into a context not only of twentieth – century classical reception in Brazil and throughout the modern world, but also in discussions of Afrodescendent communities in Brazil and the Americas.

Key Words Race; Black Orpheus; Classical Reception; Afrodescendent communities; Brazilian literature

> The film, a groundbreaker of sorts due to its mostly black, Brazilian cast, had been made in the fifties. The storyline was simple: the myth of the ill – fated lovers Orpheus and Eurydice set in the favelas of Rio during carnival, in Technicolor splendour, set against scenic green hills, the black and brown Brazilians sang and danced and strummed guitars like carefree birds in colourful plumage. About halfway through the movie I decided I'd seen enough, and turned to my mother to see if she might be ready to go. But her face, lit by the blue glow of the screen, was set in a wistful gaze. At that moment I felt as if I were being given a window into her heart, the unreflective heart of her youth. I suddenly realised that the depiction of the childlike blacks I was now seeing on the screen, the reverse image of Conrad's dark savages, was what my mother had carried with her to Hawaii all those years before, a reflection of the simple fantasies that had been forbidden to a white, middle – class girl from Kansas, the promise of another life: warm, sensual, exotic, different. (Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States of America, in *Dreams of My Father*)

In the quote above, Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States of America, talks about his experience watching *Black Orpheus* with his mother. Son of a Kenyan father and a white American mother, Obama, who complains about his mother's "wistful gaze" upon the "childlike blacks" in Camus' 1959 film, misses the extent to which—or resents the imposition through which —he himself is black

Orpheus: a gifted body, at risk of being torn apart under the gaze and desires of others. Obama's quote does not only convey the lasting import of Camus' *Black Orpheus*, as a film with such far-reaching influence as to be discussed in the biography of an American president. But Obama's quote also suggests the timelessness of the idea of black Orpheus: again, Obama is himself the racialized body, at the mercy of an external gaze to maintain its integrity.

Camus' *Black Orpheus* is notable not only for a black Diaspora, which includes an American president, but it also bears fruit in its native Brazilian soil. A sizable percentage of the Brazilian population claims African heritage - by some estimations, 50% of the population, or 100 million people (Page 1995). The film, moreover, has a rich back-story within its Brazilian framework. From the opening credits, Camus' movie claims a genealogy in Vinicius de Moraes' 1956 *Orfeu da Conceição* (*Orpheus of the Conception*), a play so influential in itself as to be restaged in its original city of São Paulo in 2010. In 1999, Brazilian filmmaker Carlos Diegues remade the Camus film, and he claimed to re-root black Orpheus in its original soil. In its opening credits, Diegues' *Orfeu*, like Camus' film, claims to be based on Moraes' play. Outside of the movies and theater, a number of books within and outside of Brazil take Orpheus as its organizing trope, including political scientist Michael Hancard's study of black social movements in Brazil, titled *Orpheus and Power* (1995).

A study of black Orpheus in Brazil, of which Camus 1959 movie is the principal vehicle, is in order. With the rise of classical reception studies specifically interested in non-traditional and postcolonial frameworks for the Classics, there is an unprecedented context for such a study. The revival of Moraes' film in 2010 closes a chapter on the artistic projects of the 1950s in Brazil, but it also suggests that the power of the symbol of black Orpheus in Brazil is no weaker today that it was over half a decade ago.

Black Orpheus and Postcolonial Reception Studies

During the past decade, a number of scholars have created a context for reading the legacy of Greece and Rome outside of the traditional frameworks. In*Classics & Colonialism*, which was published in 2005 but grew out of a 2001 conference at the Institute of Classical Studies in London, Barbara Goff argues that Classics as a discipline "has played a role both in imperialist and colonialist movements and in the opposing movements of resistance" (6). In the same volume, Lorna Hardwick reflects upon her Research Project on the Reception of Classical Texts, at the Open University. Hardwick asserts that analysis of "over 700 recent productions of Greek drama" leads her to conclude that "there is a pattern of features that suggest a distinctive role for classical material in provoking awareness and transformation of cultural identities" (107). My own *Ulysses in Black: Ralph Ellison, Classicism, and African American Literature*, is now only one among a number of projects interested in the role of Classics among African American authors, the United States being a not-so-unique, postcolonial setting.[1] These projects include Tracey L. Walters' *African American Literature and the Classical Tradition: Black Women Writers from Wheatley to Morrison* (2007), and

African American Writers & Classical Tradition, by William W. Cook and James Tatum (2010). Like their counterparts, black American authors sometimes "pull" the classical idea or text to their own use, to borrow Goff's metaphor, as opposed to the classical object "*pushing* its way through time to a contemporary period" (13). In the case of African American classicism, writers who self – identify as black take up the Classics as a mode of canny expression. [2]

Although Goff's pulling model applies to any number of postcolonial receptions, Brazil presents a curious anomaly, as a postcolonial country where black identity is riddled with unique complexities. [3] Unlike the works within the United States Cook and Tatum, myself and others present, *Black Orpheus* was not the product of a black Brazilian artist and, some argue, not a Brazilian film (Stam 1997). Yet in *Black Orpheus* we find a product of classical reception that enters broader discourses of race, nation, and cultural identity. The significance of the 1959 film is clear from black Orpheus' pre – Brazilian genealogy, with Jean Paul Sartre's essay and the eponymous magazine; the musical and theatrical precursor in Brazil, with Vinicius de Moraes' *Orfeu da Conceição*, which explicitly called for a black actor as Orpheus; the reprise of a black Orpheus in Brazilian filmmaker Carlos Diegues' 1999 *Orfeu*; and the 2010 revival of Moraes' play in São Paulo, Brazil.

Marcel Camus' 1959 film*Black Orpheus* challenges the model of the Classics within a postcolonial context in a number of ways and therefore demands our attention. Camus' movie is an award – winning masterpiece; it won the Palme d'Or in Cannes in 1959, and the Oscar and Golden Globe for Best Foreign Film in 1960. The film presents a black (Negro) Orpheus, in a *favela*, a Brazilian hillside ghetto, in Rio de Janeiro. The "de – center[ing]" that occurs, however, to borrow Lorna Hardwick's language regarding postcolonial classicism, wherein the "text is liberated for reinterpretation" (Goff 109), is different from what we might experience in the African, Caribbean, or American contexts discussed above. In the first place, there is the problem of a French filmmaker presenting a Negro Orpheus in Brazil. *Film Quarterly* reviewer Ernest Callenbach (1960) laments the film's "exoticism" and its "travelogue" feel. And as Robert Stam charts in *Topical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (1997), *Black Orpheus* engendered some disgust among Brazilians. Caetano Veloso, the Brazilian, Tropicalia guitarist who played a major role in the remake, *Orfeu* (1999), claimed that he "detested Camus' film because it depicts the *favela* in an allegorical way, as a perfect society in which only death is bothersome" (Stam 51)[4]. A caption during the film's opening credits tells the viewer that it is "based on the play by [Brazilian poet] Vinicius de Moraes," a claim that Carlos Diegues' 1999 film would also make. But questions of setting and character remain.

Whose Orpheus is black Orpheus? Is his genealogy the apparent tie to French philosopher Jean – Paul Sartre's reading of Negritude poetry, the ubiquity of which is clear in the essay's multiple publications, from 1948 – 2001? Is black Orpheus Brazilian, and if so, is Brazil a postcolonial scene for classical reception? The simplicity and elegance of Camus' *Black Orpheus* belies the complex set of problems it presents vis – à – vis classical reception and the representation of race in Brazil.

As Rainer Maria Rilke's "Sonnets to Orpheus" (1922) suggests, Orpheus has a powerful regeneration in the 20th century. Rilke's is "the most far – reaching adaptation of the Orpheus myth since antiquity" (Cook and Tatum 346), although it certainly would not be the last. Tennessee Williams would return to the Orpheus myth in his 1945 play *Orpheus Descending*, and Jean Cocteau's film *Orphée* (1949) gives Camus a cinematic precedent for the myth. In his study of modern adaptations of the myth, Charles Segal reminds us of Orpheus as a fertility figure, whose "descent restores a lost vitality to the earth" (Segal 157).

Camus' film is clearly indebted to Cocteau's*Orphée* and its European and American antecedents leading into the 1950s, but Moraes' *Orfeu da Conceição* provides the immediate Brazilian framework. In his essay on Moraes' play, Celso de Oliveira makes a compelling case for the preoccupation with Orpheus in Europe and America after World War II, regenerative possibilities as the myth's central concern. Segal sees in the Orpheus adaptations a modern landscape with "trains, stations, and towns, but characters in effect go nowhere" (Segal 172). These themes migrate into Brazil, itself on the cusp of modernity. Claude Lévi – Strauss' 1955 study of Brazil, *Tristes Tropiques*, affirms the relationship between French and Brazilian urban, aesthetic, and intellectual life. Although Lévi – Strauss does not directly name Orpheus, his analysis of the Brazilian *favelas* deploys similar tropes to that of Sartre's black Orpheus. Lévi – Strauss observed that in Rio de Janeiro "the poor were perched high up on the hillsides…where a population of Negroes clad in well – washed rags composed lively guitar – melodies" (88). Indeed, such Negroes and their "lively guitar – melodies" feature prominently in Camus' *Black Orpheus*. During the same period of the 1950s, literary critic Waldo Frank expressed amazement at "the beautiful dancing and music – making of the *favelandos*" (Stam 168); the black dancers were likened to a Greek chorus. Within this context, Brazilian poet Moraes adapts the Orpheus myth for his native soil, and he sets his play *Orfeu da Conceição* in "um morro carioca," a town of Rio de Janeiro (Moraes 1960).

Apart from its French and broader European and American contexts, Brazilian intellectuals were crafting their own postcolonial identity in the early part of the twentieth century, and indigenous themes and tropes also have relevance to Camus' film. During the "Week of Modern Art" (*A Semana de Arte Moderna*) on February 11 – 18, 1922, in São Paulo, Brazilian poet Oswaldo de Andrade declared that the task of the artist in Brazil was that of a symbolic cannibalism (*omophagia*). Brazilian artists were to consume all influences, national and foreign. Andrade was suggesting that, given the stories about the Tupí peoples of Brazil eating their enemies in order to incorporate their strengths, Brazilians had a native gift of assimilating global influences and creating something new. Such regeneration is the Orphic mode, as the quote above from Segal (on Orpheus restoring the earth's lost vitality) reminds us. Dismemberment (*sparagmos*) is of course a central issue in the Orpheus myth, and this is consonant with the Brazilian modernist trope. Brazilian poet Jorge de Lima's *Invenção de Orfeu* (1952) creates an "indigenous palimpsest" in his allusions to earlier traditions, argues Luísa Sá (2000). Lima consumes Luís Vas de Camões' epic *Os Lusíadas* (*The Lusiads*), the Homeric, Dantesque poem from 1572 (which in turn

had consumed classical epic). Camões' poem is a foundational text of Brazilian literature and is in part responsible for the promulgation of the idea of Tupí as anthropophagi. Lima's poem shifts perspectives, and Orpheus is the Indian under threat from the Portuguese. Lima makes possible Orpheus as a symbol for the Brazilian subaltern. In Lima's poem, the colonized subject does not speak but is incorporated into a broader metaphorical, indigenous body. As we see, therefore, in Brazilian literature of the early 20th century, the local artist is to consume its indigenous land, Europe, Africa, and others, artistically dismembering these bodies and reconstituting them through palimpsest and montage (Sá 2000). This process is also evident in film (Stam 1997).

Is Brazil a Postcolonial Setting for Classical Reception?

As a postcolonial setting, Brazil holds many of the paradoxes of the United States of America, and political scientist Anthony W. Marx, in his book *Making Race and Nation* (1998) finds the comparison between these two nations—and including South Africa—quite useful. Brazil shares the American status of former colony, a history of the Transatlantic Slave Trade of Africans to the New World, and the legacy of an apartheid system, or at least second - class citizenship, after the emancipation of slaves.[5] Brazil's colonial status was among the most complex in the Americas. Founded as a Portuguese colony in 1500, Brazil resembled other American trading posts and competed with French, Dutch, Spanish, and English colonies in sugar production (Marx 1998). Brazil met the challenges that the rise of the Dutch East Indian Company in the early 1600s presented with the discovery of gold later in that century, a find that gave buoyancy to the Brazilian economy throughout the 1700s (Marx 1998). Despite similarities with other colonies, Brazil was unique in being the only American site of a European monarchy.[6] With Napoleon's advance into Lisbon in 1807, the Portuguese king Dom João IV "acceded to British demands that they escort him, his courts, fleet, treasury, and even a printing press, into exile in Brazil" (Marx 32). Until gaining its complete independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazil had the status of quasi-colony, quasi - monarchy. Andrew Marx best characterizes this condition:

> With its royal presence, emergent Brazilian nationalism shifted from being anti-Portuguese to embracing a localized monarchy. The Brazilian Empire was consolidated around the symbol of the "moderating power" of the crown. The result was a remarkable degree of unity and stability, reinforced by state-controlled exports and British support for its trading partner. (Marx 32)

Brazil's prosperity owed much, of course, to the presence of African slaves. Brazil imported its first African slaves in 1538, almost a century before blacks were brought to Virginia in 1619. Brazil had the most extensive and longstanding role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade. As historian Joseph A. Page argues, "in the course of three centuries about 3.5 million blacks (six times the number brought to the United States) survived the ordeal of the Atlantic crossing" (Page 61). Despite Portuguese

claims regarding the mildness of slavery in their empire (Marx 1998), circumstances in Brazil resembled that of other colonies. Notwithstanding exceptional cases, such as the sculptor Antônio Francisco Lisboa (1738 – 1814), or Chica da Silva (1732 – 1796), who so enamored a Portuguese official that he built her a lake (Page 1995), slaves worked sugar and coffee plantations and endured harsh conditions in the mines of Minas Gerais. There were a number of slave revolts, and runaway slaves established *quilombos*, independent communities such as the Republic of Palmares (Andrews 2004). As historian George Reid Andrews sees, the example of Haiti stunned the ruling classes across the Caribbean and Latin America, and "in 1823 the governor [of Bahia] ordered 'a general attack on all quilombos known to exist' in the province" (Andrews 75). The slave trade to Brazil continued even after the British Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807, and the number of slaves brought to the port of Bahia, in Salvador, actually peaked between 1846 – 1850, with numbers approaching 10,000 slaves per year (de Queirós Mattoso 1986). Brazil was the last country in Latin America to abolish slavery, in 1888, twenty three years after the Civil War in the United States of America.

By the time of full independence in 1889, Brazilians had already held a degree of independence from the local monarchy that ruled from 1822, and only 5% of the population were slaves in 1889 (down from 25% in 1823) (Ronaldo Vainfas, *Dictionário do Brasil Imperial*, Rio). Blacks nevertheless struggled, and second – class citizenship ensued. Historian Anthony Marx traces the disparate treatment of blacks and whites in the early part of the twentieth century (Marx 1991), and there is clear evidence of mistreatment—police brutality, curfews, and the rise of ghettoes — in public spaces (Merrell 2005).

The plight of Brazilian blacks from 1888 to the present is as perplexing as the country's strange history. In the first place, a practice of importing European labor in the early twentieth century took hold across Latin America, and especially in Brazil. Brazilian leaders saw the "transfusion of new blood" (Andrews 119) as the path forward. As Page argues, Brazilians "were willing to lay major blame for what they perceived as their own national inferiority on the presence of a large black and mulatto population" (69). While in the United States, leaders grappled with segregation and the prospects of black emigration to Africa post – Emancipation, Brazilians saw a problem in widespread poverty among Afro – descendents, black ghettos, and independent black practices that had to be repressed. Brazilian intellectuals felt the issue would correct itself through racial mixing (Andrews 2004). By the 1930s, the ideas of sociologist Gilberto Freyre began to take hold: Brazil was to be a racial paradise, in which three main groups, Brazil's indigenous populations, blacks, and Europeans (primarily Portuguese), blended into a unique culture. As Marx argues, however, there are a number of indicators that the myth of racial democracy was just that—a useful fiction:

> Brazilian culture remains inclusive. But recent scholarship has established that the difference in socioeconomic status between mulattoes and blacks is insignificant in comparison with the relative privilege of whites, whose average income

> was about twice that for nonwhites both in 1960 and in 1976. (Marx 68)

In *Blacks and Whites in São Paulo, Brazil*: 1888 – 1988 (1991), Andrews charts practices of discrimination where only persons of "good appearance" (*boa aparência*), namely, whites, were hired for certain jobs. Low number of blacks in professional fields as compared to whites and mixed – race Brazilians (*pardos*) in the period that Andrews charts is astounding. By 1995, Page was able to write that Brazil "has the largest black population outside of Africa" (4). But paradoxes abound: "The ease with which individuals of different racial backgrounds intermingle has served to obscure recognition of the existence of a subtle and not – so – subtle racism that makes it difficult for blacks to enjoy the same political, social, and economic opportunities as whites" (Page 11).

The plight of the African in the Brazilian body politic has thus been one of struggle and resistance (Butler 2000). The symbolic value given to black identity in the main—in candomblé festivals, African drumming, and the racial democracy myth, generally—belies the reality of the lives of many blacks in Brazil. These Afro – descent practices, at one time illegal (Merrell 2005), are incorporated into the broader Brazilian citizenry, after their*sparagmos*. But black voices remain. Attempts to address the complexities of black identity can be found in literature and the arts, as Emanuelle K. F. Oliveira shows (2008).

Thus black identity in Brazil has been that of the 'dismemberment' of their cultural contributions, and resistance to assimilation. Orpheus is an ideal trope. Given these complexities, the depiction of the Afro – descendent community in Camus' *Black Orpheus* is troublesome, outside of Brazil, as Obama's quote from the epigram examples, and within it, as I have outlined here. My own experience watching Camus' film echoes Obama's and is, in fact, resonant with a genealogy of the trope of black Orpheus, which predates Camus' 1959 film. As a figure, black Orpheus embodies the paradox of Afro – descent identity since the beginning of the Atlantic slave trade.

A Genealogy of *Black Orpheus*

> After the Egyptian and Indian, the Greek and Roman, the Teuton and Mongolian, the Negro is a sort of seventh son, born with a veil, and gifted with second – sight in this American world, – a world which yields him no true self – consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the reflection of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double – consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two – ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*)

Du Bois' observation about the Negro in America in 1903 has far – reaching applica-

tion. The trope of black Orpheus is consonant with Du Bois' notion of double – consciousness. Black Orpheus, from the inception, is a way of "looking at oneself through the eyes of others;" an invention of Jean – Paul Sartre, black Orpheus was never an invention of any person of African descent. Yet black Orpheus is in so many ways an appropriate symbol. How could the person of Afro – descent, in the New World, be anything but a "two – ness," an entity that embodies African practices alongside European identity, classical and modern? And yet, like Orpheus, the person of Afro-descent struggles to reconcile these "warring ideals" within a "dark body whose dogged strength alone keep it from being torn asunder." Orpheus' failure is that of the Negro in the American context. As troublesome as was Sartre's invention, it was one that would reverberate into the 21st century, at least in Brazil.

Orphée noir

In the 1948 essay that introduces Léopold Sédar Senghor's anthology of negritude poetry, Jean – Paul Sartre invents black Orpheus. The essay was reprinted in 1949 (*Présence Africaine*, *Situations*, *III*), and the translation that appears in Bernasconi's 2001 volume is that of John MacCombie, published in *The Massachusetts Review*, in 1964/5, as "Black Orpheus." If Wole Soyinka's later complaints that the name "Black Orpheus" bothered him are any testimony (Jeyifo 2001), Sartre's was an inconvenient conception. At the same time, black Orpheus could not be ignored.

Soyinka's comments on the mid – century black Orpheus echo Obama's on the filmic figure, which he watched at the end of the century. As with Du Bois' "dark body," each black Orpheus is conceived through the "two – ness" of a white gaze upon black corporeality and action. In Sartre's essay, the European philosopher argues that negritude poetry, as black – voiced for black audiences, was not intended for whites. Yet Sartre dares, almost voyeuristically, to watch, and to react. He asks his (white) reader, "Did you think that when they raised themselves up again, you would read adoration in the eyes of these heads that our fathers had forced to bend down to the very ground" (115)? The specific essence of Negritude poetry is consistent with an existential approach to our existence; Negritude poetry is a "*becoming conscious*" of the experiences of Africans in European hands. For Sartre, Negritude poetry is not only specific, but it is also exceptional. With Marxism as a counterpoint to his existentialism, Sartre asserts that forging meaning is for blacks different from the processes through which whites craft themselves.

Sartre's Marxism is another feature of his analysis that resonates in the Brazilian context. As Kim Butler observes, Brazilian Marxism threatens to unravel Afro – descent cultural identity in South America's largest country (Butler 2000). ForSartre, blacks need this precondition of cultural identity before they can take part in broader national or economic projects: "The unity which will come eventually, bringing all oppressed peoples together in the same struggle, must be preceded in the colonies by what I shall call the movement of separation or negativity" (118). Blacks must first craft themselves as individuals and as a people (separate, a negation of whites)—even without a language that corresponds with, for example, Irish for the person of Irish extraction (Sartre's analogy)—before they should join the movement against

broader oppression. Sartre's paternalism is, of course, astounding, from any perspective, but especially given his essay's position in the context of poetry actually written by persons of African descent. What saves Sartre, however, is precisely the sense of blackness as an existential reality, one that later philosopher Lewis R. Gordon sees as an irrepressible response to lived experience (Gordon 2000).

Sartre offers several ideas that would come to be recurrent tropes for Brazil's black Orpheus. He assert a specific black identity separate and distinct from (a negation of) whiteness. In poetry, the negation of whiteness comes in the inversion or redeployment of symbols, beginning with the valences of black and white. Sartre quotes poems that not only privilege the idea of blackness but in fact seem to hone in on it with obsessive focus. The fixation on black bodies, Du Bois' "dark bod[ies]," render them objects of fetishism, and we see this again in Camus' film. Within the Senghor volume, Sartre cites Senghor's "Femme Noir" with its "naked woman, black woman," the "firm fleshed ripe fruit" and "somber ecstasies of black wine;" Léon – G. Damas' "Limbe" pleas to "give me back my black dolls," and so forth, until the symbolic value of blackness, heretofore one of death and decay, dominates, henceforth sensuality and childlike play (Sartre 2001).

The symbolism of black bodies finds expression through music for black Orpheus, "Orphée noir." If inversion and redeployment of blackness as symbol dominate the poetic language, musicality is to convey a cultural essence. In Sartre's words, "rhythm cements the multiple aspects of the black soul, communicates its Nietzschian lightness with heavy Dionysian intuitions; rhythm – tam – tam, jazz, the reverberation of these poems – represents the temporality of negro*existence*" (133).

The Dionysian symbolism of black Orpheus troubled Soyinka, and the Brazilian artists would again deploy it. Along with Antônio Carlos Jobim, Moraes not only composed music for his play, but he brought Bossa nova to the world scene through his work on Camus' film. Samba, that form which takes its rhythms from Africa, is the driving force of the music in the movie. Diegues' 1999 film extends the local, Brazilian response to the mythological theme of Orpheus the poet, Orpheus the musician, not only through Caetano Veloso's Tropicalia, but also through Samba, Afro – reggae, and Brazilian hip hop, as the "Enredo" or theme – song from the film's soundtrack declares.

Because black bodies and their musicality are transplants from an African homeland, Africa is the culminating trope of Sartre's Orphée noir. Africa is the Eurydice that the Negritude poet loves with all his being but cannot lay hold of. Sartre makes only a handful of explicit references to the title character of his essay, but they are illuminating. The symbolism of the Orpheus myth permeates Sartre's essay. The Negritude poet, needless to say, is Orpheus. Negritude is the lost love that these poets "wish to fish for in their abyssal depths" (119). Africa is "phantom flickering like flame, between being and nothingness" (120). The symbol now played and replayed, Sartre hones in on his theme: "I shall call this poetry 'Orphic' because the negro's tireless descent into himself makes me think of Orpheus going to claim Eurydice from Pluto" (121). The "descent into" oneself brings Africa within the dark body; it is no longer an external or exterior reality. The dark body does not migrate

geographically to reconcile the "two – ness" of its identity. Rather, it travels inward. But this descent threatens to unravel a Brazilian integrity, where*ordo e progresso*, "order and progress," is achieved not inwardly, but in the main.

Sartre's ultimate reference to Orpheus in the essay is Hegelian, and it is worth citing it here at length because it returns us to death and loss, which point to the impossibility of Orpheus as a sustainable symbol for blackness – or rather it is blackness, as cultural identity, that might be unsustainable:

> In fact, Negritude appears as the minor moment of a dialectical progression: the theoretical and practical affirmation of white supremacy is the thesis; the position of Negritude as an antithetical value is the moment of negativity. But this negative moment is not sufficient in itself, and these blacks who use it know this perfectly well; they know that it aims at preparing the synthesis or realization of the human in a raceless society. Thus Negritude is for destroying itself, it is a passage and not an outcome, a means and not an ultimate end. At the moment that every black Orpheus most tightly embraces this Eurydice, they feel her vanish from between their arms. (137)

Sartre's paradoxical assertions underscore the ambivalence and unsustainability of racial identity. In the first place, Hegelian synthesis brings us to the "realization of the human in a raceless society," which is exactly the goal of the Brazilian body politic, from Freyre onward. In Diegues' 1999 film, black Orpheus is part of a rainbow of poverty. Yet this "order and progress," for whatever its worth, comes through a*sparagmos*; as with Sartre's Negritude, which is "for destroying itself," Afro-descent identity in Brazil has to be broken apart for Brazilian identity to hold. At the same time, Brazilian modernity needs black Orpheus "tightly embrac[ing]" Eurydice. How else does Brazil distinguish itself as a country, without the incorporation of its many parts?

Brazil's Black Orpheus.

Within this Brazilian context, the filmmaker Camus crafts*Black Orpheus*, a film that is as troublesome to the category of postcolonial reception as is Brazil to that of postcolonial nation. Race complicates matters even further. As Marx posits, "nations make race," and the role that Brazilian nationalism played in making *Black Orpheus* a racial film should not be underestimated (Butler 2000). Notwithstanding some of the negative responses of Brazilian artists to the French – made film, which I have already touched upon, Camus' movie does declare its indebtedness to Vinicius de Moraes' play from the very outset, as we have seen. As Stam asserts, *Black Orpheus* is a Brazilian film (Stam 1997). It is necessary to delve into the performance history of *Orfeu da Conceição*, which premiered in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1956. Moraes had published a version of the play in 1953, and Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer designed the set for the 1956 production (de Oliveira 2002). Niemeyer is the embodiment of Brazilian modernity, and he was the principle architect of Brasilia, a city that was built in four years (1956 – 1960) as capital and seat of the federal government. At the age of 102

in November, 2010, Niemeyer has a monumental place in Brazilian culture, and his commentary extends beyond architecture. (Neimeyer has been quoted as comparing his buildings to the exotic bodies of Brazilian women.) His involvement in Moraes' play is noteworthy, as it reinforces the relationship between race and nation (Marx 1998). This background extends into the 21st century, with the 2010 revival of Moraes' play in São Paulo, Brazil.

The Brazilian Orpheus as a racial body is not entirely Camus' creation, but rather it owes to the specific spirit of Moraes's play, with its Sartrean genealogy. More specifically, the Brazilian formulation of the racial paradise requires a bidirectional pull: In one direction the nation claims "order and progress" through the incorporation of all of its historical parts, again, blacks, Europeans, and Indians (Butler 2000). In the move toward a national identity entirely its own, however, Brazil required the distinctive contributions of each of its three constitutive groups. So, for example, practices that had been outlawed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as the religious practices of Afro - descendent communities, Candomblé and Umbanda, are today significant features of Brazil's industry of ethnic tourism (Andrews 122).

In this context, the Brazilian Moraes, not the French filmmaker Camus, insisted upon a black Orpheus. Moraes, who, like Niemeyer, was of European descent, gives specific instructions about the characters in*Orfeu da Conceição*: "all of the characters of the tragedy should normally be represented by actors of the negro race" (*tôdas as personagens da tragédia, deven ser normalmente representadas por atores da raça negra*).[7] Certainly a symbolic blackness is at the heart of Moraes' modernism. As we see from the play's opening scene, blackness is the obscurity of night, where danger lurks and secrets can be kept. Darkness is where the moon enchants: "There are so many perils in this life for the passionate, especially when a moon suddenly surges and sinks from the sky, as if forgotten" (19 - 20). These lines are quoted verbatim in Diegues' 1999 film, further evidence that the discussion of Camus' film must extend through the 20th century.

The symbol of blackness in the play converges onto black bodies, as Moraes' stage directions militate, but we also see this in the suggestion of Afro-descendent religious practices, from which Camus draws for*Black Orpheus*. In Moraes' three-act play, a character simply named A Dama Negra ("Black Woman") reports Eurydice's death to Aristeu the beekeeper at the end of act 1. Although Moraes never has the Black Woman expressly as an Underworld figure in act 2 of the play, she returns in the last moments of act 3.

Camus' movie certainly resembles many others, and even Cocteau's, in preserving the baseline of the Orpheus tale: the prolific musician, in love with Eurydice, whose death prompts Orpheus descent into the Underworld, permanent loss of her, and his return to our world (and ultimately, his death). Camus develops a character, Mira, who is a rival to Eurydice for Orpheus' love. Mira is born in Moraes' play, and Camus reprises her role. Mira simplifies the plurality of persons enamored with Orpheus, a feature from the myth that Cocteau tries to preserve with his society of Bacchant women. Also significant is Camus Underworld scene, where Orpheus de-

scends from the busy streets of Rio de Janeiro into a strange ritual, where black celebrants dressed in white sing and dance a very different song from the ones we have heard thus far. The practice is Umbanda, a synchretic, religious ritual that mixes ecstatic worship derived from West Africa with Christianity. Ancestor worship and spirit possession are its stock and trade, and Orpheus hears Eurydice's disembodied voice (enclosed, we know, in another body). We see that this is not Eurydice, and Orpheus will, momentarily. The rest of the story could be simply telegraphed, but the addition of Mira and, more strikingly, the Afro – religious practice makes the Brazilian Orpheus quite unique. These features, combined with the setting in Rio de Janeiro and the elegiac tones of Bossa nova, lifted Camus' film above others.

Diegues' 1999 ***Orfeu.***

We might borrow Sartre's language, so that Camus' film expresses the antithesis position of Orphée noir, that of a black symbolic expression of identity in contrast to the thesis of whiteness, or even European identity. In this case, Diegues asserts a synthesis. He wants to correct the problem of Orpheus' self – referential blackness. Diegues sets the musician in a context wherein his blackness is incorporated into a broader body politic. Diegues, for example, drops the *noir* or *negro* from the film's title; Orfeu's blackness is incidental, or at least secondary to his Brazilian-ness. In Diegues' film, Orfeu's music is a blend of afro-reggae, pop, samba, and Bossa nova. The *favela* in which he lives in not the all-Negro locale of Camus' movie but rather a place where the poor are black, white, brown, and Indian. Diegues sheds Camus' film of its idealized *favela* (Broggi 1999). Violence is rampant, and it is often difficult to distinguish between the beat of a drum and the clap of a gunshot. Characters like Michael, the precocious youngster who names himself after Michael Jackson, underscore both charm, and the hopelessness of life for many of Brazil's underclass. Michael dreams of a more creative life, where the paintings he creates might bring profit. Orfeu's senseless death only adds to this character's desperation; Michael's dirge-like scream at the end of the movie is one not easy to forget, and it is eerily featured on the movie's soundtrack.

Diegues can be credited with restoring aspects Moraes' *Orfeu da Conceição* lost in Camus' film, although no single movie could capture and amplify all of its nuances. The 1999 film reprises Dona Conceição, Clio in the play, Orfeu's mother, whose absence from Camus' film makes Orpheus a person without a past. In Diegues' film, Dona Conceição urges Orfeu not to marry, as she does in Moraes' play. Her use of *buzios* in Diegues' movie, shells that in Candomblé and Umbanda bespeak positive or ill – omens when scattered, is new, a nod toward a dignified deployment of Afro – descendant social practices, ties to ancestral legacies.

Through Orfeu's rivalry with his childhood friend, Lucinho, Diegues allude to an extent to the "battle of the Sambas," the Underworld song competition from Moraes' act 2 that epitomizes Carnaval. Orfeu and Lucinho are now rivals for the hearts of the favelandos; the former pushing for industriousness and creativity as the way out of the favela, the latter exploiting people and resources through drug trafficking. Along with the Orpheus myth, Diegues deploys the biblical story of Cain and Abel to dichotomize

the good and bad 'brothers.'

As was the case in Moraes' play, Orfeu's song is elegiac: it is somber, conveys the brevity of life and, often, of love, and it is melancholic. The play's second act, which is the Underworld scene, is actually "the inside of the club of The Lords of the Underground," a group, led by Plutão, whom Diegues takes up as Lucinho (Lucifer). Like Lucinho, Plutão challenges Orfeu as "rei," with gang members repeating, "He [Plutão] is the king!" With regard to their more upbeat, frenetic dance, Plutão asks, "Is that Samba, or is that not Samba?" The dancing women in the Underworld claim, "I am Eurydice." Has Eurydice really chosen this Samba, "the reign of joy," over Orfeu's melancholic, realistic song? Diegues captures many aspects of the "battle of the Sambas," which he clearly interprets as a conflict of worldviews: Is the*favela* a place of nihilistic indulgence, a response to the surrounding despair; or, does the workaday ethic of Orfeu, who incessantly crafts his songs into the night, prevail?

Throughout the movie, the police who raid the*favela*, depict the real-life, ambivalent presence of the panoptical State; the Lucinho is a surrogate son to the police chief. Recently in Brazil, the two-part film *Tropa de Elite* ("Elite Troop") explores the ambivalent relationship between federal and state police forces and drug traffickers.

For all that Diegues' film wants to accomplishes, it cannot fully abandon Orpheus' postcolonial roots: Orfeu is black, his hip-hop inflected music is born from his heritage, and he is strangely out-of-place in his integrated setting. Even in 1999, Diegues' treatment resonates with Sartre's Orphée noir. The cast of characters in*Orfeu* needs the creative genius of their musician if any hope is to be granted for their desperate plight of poverty. Yet by descending inwardly, into the African of his imagination, Diegues' negro Orpheus faces dismemberment. If a true Hegelian synthesis were possible, Orpheus would live on, and the story would, finally, be rewritten. As nations make race, so race complicates reception. Black Orpheus is not a simple reception of classical myth. Rather, it is a complex, subtle, and longstanding reception that spans the 20th century.

Notes

1. For the United States as a postcolonial setting, see Gilroy 2006.
2. In a forthcoming review of *African American Writers and Classical Tradition*, Rankine argues that the canny is precisely that which juxtaposition of black thought with Classics yields—in fact, that any juxtaposition of seemingly disparate ideas and texts is creative and revolutionary.
3. I have already cited the vast number of black people in Brazil, and I will explain this issue more below. In addition to this, military dictatorships of the 20th century in Brazil pushed for a common identity, so that cultural identity—blackness, as it were—went underground, in a manner of speaking. Marx 1998 and Oliveira 2008, among others, such as Butler 2000, discuss this as it pertains to race. See also Covin 2006.
4. At a conference in Salvador, Brazil in 2010, I learned that Veloso's wife was the producer of Diegues' film, which is worth noting, if matters of the heart influence aesthetic taste in any wise.
5. Although blacks were legally enfranchised in 1891, the legal apparatus outlawed their practices

in public spaces, so that they were disadvantaged under the law. See Merrell 2005. Universal suffrage, extending to such groups as women and the homeless, was granted in 1932.

6. See for example, Freyre 1987.

7. Oliver Taplin's note on restaging Greek drama, that significant stage action is recoverable in the text, applies here; Moraes' *requires* a black Orpheus.

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The past three years witnesses the growing-up of FWLS. Thanks to all the members of Editorial Board and authors, FWLS has been included in MLA International Bibliography database, Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature database, and will be included in EBSCO's library. We expect all the articles published in FWLS will be available on EBSCO's database called LITERARY REFERENCE CENTER PLUS in early 2012.

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FWLS is still advancing its way to full success and appreciates supports and concerns from all circles though it has made some progress. More contributions in area of literature including literary theory, cultural studies, particularly articles which engage in those literatures written in Non-English languages are warmly welcome.

On the occasion of Christmas and New Year FWLS conveys its best wishes to all the readers, authors and Editorial Board members. Merry Christmas and Happy New year!

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