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上海·武汉·西拉法叶

In Memory of John Neubauer(1933-2015)

John·Neubauer
(November 2, 1933-October 5, 2015)

Forum for World Literature Studies

Vol.7, No.3, September 2015

Globalizing Literary History and World Literature: In Memory of John Neubauer(1933-2015)

Edited by Shang Biwu

Poetic Form and Literary Tradition

Edited by Luo Lianggong

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尚必武（栏目主持）

诗学形式与文学传统

罗良功（栏目主持）

上海·武汉·西拉法叶

编委会

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In Memory of John Neubauer (1933-2015): A Foreword

Shang Biwu
School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University
800 Dongchuan Road, Minhang District, 200240, Shanghai, China
Email: biwushang@sjtu.edu.cn
Nie Zhenzhao
School of Chinese Language and Literature, Central China Normal University
152 Luoyu Rd., Hongshan District, 430079, Wuhan, China
Email: niezhenzhao@163.com

"The scholarly world, especially all of us who are concerned with comparative cultural study, are in debt to John Neubauer."
— Mario J. Valdés

"Describing the many fields to which John (Neubauer) has made a significant contribution would take more space than we have available."
— Mieke Bal

We were extremely saddened by the news that John Neubauer passed away on October 5, 2015, the time when we were in the middle of the 5th international Symposium on Ethical Literary Criticism held in Seoul and Busan, Korea. For years, John has been a major figure for our constant communications and heated discussions on various issues of common concern. It is quite unacceptable that he is no longer there.

John (known as János to his friends and families) was born in Budapest, on November 2, 1933. He spent his early life in Nazi-occupied Hungary before the Neubauers migrated to America. He traveled, stayed and worked in such places as Amherst, Princeton, and Pittsburgh in the States. It was in University of Pittsburgh that János spent a decade (1973–1983) consolidating his interest and reputation in Comparative Literature. In 1983, János, and his wife Ursula, an artist, and their daughters went back to Europe. With his colleagues, including the eminent scholar

Mieke Bal, János established the Comparative Literature Program in University of Amsterdam and worked there till his retirement. János's migration finds a perfect counterpart in his transcultural and comparative works, among which are *Bifocal Vision: Novalis' Philosophy of Nature and Disease* (University of North Carolina Press, 1971), *The Emancipation of Music from Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), *The Fin-de-Siècle Culture of Adolescence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), *Cultural History After Foucault* (1999), and *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2007).

We got to know János by reading his edited collection *Cultural History After Foucault*, which was first appeared as an special issue in *arcadia: International Journal of Literary Culture* 33.1 (1998) and later published by Aldine Transaction in 1999. However, our exchange with János started in 2012, when we proposed a special issue on "Ethical Literary Criticism: East and West" to *arcadia*. When guest-editing this special issue, we stayed closely in touch with János, whose insightful comments, practical suggestions, kind encouragements, and enthusiastic support have accompanied us throughout this academic adventure. For his unfailing enthusiasm and overwhelming friendship, we feel extremely grateful at that point and beyond. For years, we have been waiting for János to recover from his sickness and preparing for his academic trip to China, which we believe, will be rather beneficial and rewarding to our colleagues and students. Unfortunately, our hope was broken on October 5, 2015.

János is an eminent scholar, sharp critic, brilliant editor, loyal friend, wonderful husband, and cheerful father. We feel very grateful to János and his two talent colleagues Prof. Vivian Liska and Prof. Vladimir Biti for their deep insight, unbiased evaluation and instructive comments that have brought ethical literary criticism from Chinato Western academiathrougha special issue of *arcadia*. In particular, we are most thankful for their thought-provoking general introduction which they departed from usual reluctance to underline the value of this new critical approach and to indicate how it could be further broadened for its persuasiveness.

János is an astute commentator with extraordinary vibrancy and rich knowledge. With much wisdom and philosophy, he writes to us that "I would be happy to participate in some form in reflections about your very stimulating theory. As far as I am concerned, the main issue is not the inclusion of this or that 'Western' thinker but rather to bring your theory in line with a key trans-cultural science, bio-cultural evolution. Your sharp separation of the physical (animal) body and consciousness need to be brought in line with the fusion of the two in cognitive (neural) science and evolutionary theory." Undoubtedly, his insightful comments

offer us much nutrition and encourage us to stride forward along lines of ethical literarycriticism.

As is keenly observed by János, some of our arguments contradict those proposed by Theodor W. Adorno, Jacques Derrida or Giorgio Agamben and many other Western scholars. We have been thinking of these questions and planning to answer them in our future discussions. Regrettably, János could not read our papers addressing them, but we are sure that he would be happy to know that we have been trying to make our conceptual system more elaborated and persuasive.

In remembrance of János, we put off the publication of the third issue of *Forum for World Literature Studies* and decide to launch a special thematic cluster "Globalizing Literary History and World Literature: In Memory of John Neubauer (1933-2015)." Our proposal has been warmly received by János's colleagues and friends, who have been working days and nights preparing their articles and personal notes, for which we feel much obliged. It is their John Neubauer-like professional ethic that has made this thematic cluster possible.In particular, we thank Ursula for sending us the most recent photo of János, whose smile will remain a constant encouragement for the rest of us to live and to work well. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the contributors of this thematic cluster, all of whom are closely related to János in one way or another: Vivian and Vladimir, for many years, have been his colleagues and co-editors of the journal *arcadia*; Tan Junqiang is his visiting scholar and later his Ph.D. student; Jüri Talvet has been his old friend, for whom János helped to establish the now famous Estonian Association of Comparative Literature.

Though Jánoshas left us, he will always be remembered by his love for his wife, his care for his daughters, his loyalty for his friends, and his scholarship and achievements in academics.

May him rest in peace.

责任编辑：杨革新

Globalizing Literary History

John Neubauer
Comparative Literature,University of Amsterdam
1012 WX Amsterdam, Netherlands
Email: johnneubauer329@gmail.com

Abstract National conception and justification of literature constitutes the foundation of literature's national institutionalization in nineteenth-century Europe. Through examining Wellek's insightful arguments on literature and literary history, this article specifically focuses on European literary histories, in whichthe globalization of English has given a multicultural project a monolingual bias. In fact, writing regional literary histories has a two-fold significance for globalizing the field: they provide regional models that can be applied to other regions, and they represent concrete steps towards a global conception of literary history. To me, works of literature and other works of art are neither fixed nor eternal but constantly change. Hence, I propose that a broadened notion of adaptation could become the very heart of a global concept of literary history. Such a broadened conception would recognize not only that literary works are constantly reshaped by new historical, cultural, and social contexts but also that new philological shapes emerge via re-edition (or even digitalization) of texts;adaptations via translations,staging, musical setting, and visual illustrations.

Key words regional literary history; global literary history; national conception of literature; Europeanliterary history

Author John Neubauer was a Professor of Comparative Literature at University of Amsterdam, and former editor of *arcadia: International Journal of Literary Culture*. He published many books and articles on comparative literature and cultural studies, among which are *Bifocal Vision: Novalis' Philosophy of Nature and Disease* (1971), *The Emancipation of Music from Language: Departure from Mimesis in Eighteenth CenturyAesthetics* (1986), *The Fin-de-Siècle Culture of Adolescence* (1992), *Cultural History After Foucault* (1999), and *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2007). He passed away in Amsterdam on October 5th, 2015.

1. National Histories of Literature

Friedrich Schlegel, a leading German romantic thinker,started to write the first literary histories in the last years of the eighteenth century. His brother August Wilhelm Schlegel broadened these first comparative and transnational attempts, but the wars against Napoleon inspired Friedrich's last and most important literary history, which is broadest in scope but nationalist in his conception. His 1812 series of lectures in Vienna titled *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur* (History of the Old and the New Literature) briefly touched on Hebrew and Persian literature, and, based on Schlegel's study of Sanskrit,included a chapter on ancient Indian literature. The lectures bypassed Chinese literature, whose first histories in European languages — Herbert Giles's *History of Chinese Literature* (1901) and Wilhelm Grube's *Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur* (History of Chinese Literature; 1902) — appeared almost a century later. Friedrich Schlegel's initiative to globalize literary history was, however, also a decisive step towards nationalism, for he narrowed his conception by defining literature as the embodiment of a nation's intellectual life. Earlier he believed that the national elements of modern literature could only be comprehended within a larger totality, but now he proclaimed that poetry's foremost task was to recall a nation's distant origins, and glorify, as well as preserve, those national memories that were indispensable for a nation's spiritual existence (10-16).

This national conception and justification of literature became the foundation of literature's national institutionalization in nineteenth-century Europe. All European nations gradually introduced the teaching of their national literature in the schools and at the universities; university chairs were established for the vernacular literature; and the appointed professors were expected to write histories of the national literature for educational purposes. Simultaneously, National Theaters, National Academies, publishers, and other literary institutions were founded to cultivate and promote thisnative literature. Most nineteenth-century national histories closely linkedliterature to social, political, and national events, usually in the spirit of Hippolyte Taine's triple concept of "race, milieu, and moment" (see Wellek *Modern Criticism*, 4: 27-57) and Hegel's notion of a *Zeitgeist*, the idea that all social and artistic phenomena of an age express a common spirit. TheHegelian idea of *Zeitgeist*furthered the periodization of literary history and suggested the use of periods like Romanticism and Realism, which covered more than literature proper by including the other arts and cultural phenomena. Nineteenth-century

national literary historiesof Gervinus, Lanson, Taine, Chlebowski, De Sanctis, and Beöthy in myfinal "Works Cited" helped forging national identities, but they excluded minorities and often created schematic unities at the cost of individualism and variety. Individual literary works were often forced into period concepts that did not do justice to their richness. Reading literature within such preconceived national and period concepts did not encourage readers to focus at the linguistic and stylistic aspects of the texts.

The first major attack on such schematizations of literature came from the Russian formalists, whoquestioned periodization and references toa *Zeitgeist*. In a 1927 article titled "On Literary Evolution," Yuri Tynyanovproposed that literary history was a series of temporal shifts from system to system, amounting to what he called a "literary series" in literary evolution (459). Though he admitted that the literary series should later be correlated with non-literary series in the other arts, culture, and social life, he minimized the role of a *Zeitgeist* by foregrounding a timeline based on literature alone. This approach was adopted by René Wellek, a literary scholar born in Czechoslovakia who immigrated to the United States and introduced there after World War II the study of comparative literature. According to the famous *Theory of Literature* he published with Austin Warren in 1948, there could be no objection if the results of literary historians "should coincide with those of political, social, artistic, and intellectual historians," but "our starting-point must be the development of literature as literature" (264).

The Tynyanov/Wellek theory did not inspire outstanding new literary histories, and nearly two more decades had to pass before it came under serious attack from Germany, where the *werkimmanent* approach, exclusive focus on text, dominated after the war. Hans Robert Jauss opened his 1967 inaugural lecture *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft* (Literary History as a Provocation of Literary Scholarship) with the lapidary but devastating remark: "Literary history has fallen in our time into increasing, but by no means undeserved, disrepute" (144). He regarded not only the traditional literary histories responsible for this, but also Marxism and Formalism, which dominated post-war literary histories in East- and West-Germany respectively. Jauss gave credit to Tynyanov's notion of evolution (166), but proceeded to outline a reception concept that interlinks the literary and social series via the experience of readers and their dialogue with literary works (167, 171).

Wellek, among the first American theorists to respond to Jauss, opened his famous "The Fall of Literary History" (1973) by citing Jauss's statement, but he dismissed reception theory as *déjà vu*, a mere rehashing of "a history of taste that

has always been included in a history of criticism" (77). Nevertheless, Wellek admitted that he may have made in *Theory of Literature* a "possibly oversharp distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic methods," which led to an isolation of works of art in history (67). The gloomy ending of Wellek's article was often taken as an epitaph for literary history, but the article surrendered only two of the presuppositions he adopted from Tynyanov: literary histories ought to rely solely on intrinsic criteria and such literary series constitute an evolution. Wellek particularly regretted that he found no evolution in his history of criticism: "I myself have failed in *The History of Modern Criticism* to construe a convincing scheme of development. I discovered, by experience, that there is no evolution in the history of critical argument" (77). Typical of the ensuing crisis was the question that David Perkins posed in 1992 with the much-discussedtitle of his book: *Is Literary History Possible*? His skepticism was reinforced by post-structuralist and deconstructive theories, which attacked histories with teleological destinies, and questioned both organicist conceptions of history andthe possibility of writing grand historical narratives. However, reception theory, Michel Foucault's genetic history, New Historicism, and cultural history have opened new historical approaches to literatureby the time Perkins's book appeared.In the following discussion, I shall indicate how national and transnational literary histories reacted to the crisis of history writing.

Within national literary histories, the prominent reaction to the crisis of grand narratives has become simply to abandon continuous historical narrations. The trend was set by Denis Hollier's history of French literature,whose methodology has since been adopted in a Dutch/Flemish history edited by M. A. Schenkenveld-van der Dussen (1993), a Francophone Belgian one edited by Jean-PierreBertrand (2002), a German one edited by David Wellbery (2004), a Hungarian one edited by Mihály Szegedy-Maszák (2007), and an American one edited by Greil Marcus and Werner Sollors (2009). They all replace the continuous narrative thread of literary history with chronologically ordered independent essays (two-hundred-six in Hollier's French edition), each of which is attached to the date of an event that closely or distantly relates to literature. Thus, for instance, an article with the heading "Pour le profane," linked to the date December 5, 1905, refers to a vote in the National Assembly on the Separation of Church and State, and italerts readers to related entries, dated1808, 1898, and January 9, 1959. Hollier'sscheme disperses writers, works, and themes over several unconnected articlesand it avoids the use of historical periods in the hope that the shortened time scale of the articles will allow more encounters, convergences, and mutations (xx). By these and other

means, Hollier wanted to achieve a "heterogeneity that escapes the linearity of traditional literary histories" (xix). Cross references are made here only within a single article. Hollier admits this loss of historicity by dropping the word "history" from the French title *De la littérature française*. In short, this type of approach cuts up literary history, and partly compensatesfor this by linking literature to contemporaneous cultural and international events.

2. European Literary Histories

National literary histories dominated the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, and only few significant comparative literary histories were published. This changed when the International Comparative Literature Association, founded in 1955, established in 1967 a Coordinating Committeewith the charge to publish a series with the somewhat curious title "A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages." The formulation offered the possibility of going beyond geographically defined Europe to include, in principle, literatures from North- and South America, Australia and other parts of the world where a European language was officially recognized. Indeed, the series came to include a two volume African history titled *European language Writing in Sub-Saharan Africa* (1986), edited by Albert Gérard, and a three-volume *History of Literature in the Caribbean* (1994-2001), edited by James Arnold.

The core of the still incomplete seriesis a multivolume literary history of a geographically defined Europe, which is chronologically divided into periods and movements, each of which is covered by one or several volumes. The latter is the case with the Renaissance and Romanticism. There are no volumes yet on the literature of Classical Greece, the Middle Ages, Realism, or Naturalism — and some these may never materialize. Progress has been slowed down by the conceptual shifts that comparative literature and the writing of literary histories underwent since 1967. The first volumes tended to simply line up articles on national literatures side-by-side, leaving the comparison and integration of the rich material to introductions and the reader.

Due to the Cold War and a certain inherent West-European bias, the coverage of geographical Europe itself was for a while rather uneven in the series: of the East-European literatures, for instance, usually only the Russian one was systematically included. The series represented an important step towards globalizing literary history, but it excluded nations and areas where European languages were not official, and, more important, it ignored the native languages in nations and regions where a European language was official. In retrospect, a certain

Eurocentric bias colored this laudable move towards globalizing literary history. According to the charter, the volumes could be published in any major European language, and, indeed, six French volumes and one Germanone has been produced, but due to commercial/financial constraints non-English volumes can now be published only with substantial subsidy. Here, as elsewhere, the globalization of English has given a multicultural project a monolingual bias.

Another conceptual problem of the ICLA project emerged from the West-European orientation of its founders, who considered it self-evident that the break-down of literary history into periods should follow categories used in France, England, and, to a lesser extent, in Germany. Even so, the periods overlap: the series contains volumes on Expressionism and Symbolism, but also on Modernism, five volumes on Romanticism, but also two volumes on the 1760-1820 period. At the same time, there are also serious gaps: a proposed volume on Naturalism, for instance, has been delayed because of disagreements on a Europe-wide definition of what the term actually means.

Definitions of periods and movements became even more complex once the series gradually expanded its scope within Europe, and the subject matter broadened to include relevant elements of literary culture. It was in reaction suchproblems that I have proposed within the series a "literary culture" subseries covering not all of Europe but only a region. The four-volume *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2004-2010) that I have published with my co-editor Marcel Cornis-Pope and some hundred-fifty contributors has meanwhile spawned ongoing projects on the literary history of the Iberian Peninsula and of Scandinavia. The first volume of *A Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula* (2010) has already been published by Fernando Cabo Aseguinolaza and his coworkers.

I offer the following brief description of our East-Central European project in the hoop that some of our ideas could be adapted in coping with the larger problems of literary histories in other parts of the world, including the Far East and South-East Asia. The problems of regional projects start with defining and justifying the coverage. For our project, we have defined East-Central Europe as a narrow strip of land stretching from the Baltic countries to the Balkans, but opinions disagree on the question what to include on eastern and southern sides, and many would argue that Austria should also be included. However, we conceived of the region in terms of imperial dominations from Russia in the East and the German-speaking nations in the West. The southern part has been occupied for centuries by the Ottoman Empire, which has meanwhile been pushed back but left powerful religious and cultural tradition behind.

The region is one of the world's richest multilingual and multicultural areas, but this very richness has led to endemic internal ethnic, religious, and border conflicts. We wanted to put the region's literature on the map for both internal and external readers. Today, the inhabitants of the various nations in East-Central Europe tend to know only their own language and literature, often through the distorting lens of nationalism, Nazism, and Stalinism. Since no independent countriesexisted in the region around 1800 (the starting date of our history) andonly independent, though often unstable, ones after 1989 (our flexible terminal date), national struggles for independence have powerfully shaped the various literatures, and, vice versa, national poets and national literature have played a crucial role in each nation's struggle for independence. National songs, legends, myths, and literature have in Friedrich Schlegel's sense shaped the identity of each nation, but they have alsoproducedhistorical misunderstandings, military conflicts, and ethnic tensions thatled tocultural impoverishment, monolingualism, and monoculture. In the last two-hundred years, much of the region's great literature has been written in exile and emigration.

Due to East-Central Europe's specific social, political, and artistic history, West-European period terms have only limited relevance. We dividedthe region's literary history between 1800 and 1989 into three flexible periods, which apply to all the literatures of the region, even if they did not take place simultaneously: (1) National Awakening, (2) Modernism, and (3) Soviet Domination. The first and the third term are specific to the region, while Modernism, adopted from the West, needed to be redefined, because currents from the West enteredin East-Central Europe into complex interactions with responses to nineteenth-century nationalism. Modernism opened a window to the world, but the westward gaze couldnot lose sight of the local ethnic traditions and struggles. We chose "Soviet Domination" as a category for the period 1945-1989 because the political system during this time reconstituted all aspects of literary life in the region, though not quite uniformly. The cultural policies and the literary lives in the Baltic countries, which were incorporated in the Soviet Union, differed considerably from say Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, or Albania, where nationalist currents expressed themselves in various forms.

This is not to suggest that national and political issues fully determined the region's literary history. Instead of telling one single literary history, we "scanned" the region's history from five different angles, andonly the first scan follows politics closely. Here we show how writers participated in such key events as the revolutions of 1848, the two world wars, the revolutions of 1956

and 1968, and the turnover of 1989-1991, and we analyze the changing memory of these events in literary works. At each of the key dates, conflicting national narrative strands encounter each other, showing alternative perspectives. The second part of the first volumeconsiders the history of literary periods and genres from a specificallyregionalperspective. Wefollow, for instance, the emergence of the region's historical novel, and we show East-Central Europe's important contributions to the emergence of such new twentieth-century genres as the reportage, the lyrical novel, fictionalized autobiography, literary theory, and the cabaret.

Our second volumefocuses on multilingual and multicultural cities and smaller regions. It includes literary histories of Riga, Budapest, Trieste, Plovdiv and other cities, as well as multicultural regions like Transylvania and the Vilnius region. Such histories do not cross present-day national borders, but they are genuinely transnational and comparative. The innovative and far-reaching implications of this conception, which may be termed "showing the globe in a raindrop," merit further attention. Methodologically, the conception compares with the work ofarcheologists, who undertake "vertical" border crossings by unearthing different cultural layers at a single site, chronologically crossing thereby cultural layers, some of which reveal monocultures, others a cohabitation of several. Such site-specific cross-cultural diggingsmay unearth Hun or Etruscan cultural artifacts in Italy, Viking or Celtic remnants in England, Slavic traces in modern Germany, or evidences of the Roman civilization in the southern part of Europe. Adapting such a model, one could envisage writing literary histories of Paris, London, Berlin, Shanghai, and other metropolitan centers, whichwould include ethnic, exile, émigré and migrant writing in various tongues.

Adapting such an archeological model would mean, above all, that literary histories should include literatures written not only in the present national language but also in languages that either have died out at the site or still exist in a minority status. The site could well cover the territory of a whole present nation, but the coverage should be transnational. A further development of such site-specific multilingual literary histories could effectively convert adjectival nation designations (e.g., German, Polish, French, or Chinese literature) into geographical ones (literatures written within the border ofpresent-day Germany, Poland, France or China).

Other recent regional literary histories have initiated similar innovations in literary history. The second volume of the *Literary Cultures of Latin America: a Comparative History* (2004) that Mario Valdés and Djelal Kadir have

editedincludes twenty-three articles on cultural centers, while the first volume of the mentioned literary history of the Iberian Peninsula includes Jon Kortazar's study on the history of Spanish-Basque cohabitation in Bilbao (222-36). However, the three regions, East-Central Europe, Latin America, and the Iberian Peninsula, face different multilingual, multicultural, and multi-literary problems. The ethnictraditions are still alive in Bilbao, but they have largely disappeared in East-Central Europe because of wide-scale elimination of minorities via forced assimilation, repatriation, the Holocaust and ethnic cleansing, as well as an amnesia concerning the literary culture of such vanished minorities. In Latin America, the shared Spanish and Portuguese language allowed writers, ideas, and literary stylesto move from one center to another (Valdés and Kadir 1: xx), whereas linguistic and ethnic differences have limited such a circulation in East-Central Europe.

Regional literatures have started to recuperate the Amerindian literatures in Latin America, the Arab, Jewish, Catalonian, Galician, and Euskadi literatures in the Iberian Peninsula, and the Romani, Sinti, Yiddish, Armenian, and other the minority literatures of East-Central Europe, but national literary histories still tend to ignore works not written in the official language of the country. They may include foreign-born writers, but only if — like Joseph Conrad, Emil Cioran, Samuel Beckett, or Vladimir Nabokov — they had mastered the national language. In the East-Central European region, Romanian literary histories have only recently started to include German- and Hungarian-language literatures, Hungarian literary histories still ignore the once flowering Serbian, Slovak, and Romanian literatures of Pest/Buda, Lithuanian histories exclude literary works written in Polish or Yiddish in Vilnius, and Baltic national literary histories disregard works in the Russian language. West-European countries now welcome literary works by migrant workers and their descendants, but, as far as I know, they include them in their national literary histories only if they are written in the country's official language. The monolingualism of present literary histories is well illustrated by the mentioned newer national literary histories: one covers francophone Belgium while the Dutch history also covers Flanders. Migrating writers and literary works carry double passports and should be included in the histories of both their native tongue and their residence. Site-specific literary histories could complement national, European and global approaches by avoiding the pitfalls of both monolingualism and bland globalism. They would differ from archeological excavations because they would have to involve hermeneutic reflectionsthat turn mere chronology into genuine history. By turning the gaze inward and backward, site-specific histories could reveal a teaming and colorful mingling of languages and literatures, a

transnational variety of *lieux de mémoire*. They would counterbalance foundational national epics that lay claim, like Virgil's *Aeneid*, on a specific site.

The third volume of the literary history in East-Central Europe, titled*The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions*, focuses on the institutional structures within which literature is created, distributed, and received. We discuss herepublishing, censorship, theater, the uses of folk poetry, and even the writing of literary histories — institutions thatwere established to further movements towards cultural and political independence. Our final volume, *Types and Stereotypes*, covers such historical and imaginary figures as national poets, real and imaginary family members, outlaws, and ghost figures like Dracula and the golem. All these types and stereotypes underwenta series of transformationsfashioned by the social and national imagination, by processes of canonization, and the emergence of new media.

East-Central European, Iberian, and Scandinavian literary histories modify the very image of Europe by foregrounding the Eastern, Southern, and Northern liminal territories, giving themthe recognition that a European literary landscape dominated by the West has ignored. New concepts of European literature ought to abandon the traditional focus on Western and Central Europe, and they ought to question thereby the canonized concepts of literary epochs, genres, and movements, all of which are based on limited notions of European literature, and have fulfilled a colonizing function when applied to the literatures "on the margin."The suggested revision of the balance between central and marginal literary regions within Europe should, at the same time,modify the image of a culturally superior Europe, and neutralize the Eurocentrism that was so obvious in the early decades of comparative literature. Giving proper recognitionto the liminal literaturesshould also mediate between Europe and its adjacent literary traditions, including the Arab, the Turkish, and the Persian ones and those that emerged from the southern part of the Soviet Union. The projected dispersion will have to question the canonized concepts of literary epochs, genres, and movements. Definedin terms of West-European phenomena, they all became colonizing forces when applied to the literatures "on the margin."

Future European literary histories will have to face, then, the double challenge of revising the image of a culturally superior Europe and of rectifying internal suppressions and imbalances. Initiatives in this direction have been taken not only in the discussed regional histories, but also in a number of other publications and organizations, for instance ina special issue of *Comparative Literature* on Europe (2006) edited by Susan Suleiman, Theo D'haen's and Iannis Goelandt's *Literature for Europe?* (2009), and in the "European Network for Comparative

Literary Studies." However, the daunting task of actually writing a comprehensive European literary history has, to my knowledge, not been undertaken recently. Admirable attemptsof the past, like Mihály Babits's *Az európai irodalom története* (1936), would have to be redone with different conceptions and via teamwork. Interestingly, such attempts are being made today on a global scale.

3. A Globalized Literary History?

Writing regional literary histories has a two-fold significance for globalizing the field: they provide regional models that can be applied to other regions, and they represent concrete steps towards a global conception of literary history. However, as I shall now show, they raiseissues that become even more complex on a global scale.

Goethe was not the one who coined the term World Literature, but as David Damrosch shows in *What is World Literature?* (2003), his reflections on the concept are still stimulating, even if they do not congeal in a single meaning. The problem becomes even more complicated if we reflect on the *history* of world literature. To paraphrase Kant, comprehensive histories tend to become either encyclopedias without conceptual frames or global generalities lacking local content.

Franco Moretti's theoretical and empirical studies on the novel are, perhaps, the most daring recent attempts to cope with a "embarrassment of riches" in global literary history. Morettibroadens the traditional focus on canonized works and reaches for a quantitatively comprehensive coverage. His testing ground is the world history of the novel, of which he had published a five volume Italian collection, the *Il romanzo* (2001-2003), even before has formulated his theoretical principles in "Conjectures on World Literature" (2004) and in *Graphs, Maps, Trees. Abstract Models for a Literary History* (2005). The volumes on the novel do not constitute, however, a formal history, and they containbig gaps next to excellent essays on individual works and writers. Here too, the European coverage is clearly biased. East European Nobel-Prize winners like Elias Canetti, Isaac Bashevis Singer, and Ivo Andrić are done away with a passing mention, in Andrić's case with the sheer remark that he was one of the greatest novelists of the twentieth century (4: 264). Writers from the Baltic countries, the Balkans, Romania, and many other countries and regions are strikingly absent. Hopefully, they will be included in future accounts thatMoretti and his team continue to prepare. In his 2004 article, Moretti proposed that, next to traditional close reading, global views of literature also need "distantreading," for this yields fewer elements, and hence a sharper sense of their interconnection ("Conjectures" 151). We do, of course, need

interconnections, but "distant reading" may yield schematized overviews, depriving thereby literature of its richness.

Moretti's historical analysis of detective fiction in the "Tree" section of *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (2005) may serve as an example of his abstract forms, this time adapted from evolutionary biology. The premise here is that genres, sub-genres, and stylistic devices like the free indirect discourse change under new historical and social conditions. One would readily consent, if Moretti did not essentialize the meaning of individual works. The mutations that political, social, and market forces bring about, are defined with respect to an unchanging original, and history modifies genres but regards the meaning of individual works fixed, though one would expect that later developments of a genre modify also the image of its beginnings.

Other literary historians have more modest aims. Theo D'haen's *Concise History of World Literature* (2011) is a highly informative introduction to thoughts on world literature and the history of world-literature histories. Though it offers no world-literature history of its own, it includes good summaries of debates on the relevant publications of Moretti and others. One section in the *Companion* volume, co-edited with David Damrosch and Djelal Kadir (2011), offers a "history of World Literature through significant writers and theorists from Goethe to Said, Casanova and Moretti." A corresponding *Reader* has been published in 2012. Of the plethora of recent reflections on globalizing literature I can mention here only two collection of essays that Gunilla Lindberg-Wada has edited and published in 2006: *Literary History: Towards a Global Perspective* and *Studying Transcultural Literary History*.

While I admire the learning and ingenuity of these new approaches, I cannot help asking whether a full globalization of literary history is viable, and whether the broadening coverage of the world map can adequately represent the cohabitation of literary cultures. We should remember Siegrfried Kracauer's objections to writing world histories in general. Using the term *Ungleichzeitigkeit des Gleichzeitigen* (asynchronicity of the contemporaneous) that the German art historian Wilhelm Pinder had introduced in 1926, Kracauer argues that globalizing the set of simultaneous phenomena will make it inevitably more difficult to bring them together under a common concept, for the various parts of the world run on different clocks ("General History" 569).

Kracauer's point applies to one of the most vexing issues we have already encountered: the difficulty of finding period concepts for broader literary histories. Ifperiod concepts coined in Western Europe ill fit East-Europeanphenomena,

they are even less applicable elsewhere. As Mario Valdés and Djelal Kadir write in their literary history of Latin America: "all classifications based on European models" break down in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin America (1: xviii). Is it possible to find common period concepts for a globalized history of literature if individual nations, regions, and continents run through such different phases? Concepts like Renaissance, Baroque, Romanticism, or Expressionism can obviously not be globalized.

Traditional literary periods have been based on the internal features of literary works, usually in combination with dominant social and political trends. The problem is twofold: first, internal literary features, social conditions, and political history differ from one language area to another, and secondly, the crossing from one period to another occurs at different points of the time scale. Searching for global parameters, there seems to be no way to resolve the second issue, forit seems impossible to globally synchronize the transitions from one period to the next. However, we may identify a skeletal global structureif we direct our attention to the technologies of writing and communication, which have recently attracted growing interest due to digitalization. In my opinion, the best guide for this is not among recent future-oriented studies but Walter J. Ong'sauthoritativebackward perspective, *Orality and Literacy; The Technologizing of the Word* (1982). Ong's prime concern is the oral tradition, but he follows its history through the periods of handwriting,and printing, stopping short of digital word processing. As his title indicates, this is a technological history of words and literature, but Ong, as well as others, insists that the changing technologies have defined not only *how* but also *what*is being written: "writing restructures consciousness" (Ong 77). Of course, inventing the alphabet, printing, and the computer offeronly four very general periods, but each of these can be broken down into subdivisions. Ong, for instance, speaks of a secondary orality, based on the invention of film, photography and telephone, while Friedrich Kittler, who juxtaposes the *Aufschreibesysteme* (systems of writing) around 1800 and 1900, ascribes the transformation around 1900 largely to the emergence of the typewriter.

It is in this sense that Wilt Idema and Lloyd Haft have distinguished already in a 1996 Dutch introduction to Chinese literature between four major periods in Chinese literary history: 1) the period of orality that ends with the invention of paper around 100 A.D.; 2) a period of handwriting that ends with the general spread of book printing around 1000 A.D., 3) a third one that ends with the introduction of lithography and other modern printing techniques around 1875; and 4) the period after 1875 (Idema 22). Because of the specificity of the Chinese signs and the

independence of Chinese history, these periods do not coincide chronologically with the key dates of word technology elsewhere, but the stages are nevertheless the same and may offer mileposts for a global view of literary history.

While all literary works can be place into the suggested sequence of global period concepts, this alone does not yield rich interconnections. I want to distinguish between two basic comparative methods, and illustrate each with an article that compares Chinese and German literary works. Both will appear in the next issue of *arcadia*, a journal of comparative literature of which Professor Vivian Liska and I are co-editors. The first one, by Johannes D. Kaminski, combines a joint study of Cao Xueqin's *Hong Lou Meng* and Johann Wolfgang Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, both first printed in the 1790s, with reflections about the possibilities and limitations of comparing literary works that had no historical contacts between them. Kaminski focuses on the function of mythological metanarratives in the two novels and shows, above all, the differences. The second one, by Arne Klawitter, studies the adaptation of the Chinese *Shijing* by German poets who knew no Chinese. In this case, historical contacts exist, but they are questionable: the expressionist poet Albert Ehrenstein published a German adaptation that he called not translation but *Nachdichtung*, a sort of free reformulation of the Chinese originals. Klawitter suggests that it was actually an *Umdichtung*, a refunctionalization of the poems under radically different circumstances. Of course, Ehrenstein was severely taken to task by critics, among them Chen Chuan, who claimed in his doctoral dissertation that Ehrenstein's "bombastic" and "pathos-laden" poems did not do justice to the original ones (104). Chuan, who later became Professor of German literature in Kunming and at other Chinese universities, was, in a sense right, but he failed to understand that Ehrenstein reused the originals to attack in the 1920s the social injustices of his own society.

Here we touch on fundamental questions of adaptation. Chuan's premise was that fidelity to the original is the only valid criterion to judge adaptations. Although many critics still insist on such a fidelity, attitudes towards adaptation have drastically changed in the last decades and most people recognize today that adaptations and sophisticated imitations can fulfil new and innovative functions. Witness the greater freedom granted to translators and stage directors, but also the burgeoning studies on adaptations of novels to film, television and other media. The central thesis of Linda Hutcheon's book *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006) is precisely that we should not judge adaptations by their fidelity to the original, and not belittle works just because they are adaptations rather than original works. The latter point

is beautifully thematized already in Chapter 17 of Cao Xueqin's *Hong Lou Meng*. In preparation of the Imperial Concubine's brief return home, her family sets up sumptuous gardens and buildings, which need to be decorated with poems. Jia Zheng invites a number of distinguished poets for this baptism, but delegates the leading role to his son Bao-yu, not because he thinks so highly of him but because he is eager to criticize his offspring. At a building of "quite another order of elegance," Jia Zheng challenges Bao-yu come up with poetic lines, but belittles the result as imitation. The literary gentlemen disagree: "There is nothing wrong with imitation provided it is done well. After all, Li Bo's poem 'On the Phoenix Terrace' is entirely based on Cui Hao's 'Yellow Crane Tower,' yet it is a much better poem" (Cao 342). They defend thereby a poetics that dominated not only classical Chinese poetry, but also such Western traditions as Petrarchism and Baroque poetry. Romanticism turned against such traditions by championing originality and genius, but the romantic tradition was itself saturated with adaptations.

Works of literature and other works of art are neither fixed nor eternal but constantly change. Oral poetry, which started to use language for artistic purposes, had no original standard but consisted of performances that were constantly revised, passed on, and readapted to suit new audiences. Converting oral poetry into written texts, a momentous process of adaptation, certainly did not give texts a standard form, as *Hong Lou Meng* itself demonstrates all too well. Hence, I propose that a broadened notion of adaptation could become the very heart of a global concept of literary history. Such a broadened conception would recognize not only that literary works are constantly reshaped by new historical, cultural, and social contexts but also that new philological shapes emerge via re-edition (or even digitalization) of texts; adaptations via translations, staging, musical setting, and visual illustrations. Literary works constantly mutate, andthis endless process of adaptation constitutes a global literary history that crosses the borders of historical periods and national cultures.

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Who Worlds the Literature?Goethe's *Weltliteratur* and Globalization

Vladimir Biti
Institut für Slawistik, Universität Wien
Spitalgasse 2 / Hof 3, A-1090, Wien, Austria
Email: vladimir.biti@univie.ac.at

Abstract Some theorists claim that today's global world antiquates national literatures in the same way as did Goethe and Marx with their idea of *Weltliteratur* more than a century and a half ago. I contest this claim, showing, first, that Marx was ambivalent with regard to the formation of the world market, anticipating its compartmentalizing consequences. Second, I argue that Goethe's concept of *Weltliteratur*, far from being opposed to national literature, which in the Germany of the time was still in the process of self-finding, has to be regarded as an attempt to consolidate national literature against the homogenizing pressure of a world rapidly and superficially uniting. Goethe was resolutely against the brothers Schlegel's national exclusionism, but he was equally firmly against the gaudy flux, overall dilettantism, and bad taste of the culture emerging from the commercial and communicational uniting of the world. His *Weltliteratur* was conceived as an ongoing dialogue between distinguished national literatures from which German literature, which at the time was the weakest among them, was expected to benefit the most. It aimed at a consolidation of his disturbed personal and the shaky German self at the time and gradually turned into an imperial gesture.

Key words Goethe; *Weltliterature*; globalization

Autor Vladimir Biti, Professor of South Slav literatures and cultures at the Faculty for Literary and Cultural Studies, University of Vienna. Author of eight books, *Literatur- und Kulturtheorie: Ein Handbuch gegenwärtiger Begriffe* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2001), among the others, he also edited or co-edited six readers as well as published over hundred articles in a wide international range of journals and readers. Co-editor of *arcadia: Journal of Literary Culture* and member of the editorial board of several international journals, *Journal of Literary Theory*, *Journal of Literature and Trauma Studies, Primerjalna književnost* and *Advances*

in Literary Studies among the others. From 2007 member of Academia Europaea.

Comparative Literature as the Promoter of Globalization

If at the time of its establishment Goethe's *Weltliteratur* was indeed a "literary-political concept" (Günther 104), the same holds even more for its contemporary interpretations and appropriations.[1] We usually see them adapting the idea, in a more or less inconsiderate manner, to new political investments and compensatory reconfigurations. In an essay which caused a considerable stir in the academic enclave of comparative literature, Franco Moretti (2000: 54) took as a point of departure Goethe's famous remark to his secretary Eckermann of January 31, 1827 that national literature no longer meant a great deal (*will jetzt nicht viel sagen*) and that the epoch of world literature had arrived (*die Epoche der Welt-Literatur ist an der Zeit*). Goethe's views (1987: 250)[2] were endorsed, as it were, some twenty years later by Marx's and Engels' adoption of the concept in terms of the emerging world market: "National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness (*Beschränktheit*) become more and more impossible, and from many national and local literatures, there arises a world literature (*bildet sich eine Weltliteratur*)" (Marx and Engels 1952: L, 421, Marx and Engels 1974: IV, 466). Taking these two sentences to be proclaiming more or less the same thing, namely the final revelation of literature in the shape of a "planetary system," Moretti puts forth the thesis that the discipline of comparative literature, having long been restricted to a very narrow international scope, "has not lived up to these beginnings" (2000: 54). It is not just that its focus has remained limited mostly to Western Europe and that it has failed to give equal consideration to everything published as literature throughout world, rather the principal shortcoming is that it has not addressed the *problem* or approached its object through an appropriate methodology. Citing Max Weber's maxim that "A new 'science' emerges where a new problem is pursued by a new method," Moretti proposes a return to Goethe's and Marx's vision of *Weltliteratur* as a systemic whole with closely interdependent constituents.

As is often the case when past thinkers are brought into play so as to legitimize present methodological revolutions, and Moretti is determined to introduce a completely new critical method to the field (2000: 55), they tend to be read one-sidedly and narrow-mindedly. Long ago, it was precisely Marx and Engels who rendered the narrow-minded treatment literature antiquated. Nevertheless, given that Moretti's new method openly dismisses so-called close reading as a technique that pertains only to canonical literary texts, the unilateral interpretation

of Goethe's views might come as no surprise. According to Moretti, "if you want to look beyond the canon (and of course, world literature will do so: it would be absurd if it didn't!) close reading will not do it" (2000: 57). As there is however always a point at which an examination of the texts of world literature must employ a close reading requiring linguistic competence, Moretti leaves this task to "the specialist of the national literature" (66). Although he considers all texts to belong to national and world literature simultaneously, there is an asymmetrical division of labor between them: "[Y]ou become a comparatist for a very simple reason: *because you are convinced that that viewpoint is better*. It has greater explanatory power; it's conceptually more elegant; it avoids that ugly 'one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness'" (68). He therefore supports and propagates distant reading in his more recent book *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (1) as well. But what is a comparative literature that, in order to create "authoritative totalizing patterns" (Spivak 108), leaves informed close reading to national literary scholars on the periphery (i.e. beyond the great Western languages that comparatist is expected to understand) and therefore depends on "untested statements by small groups of people treated as native informants" (108)? What is comparative literature whose fundamental division of labor amounts to the slogan "the others provide information while we know the whole world" (108)? What else can such comparative literature be but precisely a *one-sided and narrow-minded* discipline practiced by the scholars who are convinced they are in possession of the "better viewpoint"? If, in the envisioned division of labor, it creates the global methodological design as a technique of distant reading in order to "dominate the literary world system" (Apter 49) and relegates the dominated modest and restricted jobs to others, then ultimately it can be nothing other than "nationalism, U.S. nationalism masquerading as globalism" (Spivak 108).[3]

Goethe's and Marx's ideas of world literature, if we take a *closer* look at them, are deeply resilient to their deployment for such purpose. First of all, the very merging of these two figures into a homogeneous thesis of a substantially new world order is misguided. For Marx, world literature was an unavoidable corollary of the formation of the world market and as such an *instrument of the expanding bourgeois capital* which destroys national industries, economies and cultural self-sufficiency. Unlike Goethe's *Weltliteratur*, Marx's concept was directed against the nation-states by opposing a statist nationalism that was unknown to Goethe. But even though Marx was certainly critical of nationalism, associating it with the manipulative politics of nation-states, his stance on cosmopolitan world literature, as an instrument of the bourgeois suspension of all differences, was far from being

clearly affirmative (Cheng 28). The homogenizing pressure of this cosmopolitanism spawned the proliferation of nationalisms (as well as national philologies) in the second half of the nineteenth century and it is pretty obvious that today's globalization produces exactly the same effect. As a number of scholars who resisted the flattening of distinct literary traditions into a single "systemic rhythm" of world literature have noted, this legacy of the expanding cosmopolitanism, as disconcertingly manifested in today's global world, might be a more appropriate point of departure for the establishment of analogies between Marx's time and ours. One of the lessons that might be drawn from Marx's characteristic ambivalence regarding "globalization" is that the annihilating fragmentation follows the triumphant integration of the world like a shadow. Not long ago Derrida was warning that the "spectre haunting Europe" is a "dispersal into a myriad of provinces, into a multiplicity of self-enclosed idioms or petty little nationalisms, each one jealous and untranslatable" (Derrida39). Such an unfortunate self-enclosure in untranslatability is, however, a direct response to the celebrated imperative of universal translatability.

As John Pizer (2006: 20) for example noticed, economic globalization disrespects popular ethnic sentiments, blindly trusting that rational politics can balance the interests of all parties. Yet, on the contrary, tribal solidarities fiercely react to the threat of such a globalized economy and the concomitant loss of distinct national identities by clinging to them with ever-greater tenacity. "Globalization puts us in a position to reflect on inequality all the time. […] Inequality is not on the way out," remarks Haun Saussy (28). "The many states […] fold […] onto the one global economy; but the single economy divides up what it unites." This systemic misbalance might be the reason that the harsh critique of "nationalist ideologies and their imperial projections" in recent academic practice "has turned out to coexist quite comfortably with a continuing nationalism" (Damrosch 285). Nationalism is not an outdated or retrograde phenomenon to be downplayed, neglected and hushed up. Cosmopolitanism that argues in these terms is "all the more national for being European, all the more European for being trans-European and international; no one is more cosmopolitan and authentically universal than the one, than this 'we'" (Derrida48), no one is more particular than a 'we' that "specialize[s] in the sense of the universal" (74). Therefore, "it is the task of our transnational, diasporic, global times to rethink the national paradigm. On the other hand, it is imperative to understand the continued relevance of the nation-state form to the still unfinished project of decolonization" (Coopan 37). According to Stephen Greenblatt (1), the bodies of the deceased national identities refused to stay buried

and violently returned onto the scene of the contemporary world. Thus "mobility studies," which were set in motion by the persistent colonization, exile, emigration, wandering, contamination and métissage caused by globalization, "need to account as well for the fact that cultures are experienced again and again […] as fixed, inevitable, and strangely enduring" (16).

However, contrary to Marx's ambivalent stance on such a monolithic shaping of the world, Moretti, in a kind of better-knowing Marxism rather remote from the "father's" reflectively undecided and cautious attitude (not to mention Derrida's reading of Marx, with which both he and Pascale Casanova are quite unfamiliar), does not give the slightest account of these disturbing effects of globalization. Rather it places comparative literature, resolutely and unconcernedly, *at the service of its affirmation*. Like Casanova, who "wholly subscribes" to his clear-cut power opposition (ignorant of Foucault's revision because it is shaped à la Bourdieu), he pretends to be in full possession of the analytical tool of the "literary system." As opposed to him (her), all other literary agents, including the "specialist in national literature," are doomed to blindness for this system's surreptitious operations. The non-reflected legacy of the American and French Revolution seem to be marching hand in hand here. It is only an informed Marxist comparatist who, being properly instructed in world-system theory, is in a position to dismantle this all-pervading human astigmatism (Casanova 80, 82; Moretti 2000: 66). For Moretti and Casanova, the putatively discarded discipline of comparative literature, now refashioned into a revolutionary world literature, celebrates its heyday.

Goethe's Detachment from Globalization

If we now turn to Goethe, who is Moretti's second chosen foothold for the justification of his "literary world systems theory," he is completely unambiguous with regard to the accelerated economic, traffic and communicational uniting of the world of his time. Far from offering praise, he is *deeply concerned* by it and thus develops a consistent *defensive strategy* against this abundance of superficial impressions. The result of "all possible facilities of communication," he writes for instance to Zelter on June 6, 1825, is a generalization of a terribly mediocre culture (WA IV 39: 216).[4] Already a quarter of a century before, in the Introduction to the first issue of the journal *Propyläen* (1798), he cautioned the young writer not to get lost in the gaudy flux of a world trivialized in such a manner. Far from being merely liberating (from the constraints of local cultures), the enormous variety of world literature is simultaneously overwhelming and dangerous. One cannot feel at home in every part of the world and every century and hence one

often falls prey to what seems natural in its respective context (letter to Friedrich von Müller on January 27, 1830; 1987: 287–288). Yet one should beware of such easy familiarizing projections, which are the usual business of the mob bereft of proper insight. Goethe interprets such a swift adoption of the foreign that unconcernedly accommodates its foreignness to one's petty domestic universe as vulgar cosmopolitanism, from which he clearly distances himself. His approach is similar to Plato's treatment of Athenian democracy in Chapter VIII of the *Republic* (562d–563d), in which he speaks of a chaotic reign of selfish individuals who do anything they please. Only through a heightened attentiveness for other cultures can a writer resist the overall dilettantism of the contemporary literary market that, because of the superficial and dispersive everyday habits of literary consumers, requires from literature nothing more than swift and powerful effects (1987: 173–175). Indifferent as listeners and readers usually are, writes Goethe (302–303) again in one of his late notes characterized by resignation and animosity to the "crowd," they prefer to hear and read always the same thing, expecting the writer to treat them as one would a maid (*Frauenzimmer*), telling them only what they would like to hear.

Contrary to Moretti's and Casanova's claim, the restrictive rules of the emerging literary market tame and impede the emancipating nature of world literature. Whereas in ancient times such mechanical repetition was regarded as a rare illness, in modern times it instead became endemic and epidemic (304). But contrary to mere imitators who unquestioningly consent to the low taste of the ignorant crowd, the true artist is required to uncompromisingly adhere to the strategic task of a proper representation of nature beyond what just comes as natural, i.e., he must undertake meticulous comparative study of world-wide cultures and discover a deep unity beneath their confusing diversity. In short, a necessary departure from oneself toward the other must not amount to an all too easy self-abandonment but on the contrary, *improved self-acquisition on a higher level*. If one is too devoted to the admirable other, one loses one's own characteristic national nature (1987: 282), which is the only basis for the international recognition of a particular literature. Each product has first to display (*aufstecken*) its national symbol (*Nationalkokarde*) clearly, whereupon it will be accepted benevolently into the privileged circle of world literature (letter to Reinhard, June 18, 1829; 1987: 278). The final goal of Goethe's world literature is therefore a tireless *Selbststeigerung* or self-propelling. "You have to incessantly change, renew, rejuvenate yourself," he confesses to Müller on April 24, 1830, aged no less than 80, "in order not to ossify" (291). Continuously at risk of falling victim either to

the aggressive pressure of worldwide uniformity or to the static provincial taste of his compatriots, a world writer, as Goethe understands him, bears responsibility to withstand and reject both. Always counteracting both inconsiderate all-equalizing cosmopolitanism and petty local nationalism, he is to be unremitting in his never-ending self-formation.

Faced with the worldwide vulgarization of literary taste, Goethe reacts to it by defending the exclusive right of the creative writer to speak in the name of the whole of humankind/humanity (*die ganze Menschheit*) against the grotesque distortion of its universal human substance (*das allgemein Menschliche*) carried out in the name of non-reflected elementary habits. Such a writer must engage humanity in its entirety, must go beyond his immediate neighbor who provides him the ready security of "house piety" if he wants to embrace the true amplitude of "world piety" (FA I 10: 514). In a letter to Carlyle from July 20, 1827 Goethe states that the endeavor of the best poets of all nations has for some time been concerned with that which is universally human while trying to transcend the selfishness and appease the bellicosity of earthly human creatures. It is exactly this uncompromising universality that in world literature shines and shimmers through the particular (1987: 265). Yet under the pressure of the mob that expects everything to fit its false concepts and prejudices and thus does untold harm (*großes Unheil*) to humanity, true works of art remain unrecognized and unacknowledged (1987: 303). Threatened by the "flood" of market-influenced literature as if it were about to swallow up his delineated elitist claim, towards the end of his life Goethe bitterly complained to Eckermann that barbarous times had come (March 22, 1831; 1987: 297). He was literally overwhelmed by that insight, helplessly acting out of the "poisonous knowledge" induced by it. New barbarians misapprehend true art as that which is exemplary (*Vortreffliche*) for humankind, i.e., precisely that to which he was at pains to remain loyal throughout his literary career (letter to Zelter on the same day; 1987: 297). If we take the tripartite process of a writer's development outlined in his earlier essay *Simple Imitation of Nature, Manner, Style* from 1789 (BA 19: 77–82) as a criterion, Goethe obviously placed himself, in opposition to his German contemporaries, at the highest level of "style." This level renders the writer capable of capturing the unique essence of the object represented unlike pure imitators, who simply reproduce its externally visible surface.

Getting Out of the Crowd: Goethe's Elitist Cosmopolitanism

As a great admirer of ancient Greek culture, Goethe in the presented deeply frustrated considerations, deliberately or not, draws on the tradition of Greekelitist

cosmopolitanism directed against the narrow-minded plebs of compatriots. Such cosmopolitanism declared readiness to open the broadest possible dialogue among equals only on the condition that its distinguished participants are completely freed beforehand from the selfish interests of their inferior fellow citizens. The latter have to be kept at bay, as they care solely about enjoying rights and pleasures at the cost of others. Used to subordination, they are disqualified in advance from the intellectually free behavior of truly considering the otherness of the other and caring equally about his or her rights and pleasures (Arendt 41–45). Since one must achieve such freedom of thought through engaging bright-mindedness and courage, the Greeks reserve it for enlightened individuals, i.e., *agencies*, whereas the benighted crowd, i.e., *enablers* expected to provide through their persistent work all the necessary prerequisites for this remarkable achievement, is sentenced to compliance and delivered to its restricted habits. *Agencies are those who think and act, enablers those who work and produce.* The free democratic world, the Greek cosmopolitan argument goes, can be created solely through the well-balanced exchange of thoughts between agencies, who therefore expect their truth to be universally valid.

However, being established on the disagreement between two parties who, although seemingly speaking the same language, do not understand the same thing in what the other is saying (Rancière 1999: 10), the truth of the political elite can never gain universal validity. Its terms systematically prevent the subaltern from becoming legible by allocating these "dissimilar items" to the "pockets of disability," "zones of indeterminacy" and "regimes of confinement" and by depriving them of all symbolic profits of the citizen status. In Greek democracy as well as in its neoliberal descendants, caesura separates agencies from enablers, the entitled "subject of" from the outlawed "subject to." Enablers are sentenced to a subliminal, silent, and animal existence. The boomerang effect of such a hideous incarceration is a "systemic crisis" of democracy, "an ongoing activity of precariousness" within its established institutions, modes, and relationships (Berlant 10), the spreading of the fear into its grammar, the spectralization of its events, and the disaggregation of its political aggregate. This is why, the efforts of the agencies to impose their rule upon the enablers notwithstanding, the stubbornly reemerging split between them hinders the establishment of a harmonious democracy.

Therefore, when he founded his Academy as an isolated space of intellectual freedom in opposition to the false freedom of the polis that inflicts the opinion of the agora upon all citizens, Plato obviously realized the delineated restricted nature of the public truth. This insight into the limits of democracy induced his resolute

refusal of its universal claim that entitles everybody to partake in the business of rule. In his view, such an unnatural attitude was derived from the traumatic absence of the "divine shepherd," the only authority naturally entitled to take care of the human flock. All the evils of democracy commence with the separation of the *human* principle of government from the *natural* law of kinship as well as the establishment of this principle on the elimination of the "family father." Illegitimately usurping the natural rule of the "murdered shepherd" (Lévy 2002), democratic rulers falsify, invert and perturb his order. Instead of being based on the principle of *arkhé*, which lets the firstborn and the highborn rule, the democratic entitlement is based on the *anarchic* principle of the drawing of lots. Democracy is ruled by chance or chaos, an unbearable condition that it owes to the patricide. This crime lets the human orphans wander in the "empire of the void" whose "empty center" (Lefort 2000) persistently lures them into taking pleasure in its seizure, representation and dissemination, and they do not hesitate to disrespectfully enjoy this pleasure (Rancière 2006*:* 30–41).

However, through the founding of Academy, Plato opposed Athenian democracy by redeploying its own *maneuver of self-exemption from the deluded dominant opinion in the name of the forgotten divine truth*. He reintroduced this self-redeeming cosmopolitan maneuver because the shepherd's archaic truth was in his opinion subjected to democratic perversion into the human anarchic truth. While the democratic government claimed to be the only authentic representative of God, beneath this appearance he discerned the egotistical individual with its quick and petty pleasures. Yet considering that Plato took recourse to the same maneuver of invoking the divine truth against the truth of blinded fellow citizens, must not the same critique, to which he exposed the Athenian democracy, necessarily undermine his own argument too? To counteract the selfishness of democratic individuals, Plato likewise holds on to the eliminated pastor, taking him as "the reference point by which an opposition between good government and democratic government is established" (Rancière 2006: 35). For Plato, we can rescue ourselves from the perils and crimes of democracy only by distancing ourselves from its anarchic multitude, turning back toward the lost family father, his golden law of kinship and the sheep's (i.e. our) bond to him. Looking after both the whole flock and each its member, He alone neatly harmonizes the One with the multiple ─ and precisely this uniting is required of a good government. Confronted with Plato's thesis based on such redoubling of the opponent's argument, one can hardly resist the impression that it relies on the same human misappropriation of the divine truth that it fiercely condemns on its behalf.

I propose to take this as a welcome warning against Goethe's elitist cosmopolitanism. Yet an outright rejection of it, skipping the much-needed explanation for why Plato's argument stubbornly resurfaces in humankind's history, ultimately in Goethe's idea of world literature itself, would be of very little help. Whence this obstinate holding on to the (imagined) shepherd against his self-appointed false representatives, i.e., betrayers (Rancière 2006: 34–5) which in its turn runs the risk of repeating and being blamed for the same betrayal? We will not eliminate very influential ideological formations emerging from such "misplaced prejudices" by setting up a truth putatively superior to their blinded assertions. As no cosmopolitanism hitherto could pass judgments without recourse to a legitimating "higher truth," it could not but redouble nationalism's argument. Instead of raising absolute claims to the universal truth, it seems therefore advisable to uncover dissensual judgments underneath consensual prejudices (in Arendt's terms), or politics underneath the police (in Rancière's terms). "In the course of this replacement it is necessary to trace back these prejudices to the judgments inherent to them and to affiliate these judgments for their part to the underlying experiences which once gave rise to them" (Arendt 79).

The Acting Out of the Traumatic Experience

Taking up such an attitude to Goethe's elitist cosmopolitanism, in what follows I will affiliate it with the traumatic constellation of forces he had to cope with. Uncovering such a constellation as the mobilizer of Goethe's cosmopolitanism, I will not deny the legitimacy of the judgment generated by it, yet simultaneously, from the perspective it tried to obliterate, expose its claim to the universal truth as a prejudice. Hence the analytical objective is not to dispose with prejudices altogether because of their failure to realize the universal truth. The aim is instead to lay bare the claim of these prejudices to the status of universal truths as a pretension *unsuitable for the dissensus constitutive of democracy*. Democracy is not an accomplishable *state order* — which is precisely the main cosmopolitan *prejudice* to be dismantled — but rather an interminable *practice* of the incalculable human many carried out in the form of *judgments*. Provoked by the dissemination of various "zones of indeterminacy" into the established social aggregate, these judgments interrogate the political line separating "one life from the other" (Rancière 2004b: 303), life from inanimate matter (Hägglund 272–76) and persons from things (Esposito 209). Rather than an ultimate unification of this incalculable human many, the task of democracy is raising awareness of the violence inherent to such therapeutic cosmopolitan undertakings. In an attempt to remedy human

traumas finally, they give rise to more devastating traumatic experiences.

Before we return to Goethe by following this line of argument, let us recall that another important predecessor of his "Greek" cosmopolitanism alongside Plato, i. e. Voltaire, engaged the same nostalgic recourse to the forgotten divine truth so as to direct it against the dominant opinion of blinded compatriots. Each of these prominent intellectual figures operated as the author of a trauma narrative in their own right. In establishing his international Republic of Letters, Voltaire equally attempted to outmaneuver his ignorant aristocratic compatriots. Blindly attached to their inert and selfish habits as they were, they were suddenly exposed to critical observation by an international circle of intellectually mobile agencies. The latter conducted an emancipating dialogue with each other by distilling from it their growingly encompassing, convincing, and eventually binding truth. Once publicly recognized, however, Voltaire's remedial narrative transformed the elitist *exemption* from its monarchic surroundings into the international *expansion* of the "republican" truth. Goethe's trauma narrative undertakes the same cosmopolitan recalibration and sophistication of the local public truth, yet now distanced itself from the "idyllic," i.e., the parochial and self-enclosed type of petty bourgeois readership (1987: 298) which, to Goethe's deepest disgust, increasingly took command of the literary market of the time. To defend himself from this flood, in *The Epochs of Social Formation* (1831) he takes recourse to the unity of all educated circles across the globe. His intention is to write for this kind of readership.

Regarding a somewhat frustrated late remark, it makes a huge difference whether one reads instinctively for pleasure and reanimation (*Genuß und Belebung*) or reflexively for insight and instruction (*Erkenntnis und Belehrung*) (1987: 308), even if readers preferring the latter, profound benefit of literature are extremely rare. But only those who are able to enjoy this benefit can claim to be reading with regard to what is universally human (as one is obliged to read world literature) rather than reading in the leisurely manner of the most deluded part of humanity (as one normally reads trivial literature). Such capable (*tüchtige*) people who really care about "the true progress of humanity" by striving to shed their narrow intellectual skin are certainly few and far between, but in their rarity they are nevertheless scattered all over the world. Step by step, the initial distinction between the true (or world) and the false (national or trivial international) works, writers and readers turns into a harsh opposition. Along with its international position, Goethe's literary oeuvre consolidates its pretensions to universality.

Ultimately, Goethe does not hesitate to introduce a *clear-cut division to literature*, placing the benighted majority of its agents on one side, and the select

minority on the other: "Yet the route they take, the pace they keep is not everyone's concern." Their sublime task is to rescue the world from descending into narrow-mindedness or barbarity. They belong to the "quiet, almost chastened church" (*eine stille, fast gedrückte Kirche*) of the serious-minded (*die Ernsten*) who, because it would be futile (*vergebens*) to oppose the wide current of the day (*die breite Tagesfluth*), must nonetheless "steadfastly (*standhaft*) try to maintain their position till the flow (*die Strömung*) has passed" (FA I 22: 866–67). Their solitary position, removed from the silly worldwide crowd orientated toward immediate consumption, is tantamount to "aesthetic autonomy." However, one might ask whether the aesthetically autonomous world literature, if it must be restricted to a "quiet church of the serious-minded," the initiated circle of agencies walled in against the masses of their enablers, really deserves the name of *world* literature. How encompassing can a literature that rests on the exclusion of those without whose persistent work it cannot possibly come into being be? In order to answer this question, one is well advised to recall the paradoxical character of the relation between agencies and enablers or freedom and coercion for that matter:

> Wherever the few separated themselves from the many, they obviously became dependent on them, that is to say, in all those matters of coexistence which have to be really negotiated (*in allen Fragen des Miteinander-Lebens, in denen wirklich gehandelt werden muss*). […] This is why the realm of the freedom of the few is not only at pains to maintain itself against the realm of the political determined by the many, but is dependent on the many for its very existence; the simultaneous existence of the polis is existentially necessary for the existence of the academy. […] [I]t becomes a necessity that opposes freedom on the one hand, and is its precondition on the other. (Arendt 2010: 58–59)

As Dana Goodman convincingly demonstrated, all the prerequisites for the emergence of Voltaire's Republic of Letters, i.e., all the political, economic, educational, technological and institutional support necessary for its establishment and functioning, were provided by the same French monarchy which was ferociously criticized by him (Goodman 90–183, 233–80). Yet if his literary republic denied religious, national, linguistic and cultural barriers, it expected the reunion of people to take place on a culturally elevated basis, which relied on extraordinary linguistic and educational competences, finely tuned manners, and the refined skills of polite conversation, and from which the inert crowd of compatriot-

enablers was necessarily excluded. Exemplified in the line from Plato through Voltaire to Goethe, the self-redeeming reintroduction of freedom on an elevated level thus unavoidably implies a reintroduction of the others' bondage on the lower levels. It seems as if compliant enablers doggedly accompany free agencies, inducing ever-new attempts on the part of the latter to purify their freedom from pollution.

Goethe's personal investment in the Platonic antidemocratic and discriminatory reasoning can hardly be overlooked. Besides his narrow-minded provincial audience and the worldwide rise of bad taste, he had to fight fierce battles against the misunderstanding of his nationally inflamed Romantic German contemporaries (Mandelkow 57–65). Against all these bitter disappointments, he found a welcome consolation in the reception of his work by some distinguished French and English Romanticists once Mme de Staël's influential book *De l'Allemagne* was published in England (1813) and France (1814).[5] Using categories like double force, double light, play and floating, the French exile writer portrayed him as a protean, mobile, contradictory and ironic poet who in the presentation of his self and others tends to maneuver incessantly back and forth, establishing and destroying identities in the same move. A couple of years later, structuring his *West-Eastern Divan* (1819; expanded second edition 1827) in a deeply polyphonic way, Goethe readily recognized himself in her categories in order to distance himself from and defend himself against his inimical and provincial German milieu (Koch 187).

Far from holding the representatives of this milieu in high esteem, he constantly expressed the opinion they might be crushed in their intellectual misery by such impressive foreign talents like Shakespeare or Calderón. Each of the latter "is too rich and too powerful" to be taken even as the mirror of their self-identification. Shakespeare for example forces the rising German talents to reproduce him mechanically while they falsely believe to be producing themselves (1987: 289, 282). "How many excellent Germans have been ruined by him and Calderón!" In the same conversation with Eckerman conducted on December 25, 1825, Goethe highlights the grotesque effect of Shakespeare's plays on his compatriots, who put their potatoes into his silver dishes (1987: 228). The magnificent Calderón drives the young Schiller into madness, threatening to erode his humble virtues while the unprecedented Molière becomes desperately weak in German treatment, he remarks to his secretary on May 12, 1825 (1987: 226). No matter how much German novels and tragedies imitate Goldsmith, Fielding and Shakespeare, they nonetheless pollute and pervert their models (December 3, 1824;

223). No wonder Goethe warns Eckermann himself, in a conversation conducted at the beginning of their acquaintance (September 18, 1823), to beware of great undertakings and inventions of his own: they are almost destined to fail! One cannot expect a real sense for what is true and capable (*echter Sinn für das Wahre und Tüchtige*) in German petty circumstances, he tells his secretary on October 15, 1825. The masses who dominate them abhor whatever is truly great, tending to banish it from the world (227) (including Goethe himself, we might add, to elucidate his obvious bitterness). "For, we ordinary people (*kleine Menschen*) are not capable of retaining (*bewahren*, also in the sense of "making true") in us the greatness of such things…" (May 12, 1825; 1987: 226)

This is a simulated modesty of course: Goethe surely (and of course rightly) did not perceive himself to be an ordinary man, at least not of the sort to which he thought the majority of his compatriots belonged. He recognized himself much more in another "we" applied in a diary note from January 27, 1827, which enthusiastically comments on the rich French reception of his play *Torquato Tasso*. He famously writes, "a universal *world literature* is emerging in which an honorable role is reserved for us Germans" (1987: 243). However, as in the letter to the editor Cotta the day before and the translator Streckfuß on the same day (WA IV, 42, S. 26–28), with this "us" he obviously means just himself, since no other German writer enjoyed comparable international attention at that time. Probably the most exemplary proof of this is the huge success of his *Young Werther* far across national borders.[6] Lord Byron dedicated one of his works to Goethe, Manzoni adored him, Gérard de Nerval translated *Faust* and Delacroix illustrated it, Walter Scott translated *Götz von Berlichingen*, and there were much more fruitful refractions of and reflections on his work, for instance those of the French literary critic Jean-Jacques Ampère and the translator Albert Stapfer, not to mention Thomas Carlyle. Whereas contemporary British, French and Italian intellectuals accordingly *recognized themselves in Goethe*, other German writers recognized themselves in foreign writers and translated them passionately. With regard to these modest but diligent compatriots, Goethe found himself, along with for example Hegel in his impressively erudite contemporaneous *Lectures on Aesthetics*, in the comfortable position of being able to benefit, in the medium of the German language, from the extraordinarily rich and fruitful translation work of two previous generations (Günther 1990: 113; Wiedemann 1993: 545ff.). So despite the rhetorically or prudently deployed "we," Goethe was clearly aware of the real division of labor and prominence among German writers and intellectuals of his time. The majority of them only provided the background and sources

enabling the expression of the whole splendor of the select few. Being regarded as too provincial, they were prevented from entering the latter's "hall of fame."

A Retroactive Reinvestment of Goethe's Cosmopolitanism

Surprisingly, this traumatically resonating antidemocratic stance of Goethe's escapes David Damrosch in the first chapter of his admirably knowledgeable book on world literature, in which he treats German identity in Goethe's age as a homogeneous body rather than, as I have tried to demonstrate, something internally divided and antagonistic. He certainly portrays Goethe in a historically more careful and adequate way than Moretti, but with the same restrictive aim of deriving his own recent design of world literature from this not exactly informed, if not biased, interpretation. Unlike Moretti, who complains that nobody can really master all that was ever written in the world — as if this is what Goethe meant with his concept of *Weltliteratur* and not the contrary — Damrosch clearly states that "world literature is not an infinite, ungraspable canon of works, but rather a mode of circulation and of reading" (Damrosch 5). This he presents, as it were, as the Goethean approach *from below*, a perspective that is, it would seem, engaged to circumvent the delineated perils of global designs *from above*. As I have tried to emphasize, Goethe does associate *Weltliteratur* with mutually enriching interaction, but he means an interactionamonga number of initiated agents who exempt themselves from the mob at home and abroad. If one takes into consideration that this elitism induced by the aggressive pressure of common understanding and bad taste, more or less habitual in the select social circles of the day, is inherent in the idea of *Weltliteratur,* such a literature was anything but projected from below. Quite the opposite of being truly all embracing, in order to overcome the traumatizing effects of the surrounding ignorance, Goethe based it on the *retaliating exclusion* of this "ignorant crowd."

Goethe's argument is complex and sometimes contradictory, yet unambiguously directed against the domestic as well as the worldwide mob because of the latter's inability or unwillingness to engage in the spiritually capitalizing exchange. However, although Damrosch's reading emphasizes Goethe's "constantly shifting personality" of "a diamond […] that casts different color in every direction" (1, actually quoting Eckermann's preface), he rejects the interpretation according to which Goethe's idea of world literature would amount to an "imperial self-projection" or a "self-confirming narcissism" of German literature. At that time, he remarks, German culture was lacking a great history, political unity and a strong literary tradition, having been unable to stand comparison with its French or

English counterparts, which were in sovereign possession of all these dimensions (2003: 8). Whereas the leading French critic of that time, Philarète Euphémon Chasles, in stressing the infinite receptiveness and sensitivity of French culture clearly displays triumphalist cosmopolitanism with imperial aspirations, Goethe's cosmopolitanism emerges from the "provincial anxiety" of a nation with "relatively weak culture" that strove for international recognition and political unity (2003: 9–13).

Curiously identifying Goethe with a nation from whose dominant public representatives he consistently remained aloof, Damrosch accordingly proposes that a "provincial writer," being "free from the bonds of an inherited tradition," "can engage all the more fully, and by mature choice, with a broader literary world." His intention would be "to seek out a variety of networks of transmission and reception" (2003: 13) for his or her literature. Yet of what use is this paradoxical *provinciallyanxious freedom* if, as Goethe demonstrated with the examples of his compatriots, including Schiller, it ultimately entails madness, weak imitation, grotesque distortions, vulgarizations and failures, in short the desolate bankruptcy of the great majority of German writers who searched for the secure abode of their selves in great foreign models? As Goethe untiringly pointed out, German writers resided in the small and self-enclosed world of "home piety" (*Hausfrömmigkeit*), taking care exclusively of their own individual security (*Sicherheit des Einzelnen*; FA I 10, 514): "German poetry offers, just look at the daily production, as a matter of fact only expressions, sighs and interjections of benevolent individuals. Every individual presents himself (*tritt auf*) by his natural disposition (*Naturell*) and formation (*Bildung*); hardly anything tends toward what is universal, higher…" (Letter to Hitzig, November 11, 1829; Goethe 1987: 285) In such depressing circumstances, where is the free ability and mature readiness for engaging with the broader literary world about which Damrosch boldly speculates?

It is not the freedom from national tradition, then, but the lack of recognition and overall misapprehension or the traumatic experience of undeserved isolation and the neglect of his work at home that motivates Goethe's enthusiastic engagement with world literature (Bohnenkamp 2000; Koch 2002). When read against its public presentation, his elitist choice uncovers a self-exempting, self-rescuing maneuver aimed at international self-expansion. He significantly hopes that "the differences which prevail within a given nation will be corrected by the perspective and judgment of others" (Letter to Sulpiz Boisserée from October 12, 1827; WA IV 43: 106). In the previous letter to Reinhard from June 10, 1822 we find the following remark: "I have a general impression that nations learn to

understand each other more than ever; misunderstandings seem to be residing within each of their own bodies" (WA IV 36: 61). This biting comment is clearly addressed at his compatriots after the publication of the four-volume French translation of his dramas (Bohnenkamp 197). Far from being a "provincial writer" (Damrosch 13), in the 1820s Goethe was, to his great personal satisfaction, a widely internationally acknowledged author. As a complete foreigner in the nationally inflamed petty German circumstances, he attentively and efficiently established numerous international coalitions and foreign alliances to outmaneuver homeland pressures and suppress domestic enemies.

Goethe's Trauma Narrative: Repositioning German Literature

However, he simultaneously undertook the maneuver of the self-exemption of *German literature* from its dominant international surroundings, which instructively redoubles his cosmopolitan project. This consoling self-glorifying maneuver of turning the lack of an autochthonous literary tradition into an advantage in comparisons with France or England — characteristic of all trauma narratives — was almost a commonplace in the culturally inferior Germany around 1800 (Herder 1991: VII, 551; A. Schlegel 1965: IV 26; Wiedemann 1993, 545ff.; Koch 2002: 234; Albrecht 2005: 308).[7] Following this domestic habit, Goethe wittily employed aslightly derogatory image of Germans as, from the French perspective, "a not complete, acknowledged, but vital neighboring people, striving and involved in controversies" (a typically multi-voiced commentary from the *Kunst und Altertum* (1826); FA I 22: 259) to counteract the French national-universal tendency to instantiate global cultural uniformity. Defending his Greek "cosmopolitanism against the inferior local others," he resisted the French national universalism based on the model of Roman imperial "cosmopolitanism toward the inferior foreign others." Yet as is often the case with such compensatory revolts, this initial opposition gradually turned into substitution. Invisibly, the German "bondsman" adopted the imperial behavior of the French "lord." One inadmissible appropriation of the global truth substituted for another.

Let us examine this transformation of self-exemption into self-expansion, briefly exemplified above in Plato's and Voltaire's cosmopolitan arguments, in more detail. Already in a much earlier polemical reaction to the literary legacy of the French Revolution, significantly entitled *Literary Sanculottism* (1795), Goethe stated unequivocally: "We do not wish for the upheavals which could prepare classical works in Germany" (1987: 66). In other words, state revolutions established classical national literatures in France and England, which from his

perspective is unacceptable, as no single national literature deserves the status of the classic. This status seems to be reserved for the *pre- and transnational* literature of Greek Antiquity. For Goethe, any modern European nation making such universal claims is an improper usurper (Günther 1990: 109) in the same way as Plato blamed democrats for their inappropriate occupation of the divine shepherd's throne. Such *political* national sovereignty vainly pretends to erase the rich sediments of universal *cultural* memory inherited from Greek Antiquity because the latter's archive ultimately proves victorious (Koch 2002: 151–158). Considering the fragmentation and dispersion of this social and cultural legacy induced by modernity, it is no longer possible for any modern agency to be sovereign on its own terms. Literary sovereignty is therefore imaginable merely in terms of a "joint venture" of many agencies, which have to patiently learn to know each other in order to somehow put together these scattered fragments. Appropriating solely for themselves the universal Greek cultural legacy and occupying for their petty purpose its constitutively "empty throne," modern national agencies falsify its universality.

Even from the perspective of individual writers, Goethe admits to Eckermann on May 15, 1825 that it makes no sense speaking of someone's originality if one considers that the world leaves its imprints on the human being from his beginning to his end. "If I were able to mention everything that I owe to great predecessors and contemporaries, very few things would remain," i.e. beyond energy, power, and the will [to go through others in order to find out for oneself] (1987: 226–27). Indeed, as Goethe learns by reading his *Faust* in French translation, one cannot affirm the self without encountering the other, and the same goes for the reflections of German literature in the mirror of French or English criticism. "Like individual man, each nation also relies on what is ancient and foreign much more than what is its own, inherited or self-made," he writes in a letter to Carl Ernst Schubarth on November 3, 1820 (188). No modern national literature can erase the old Greek transnational fundament, which is why Goethe prefers a corporate aesthetic redemption of its cultural legacy. "In the evaluation of the foreign (literatures) we must not stick to anything specific in wishing to regard this as exemplary," he tells his secretary Eckermann on January 31, 1827; "if we need something exemplary, we must always return to the Ancient Greeks…"(250).

But the Ancient Greeks are gone forever. After their definite departure, their legacy lost its binding power, henceforth figuring merely as a regulating idea. As the Lord was now irrevocably absent, His throne became empty and up for grabs. In order to expose its improper usurpers after the historical dissolution of

the Antique pattern, Goethe invented *Weltliteratur* as a permanent *supervising negotiation* between them. Every modern writer must accordingly courageously confront the turbulent worldwide flux, expose his own body to its erasure, and stubbornly drive his spirit through its mess if he wants to gain the real overview and achieve representative status in the ongoing European competition. (As far as Goethe is concerned, the non-Europeans are involved not so much as distinguished competitors but rather as the not quite distinguishable sources for exploitation). Xenophobic self-isolation (which dominated the German Romantic scene) would not do. Contrary to recent quantitative interpretations of Goethe's concept (as if it comprises all literatures in their entirety) or the qualitative ones for that matter (as if it means "a symphony of masterpieces from different nations" like for example in Thomsen 2008: 13), one cannot overemphasize the importance ofprominent international literary exchangesfor Goethe's vision of world literature. It pushes all national literatures in the process of *making*, as testified by his constant concern for the participation of Frenchmen, Englishmen, Scots and Italians in the shaping of German literature (Birus 8; Günther 124).

The basic principle of self-propelling toward the common future ideal holds therefore not just for writers but national literatures as well:

> Left to itself, every literature will exhaust its vitality, if it is not refreshed by the empathy (*Teilnahme*) of a foreign one. What nature researcher (*Naturforscher*) does not take pleasure in the wonderful things that he sees produced by reflection in a mirror? Now what mirroring (*Spiegelung*) in the field of morals (*Sittliche*) means, everyone has experienced in himself if only unconsciously, and once his attention is aroused, he will understand how much in the formation of his life he owes to this mirroring. (Goethe 1987: 245)

Not everybody, though, was in a position to capitalize on the proposed process of mutual mirroring, as in order to participate in it one first had to be legitimized as an agency. In his essay *Shakespeare without End* of 1816, Goethe (1987: 135) pointed out that only an author equipped with self-consciousness (i.e. in the final analysis Goethe alone!) can properly understand foreign tempers and mentalities (*Gemütsarten*); others are too frightened by them to explore them carefully. In the same manner, heterogeneity of other literatures can be profitable only if a national literature confronting them has already established its own aesthetic credentials and identity (1987: 243, 280). In Goethe's understanding, world literature implies an ongoing dialogue of equals. Far from being a universal concern, equality requires

merits. Unlike the French or the English, the Germans of Goethe's time had not yet succeeded in accomplishing this equality; they were the only nation-in-the-making among the prominent Europeans.

In proposing a world literature based on the German future-oriented pattern of becoming, Goethe allocated to the Germans a completely different role from being just one of its national participants. To avoid misappropriations, his *Weltliteratur* refuses to adopt the national model as the basis of its identity but searches instead for its identity in an open process of permanent mediation, exchange and negotiation. As among the select few only the shaky German identity was at that time engaged in such a self-finding process, Goethe ultimately *expands the ongoing German search for identity to the dialogic becoming of world literature*. Other nations were thus expected to participate(or, in the case of non-European or less-than-European literatures: to serve)with their particular national currencies in an open exchange set up on the German identity pattern permanently on the move. In such subtle fashion, *elitist self-exemption* turned into *democratic expansion* not only on the individual (i.e., Goethe's personal) but also on the collective level: the Germans were surreptitiously appointed as the only legitimate guardians of the Greek transnational legacy. Developing his idea of *Weltliteratur*, Goethe invented a reconfigured cultural space, which allocated to his compatriots the prestigious role of the custodians of the Holy Archive. Additionally, they were presented as self-denying agencies acting in the name of the forgotten Shepherd who, beyond any selfish interest typical of the French and English pretenders, merely foster a reunion of fractured literatures and cultures. The media of this mutually (yet substantially unequally) enriching and empoweringintellectual tradebetween accredited European literatures that were expected to spawn the consolidation, improvement and final triumph of German self-understanding were "journals and books, correspondence, and translations, the journeys and encounters of writers as well as an expanding book market" (Meyer-Kalkus 106).

As John Pizer (2006: 22–24) has rightly pointed out, "impersonal" German literature could not produce a typical classical author infused by a national spirit. It was bereft of recognizable national agency, decentered through its enduring exposure to foreign influences, marked by sub-national disunity and a lack of cohesion and, still in the dialogic process of national self-finding, internally heterogeneous and contradictory. Yet precisely this set of features made it suitable as the *open dialogic model* for the establishment of world literature and world classical authors. This German pattern of subtle mediation and negotiation was directed against the bellicose competition between the strong, nationally infused

French and British literatures. Not that Goethe was hoping the world will by means of literature achieve "a universal peace" — he was no less sceptical than Kant in this regard — but he was confident that "the unavoidable quarrel will gradually subside and the war will become less cruel, the victory less imperious (*übermüthig*)" (FA I 22: 433–34). Of course, nobody can expect that nations will suddenly reconceive themselves, "but they must become aware of one another, grasp each other, and if they are unwilling to love one another (*wenn sie sich wechselseitig nicht lieben mögen*), learn to tolerate each other" (FA I 22, 491). For "if we have to communicate in our everyday life with resolutely other-thinking persons, we will find ourselves moved to be on the one hand more cautious, but on the other more tolerant and lenient" (FA I 22: 868). Nevertheless, a core motivation behind these scattered remarks is not so much "the desire for productive and peaceful coexistence among the nations of Europe," as Pizer (2006: 21) surmises, incautiously taking Goethe at his word. Rather, beneath Goethe's cosmopolitan proclamations there lurks a compensatory raising of the German national pattern of becoming into the sovereign moderator of international intellectual traffic. Germany is envisaged to become the *divine shepherd of world literature*.

In this regard, Goethe was, after all, just a loyal inheritor of a number of his reputed domestic predecessors. In 1793, Herder had stated that Germans should "appropriate the best of all the peoples and in such a way become among them what man became among his fellow creatures (*Neben- und Mitgeschöpfe*) from which he learned his skills (*Künste*). He came at the end, took from every one of them his art and now *he surpasses and rules all of them*" (Herder 1991: VII, 551 [emphasis mine]). Several years later, Novalis, in the equally cosmopolitan project *Christendom or Europe* (1799), put forth the thesis that, while other European countries are "occupied by war, speculation and partisanship (*Parthey-Geist*), the German makes himself with all diligence into an associate (*Genosse*) of a higher epoch of culture. This preliminary step *must give him, over the course of time, a large predominance* (ein großes Uebergewicht) *over the others*" (Novalis 1983b: III, 519 [emphasis mine]). In the same vein, Goethe entrusted the German language with the role of the medium of permanent translation or commerce of one with another literature. German is called upon to set the course for everybody's national currency (*Münzsorten*) "not by repelling the foreign but devouring it" (1987: 243). What Goethe ultimately envisaged was "the take up and complete appropriation (*das völlige Aneignen*) of the foreign" (1987: 238), which is tantamount to the complete denial of the foreignness inherent to Roman imperial "cosmopolitanism toward the inferior foreign others."

From Exemption to Expansion: Toward the Roman Imperial Cosmopolitanism

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans refused to acknowledge the other in his or her otherness, regarding him or her as a mere extension of their own noble breed. They simply could not imagine that there existed anybody who could be equal to them in terms of greatness and still be different from them (Arendt 121). By tacitly shifting from the Greek elitist attitude to this Roman imperial one, Goethe ultimately disqualified, or at least disregarded, any individual or collective identity reluctant or unable to persistently enrich itself, i.e., to adopt his and the German self-propelling behavior and standards. In the famous letter to Thomas Carlyle from July 20, 1827, he states:

> The Germans have long contributed to the mediation *[Vermittlung]* between individual and national particularities *[das Besondere der einzelnen Menschen und Völkerschaften]* and their mutual recognition. Whoever understands the German language finds himself in a market where every nation displays its merchandize, plays the translator while enriching himself. (1987: 265)

Being himself an internally dialogic author whose consciousness was able of devouring an incredible polyglossia,[8] Goethe wanted to transfer the vivid spiritual cohesiveness of individuals characterizing the French *esprit général* and the English *public spirit* from the national to the world literary level. However, in so doing he also wished to open the *historical stream of the entire human community* engendered in such a way, by applying to it theGerman "dialogic principle" of self-finding.[9] In an address to the society of nature researchers and physicians from 1828 he stated that what is of real concern in world literature is that "vivid and striving men of letters become acquainted with one another and find themselves stimulated for social action through their mutual inclination and common sense" (*Neigung und Gemeinsinn*, FA I 25: 79). The works of world literature concern us only inasmuch as they concern each other (Günther 124). It is only if they create such select common sense, caught in the unlimited process of perfection, that they substitute, to deploy Thomas Mann's apt opposition, what is possible or valid for the world (*Weltfähige* or *Weltgültige*) and characterized by a true world horizon (*Weltbezug*) for what is at present simply the way of the world (*Weltläufige*; Birus 16).

Given Germany's own lack of a strong, immanent, infrangible national identity

> in his time, it is not surprising that Goethe was particularly aware of and open to the possibility of a super- or transnational literary modality. Perhaps Goethe's insights into the contemporary impossibility of creating a "classical" (national) German literature made the formulation of a *Weltliteratur* desirable as the only possible alternative to cultural fragmentation. (Pizer 2006: 24)

Goethe's *Weltliteratur* was undoubtedly a *trauma narrative* in the meaning Jeffrey Alexander attributed to this concept: coming up "from below" (i.e., both from an unrecognized Goethe in the German literary space and from an underrated Germany in the European political and cultural space), it therapeutically reconfigures the existing political, literary and cultural space. The *Weltliteratur* narrative, in a word, works through and acts out both a personal and a collective traumatic experience. Yet no trauma narrative can achieve necessary public recognition without instigating "new rounds of social suffering" (Alexander 2012: 2). At the very moment at which it predicates the equal dignity of all its imagined worldwide community's invited participants, it proves unable to remove the gap, which produces "the part that has no part" in it.

This essential simultaneity of the narrative's *construction* and *destruction* of community accounts for its slide from emancipation to supremacy. Undertaken under the pressure of depravation and humiliation, it gradually rises to the status of an international intellectual agenda and thus, if only with delays and hesitations, becomes a powerful "multidirectional" platform for the recovery of various traumatized collectivities. This is what had happened meanwhile to Goethe's *Weltliteratur*, whose global impact increased in an almost daily rhythm. Yet without denying its politically intended integration of political and cultural fragmentation at home and abroad, his trauma narrative of world reconciliation (*Weltversöhnung*) was basically structured on the German *Einheit-in-Vielfalt* model of steady self-expansion: *The greater your diversity, affiliates of* Weltliteratur*, the more magnificent grows my dialogic unity in becoming!*

Having been initiated in the form of Greek elitist "cosmopolitanism against the deluded fellow citizens," that is to say, Goethe's idea of world literature tacitly perverted into Roman imperial "cosmopolitanism toward the inferior foreigners" open to the inclusion of any agency able and ready to comply with the set rules of exchange. According to Costas Douzinas (2007: 159), "[…] cosmopolitanism starts as a moral universalism but often degenerates into imperial globalism. […] The continuous slide of cosmopolitan ideas towards empire is one of the dominant motifs of modernity." It is significant that, following this same path, Voltaire's

project of the world literary republic underwent a comparable "perversion" of its envisaged inclusiveness into an intolerant exclusiveness. It finally asked "those nations which are not French […] to become French" (Lyotard 147) and thus turned its initial war of liberation into the war of conquest. No wonder then, the same imperial model already defined the true, albeit hardly deliberate agenda of the famous manifesto of Weimar Classicism, composed by Schiller but subscribed to by Goethe. It set its sails, in the interest of "pure humanity" (*rein menschlich*), to "unite again the politically divided world under the banner of truth and beauty (*die politisch geteilte Welt unter der Fahne der Wahrheit und Schönheit wieder zu vereinigen*)" (Schiller 1991: XXII, 109). After all, aesthetics in the service of Germany's own political recalibration and reconfiguration was, as Joseph Chytry (1989) has convincingly demonstrated, the main agenda around 1800. Put in the "obvious" terms of the untiringly self-propelling German spirit, world literature community was hoped to eventually become an "expanded fatherland," according to Goethe's own formulation in the essay on Carlyle's translation of Schiller (FA I 22: 431–34). Accordingly, the entrance to this expanded fatherland was surreptitiously supplied with an invisible "garbage disposal." Not everybody was equally welcome within the family.

Translating the "IronLaw of Kinship" into the "Free Competition of Values"

This undermines the enthusiastic reading of Goethe's *Weltliteratur* proposed by the Moroccan *Germanist* Fawzi Boubia (1985, 1988). Unreservedly endorsed by Pizer (2006: 27–28), he refutes the charges against its Eurocentric character. Goethe respects the particularity of non-European "others," the argument goes, advocating the movement toward the non-European Other and not a dominion over it or its levelling to European dimensions. This thesis finds a supporter in David Damrosch (2003: 13). Damrosch, quoting a passage from Eckermann in which Goethe dismisses medieval Germanic and Serbian poetry by treating both as "barbaric popular poetry" of only provisional interest for the serious writer, regards this to be "not, or not primarily, Eurocentrism," since elitism and Eurocentrism strike him as partly "competing values." The problem is, unfortunately, that in Goethe's argument they go strictly hand in hand, making a quite inseparable couple. The incessant normative activity of passing judgments and correcting aberrations — disciplining the most diverse participants to comply with the set rules of participation by abandoning their "inherited identity garbage" — transforms *Weltliteratur* tacitly from an emancipating agency into one which is oppressive. Being constitutively dependent on *verification* by its manifold adherents, the cosmopolitan operation of

trauma narratives cannot avoid perversion into an instrument of their *colonization*. The same "democratic malformation" happened, after all, to Herder's *Weltpoesie* based on *Naturdichtung* as well as to August Schlegel's *universal poetry* (canon of masterpieces, A. Schlegel 1965: IV, 14) and Goethe's *Weltliteratur* proves, albeit long after his death, unable to escape it, — all the advertent or inadvertent "makeup" applied by his domestic and international interpreters notwithstanding. Yet Goethe himself, being a well-trained pupil of Plato, was terrified by this sinister prospect of an idea, which was forged to circumvent it. This is why he tirelessly, albeit ultimately vainly, reaffirms its elitism.

In the famous conversation of January 31, 1827 (1987: 249–50), for example, he firstly shares with Eckermann the democratic thought that poetry is a common good of humankind in which some are a little bit better, swim a little bit longer at the top than the others, and that's all. As poetry is a universal human matter, nobody should delude himself he is a great poet just because he has written a good poem. Yet he was at that time already frightened by the consequences of this initially Herderian literary doctrine to which he subscribed in 1773, when he edited a collection of Alsatian folk songs together with Herder. In the meantime, this early democratic initiative of hugely expanding the idea of literature gave rise to the neo-German religio-patriotic art (*neu-deutsche religiös-patriotische Kunst*) which he now abhorred (Meyer-Kalkus 2010: 101). What was once intended to be broadly democratic was thus turned into the self-enclosed national-conservative opposite. With his *Weltliteratur*, Goethe pretended to obviate this destiny of *Naturdichtung*, which is why he could not permit everybody to usurp it. It had to be saved from such vulgarization by its uncultivated consumers in the same way as the restriction of the Greek nomos to a small circle of domestic agencies tended to prevent the (forthcoming Roman) evaporation of the political in an incalculable system of imperial expansion (Arendt 119).

He therefore immediately, in the continuation of the same conversation, returns to the Greek elitist cosmopolitan position: Such universal poetry certainly concerns Chinese, Serbian poetry or the *Nibelungenlied*, which are exclusively of a transitory historical interest, but not Greek Antiquity, which is of an immortal aesthetic interest. In the slightly later notes from the *Makariens Archiv* (1829, 1987: 284) he is even more unambiguous: "Chinese, Indian, Egyptian antiquities are always just curiosities; it is recommendable to make oneself and the world acquainted with them; but they would be not especially fruitful for our moral and aesthetic education/formation (*Bildung*)." This is the reason why "Orientals" can never stand comparison with the Greeks and Romans or the *Nibelungen* with the

Iliad for that matter (174); they simply belong to different categories, since the first represent false or transient values and the second those that are true or deep. Because of the "Oriental predilection" to lump together what is most remote, contradictory and incommensurable (169), Goethe also rejects the literary work of his younger contemporary Jean Paul (175–77). Instead of trying to distill from the world's diversity its underlying true equivalent (*wahres Äquivalent*) patterned according to the Ancient Greek model, Jean Paul uses this diversity as a coin for momentary rhetorical effects. Such "Oriental" literary rhetoric only degrades poetry, bereaving it of its true substance (178). Poetry is therefore no longer a universal human matter: all Oriental literatures, the Serbian and the old Germanic epic as well as Romantic mannerists like Jean Paul are expelled from its blessing.

They are not completely inapplicable, admittedly, but of restricted use in the envisioned world literary community of elective affiliates. Oriental culture can be used just as a "refreshing source" to "strengthen the peculiarity of our spirit," but certainly not as its law-giving pattern (FA II 6: 642). "Goethe has never abandoned Shakespeare in favor of Nizâmî" (Birus 1995: 19). The same holds for *Naturdichtung*: original but primitive, it can be reasonably exploited only as a raw material. Even if Goethe urges his compatriots to apply the Herderian *Einfühlungsvermögen* (empathic ability) in their approach to Serbian folk poetry, when he accordingly advises them to pay the Serbs a "personal visit" he describes the Serbian "rough land" as if it lay somewhere far behind, "several centuries ago" (FA I 22: 686). And when he was indeed once invited, during his journey through Italy, by the Prince of Waldeck to cross the Adriatic Sea and pay the "Morlacks" a "personal visit," he declined with uneasiness, "distinctly not interested in travelling across the Adriatic" (Wolff 2001: 192). The imagined geography, pleasing by its self-complimenting operations, refuses to be embarrassed by the real one. Even if he recommended "to read every poet in his own language and the peculiar district of his time and habits" (FA I 3: 270) and "to strive to approach the foreign as closely as possible" (FA I 3: 293), he himself read the Chinese novel of manners *Yü-chao-li* — a "marginal Chinese literary work of minor importance" (Wang 2011, 296) — in a free French translation and adaptation (*Le deux cousines,* 1826). In the same way, he retranslated the Serbian epic from the poor Italian translation. Recalling this episode fifty years later, he even claims he translated it from the accompanying French in Countess Rosenberg's *Morlackische Notizen*, which were not published until 1788, i.e. too late to be used for his translation (Wolff 2001: 192) — a neat example of how unconcerned he was about translations of "barbaric" literary products. It seems he did not exactly expect the translation of

such marginal literary works to be of the highest sort — according to his typology (1987: 181–185) — that gives up its own language in order to closely stick to the original; an informative, plainly prosaic translation, which is the lowest sort in his hierarchy, completely suffices. The "heightened attentiveness" that protects one from "easy familiarizing projections" practiced by the ignorant mob is not exactly necessary here. Oriental non-European or indeed European literatures all serve merely for rude orientation. From the Western perspective, they make up "the rest" which "we must look at only historically; appropriating for ourselves what is good, so far as we can" (1987: 250). The non-European or less-than-European literatures and cultures, in a way, remain up for arbitrary grabs for their prominent European counterparts; what counts are their motives, certainly not language, discourse or style.

The great West European literatures, on the contrary, serve Goethe as highly important refracting mirrors that, unlike the Oriental ones, fully deserve the attentiveness of Kantian *Hineinversetzen* or Herderian *Einfühlungsvermögen*. If one wants to truly understand them, meticulous and patient translation of their genuine otherness has to penetrate what is untranslatable in them (*Beim Übersetzen muß man bis ans Unübersetzliche herangehen*, 308). Goethe does not fear to be crushed by them like his modest compatriots, since the French, British and Italianswere the first to acknowledge and invite him into their international company and not vice versa. His almost imperially self-confident *Weltliteratur* therefore does not emerge from German literary and cultural inferiority as Damrosch claims. At stake is an initiative not merely richly prepared by numerous domestic translations, as indicated above, but also powerfully corroborated from abroad. Nobody comes upon the idea of forging global designs without such accreditations. Because of outlined interferences between these cultures, Damrosch's clear-cut opposition between French cosmopolitanism "from above" and German cosmopolitanism "from below" has to be substantially revised, i.e., reintroduced within each of these respective corpuses. They are far from being as robust as Damrosch (along with many others) portrays them for the polemical purpose of defending his own argument. As cosmopolitanism splits into agencies and enablers, those who speak for it and those in the name of whom it speaks — and this not only along national but also economic, social and gender lines, — it necessarily contains an *internal redoubling*. Underneath its "elitist" face, the "democratic" element is submerged, underneath its "mind" its "body." No external opposition or "blaming of the ignorant" can cancel out this constitutive gap. No "subject of" exists without a "subject to" that persistently undermines its sovereignty. Rather than

being consistent and continuous, cosmopolitanism is a split and discontinuous undertaking.

As the Goethe specialist Anne Bohnenkamp was the first to notice, his idea of world literature was "directly connected with *his perception of the international reception* of his own works" (2000: 187 [emphasis mine]). It was not that he initially and anxiously *looked after* the foreign mirrors but instead, in a creatively sovereign reaction, *reflected* on their mirroring, mirrored their refractions back, retransferred their transfers, received their reception, retranslated their translations. In sum, he creatively enhanced and propelled the process of literary exchange, and precisely this is how his equivocal narrative of world literature came into being. In the final analysis, all this consolatory acceptance, praising, translating, staging, reviewing and censoring of his work (Goethe 1987, who here again "modestly" speaks of "us") enormously contributed to Goethe's imperial self-understanding (Meyer-Kalkus 2010: 105–106). As the refractions "from one mirror to another do not fade but ignite each other" (FA I, 17: 371) the wide world suddenly became an "expanded fatherland," i.e. a substantially improved version of what he was desperately missing at home. After all, a number of his distinguished contemporaries such as Novalis, the brothers Schlegel, Fichte, Jean Paul, and Mme de Staël were also firmly convinced that the moment had come for Germans to take command of the world partition of symbolic values. They were expected "to unite all the advantages of the most varied nationalities" in order "to create a cosmopolitan midpoint for the human spirit" (A. Schlegel 1965: IV, 36). To reiterate "[…] cosmopolitanism starts as a moral universalism but often degenerates into imperial globalism. […] The continuous slide of cosmopolitan ideas towards empire is one of the dominant motifs of modernity" (Douzinas 159).

Thus the conclusion would be that, opposite to Damrosch's consistently one-dimensional reading in favor of the "free competition" of cultural values, Goethe's *Weltliteratur* nonetheless amounts to an imperial "system of self-securing" of his and the German shaken self in the sense defined by Barbara Herrnstein Smith (quoted by Damrosch, 8). This *imperial self-securing system of world literature*, "in enlarging its view 'from China to Peru,' may become all the more imperialistic, seeing in every horizon of difference new peripheries of its own centrality, new pathologies through which its own normativity may be defined and must be asserted" (Smith 54). Smith's characterization neatly harmonizes with Arendt's description of Roman "cosmopolitanism toward the inferior others," which regards the other as a mere extension of the noble Roman breed (Arendt 120). In Roman imperial terms, the other was saved from annihilation not "out of mercy,

but for the sake of the expansion of the polis, which from now on was expected to include even the most foreign members in a new alliance of comrades" (116). Far from being a firm and enclosed canon (as was the contemporary Romantic *Universalpoesie*), Goethe's adaptable and steadily contextually fed movement of world literature that swallows up ever-new participants thus gradually, despite his reluctance, acquired the Roman profile. Goethe as the engineer of world literature and the Germans as its collective beneficiaries systematically capitalized the "reiterated mirroring" and "mutual illuminations" (Bohnenkamp 202–203) provided by its numerous adherents. According to a lucid early remark by Ernst Robert Curtius, world literature was from the very beginning meant as a "meeting point of many references, a center of diverging perspectives: formulated as a mission" (*ein Aufgegebenes*; Curtius 1954: 46; Bohnenkamp 2000: 202), it accumulated profit as capital does by its very definition. Being shaped as steadily agglomerating symbolic capital — and note that without exception recent German interpreters also avoid this point — it was meant exclusively for *agencies* in the globalizing operations of circulation. The remaining unfit candidates (like the non-European, less-than-European, pre-modern or indeed Romantic mannerist literatures for that matter) were expelled in advance from the international circulation, transformation and translation that enables the symbolic enrichment of its participants — as Damrosch (4–5) significantly circumscribes the essence of world literature. Being rejected by a fine-tuned "garbage disposal" that hideously supervised its normative procedure, they were relegated to the category of *enablers*, the "working and producing" residue of all compensatory trauma narratives. This amorphous surplus follows the triumphant rise of world literature like an uncanny shadow.

Systematically stamped, marginalized, and excommunicated by the relentless normative work of this global system, these enablers were captured in the immobile, restricted and benighted realm of national literatures (Damrosch 6). Locked in such a way, they were prevented from gaining and benefitting from cultural exchanges and concomitantly bereft of any chance to function as the prestigious exchange valuefor all the others. Destined to be deployed at best selectively, partially and occasionally as raw material, rather than permanently exchanged, differentiated and refined in the ongoing globalizing operations, they were condemned to the status of local and anonymous use values devoid of global identity, relevance and acknowledgement. If the production and proliferation of such telluric, indistinctive, non-exchangeable and untranslatable "pockets of disability" is an unavoidable corollary of the self-propelling system of world literature, then the habitual attitude of the inhabitants of these pockets to world literature has to be re-examined. The

enthusiastic endorsement of its operations, feverishly trying to scratch and crawl the enablers' way into their "blessed realm" at the cost of thereby being denigrated to the status of a temporally anterior and spatially exterior object with regard to the systemic mainstream (Shih 17), risks the elimination of these "systemicoutputs" from the field of political attention. Are we therefore not better advised to raise the question as to who in the last analysis is authorizing, promoting, and canonizing this imperial system, and with what motivation, purpose and benefit?

In other words, the relation of global domination based on the imposition of common law, as represented in the existing projects of world literature, must confront continuous disagreement rather than be smoothly perpetuated. If world literature does indeed want to be democratic, then it has the task of highlighting the irresolvable conflict that underlies its cosmopolitanism rather than the task of persistent suppression of this conflict for the benefit of a supposed "unity-to-come." In lieu of being an "unfinished project" that has to be brought to its harmonic completion, world literature is a project *never to be finished* because of the split inherent to it. Maintenance of its democratic character, not its celebrated "dialogue of equals" but its neglected constitutive disagreementbetween agencies and enablers has to be consistently practiced.

Notes

1. This article presents a part of the fifth chapter of my forthcoming book *Tracing Global emocracy: Literature, Theory, and the Politics of Trauma* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, January 2016).

2. My translation of this passage from *Conversations with Eckermann* slightly differs from both the American translation by John Oxenford (San Francisco, 1984: 132) used by Damrosch 2003 and Moretti's own translation. All following translations from German will be mine if not otherwise indicated.

3. If I am here siding with Spivak's critique of Moretti, this does not mean that I endorse her own revision of comparative literature. With its opposite privileging of native informants and comparatists (2003: 14, 22), it overemphasizes the particularity of languages and cultures in a typically liberalist, multiculturalist spirit.

4. I will be quoting, in the following, various critical editions of Goethe's works (*Weimarer, Berliner, Frankfurter Ausgabe*) according to the following principle: division (here IV), volume (here 39), page number (here 216).

5. This might be one possible answer to the "rarely asked" but fundamental question from Thomas Beebee's illuminating discussion of Nietzsche's skeptical stance to world literature:

"[W]hat kind of consolation can the teaching and propagation of world literature provide?" or, even more specifically, "[W]hom is world literature consoling, and in what way?" (Beebee 2011: 367, 376) Goethe himself found in *Weltliteratur* a consolation for his traumatic situation at home in the same way as, to take up Beebee's examples, the students in Kathleen Komar's class in Los Angeles or Roberto Bolaño's character Urrutia did. Yet if Goethe's specific traumatic experience effectuates world literature's ability to console, then Michael Rothberg's concept of "multidirectional memory" (Rothberg 2009) might be an apt instrument for specifying this ability. *Weltliteratur* is always responding to a nationally situated traumatic experience but possesses the ability to work through the remote affiliate traumatic experiences as well. Such elective affinities among the injured are however always established at someone's cost and it is precisely this "side effect" of world literature's "therapy" that must not be forgotten. Its politics must not degenerate into policing.

6. I thank Galin Tihanov for this reminder.

7. An American philosopher, having researched the German intellectual corpus around 1800, had this impression: "There is, so to speak, quite a promiscuous theoretical as well as stylistic dependence of one writer on another. […] In this climate of in- and cross-breeding of citations and cross-references, one writer being quite dependent upon others in the trading of ideas and authorities…" (Eze 1997: 6–7)

8. As regards Goethe's overarching creative consciousness, it strikes his attentive readers as " 'what we Germans call spirit [*Geist*], which is predominant in an upper leader (*das Vorwaltende des oberen Leitenden*)' (FA III 1, 181), a weightless, on-hand intelligence that 'especially belongs to a man of age or an aging epoch' and qualifies itself through a 'worldwide overview, irony' and 'free use of talents'" (Koch 2002: 201).

9. I deliberately deploy this famous concept of Mikhail Bakhtin's literary and linguistic theory to indicate the importance of his in-depth reading of Goethe for its shaping. However, unlike Pizer, who enthusiastically endorses Bakhtin's empathic understanding of Goethe, I interpret the dialogic principle — in both cases — as an operation of imperial self-empowerment that aims at the establishment of a supreme authority or what we, using Bakhtin's own terms, could dub the "authorial self."

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The Reproducibility of the *Angelus Novus* in the Moment of Danger

Vivian Liska
Institute of Jewish Studies, University of Antwerp
Prinsstraat 13 L. 400, B-2000 Antwerpen, Belgium
Email: vivian.liska@ua.ac.be

Abstract Walter Benjamin's "Angel of History" inspired by Paul Klee's artwork "Angelus Novus" has become a modern icon that continues to receive international acclaim in markedly different contexts and situations. This reception raises questions about the conditions and implications of carrying Benjamin's allegory and, by extension, modernist icons as such, across cultural, temporal and political borders: Under what conditions can this arguably most radical of canonized mnemonic images of the past century be saved from conventionalization in order to continue to testify to the violence and destruction perpetrated over the course of human history until today? This question is addressed in a juxtaposition of several contrasting interpretations of Benjamin's famous allegory.
Key words Angel of History; Memory; Transmission; Benjamin; Iconicity
Author **Vivian Liska**is full professor of German Literature and Director of the Institute of JewishStudies at the University of Antwerp. She is also permanent Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem and a member of the visiting staff of New York University. Her academic work focuses on Modern German Literature, Literary Theory, German-Jewish thought, Modernist literature and poetry after 1945. She is the editor of the book series "Perspectives on Jewish Texts and Contexts" (De Gruyter, Berlin), the *Yearbook of the Society for European-Jewish Literature* (with A. Bodenheimer), *arcadia:International Journal of Literary Studies* (with Vladimir Biti). Her most important recent books are *Giorgio Agambens leerer Messianismus* (2008), *When Kafka Says We* (2009), *Uncommon Communities in German-Jewish Literature* (2009), and *Fremde Gemeinschaft. Deutsch-jüdische Literatur der Moderne* (2011).

Walter Benjamin's "Angel of History" who turns his back to the future and faces the past that lies before him like a heap of rubble, has become an emblem for the

redemptive commemoration of history as catastrophe as well as for the failure to carry out this task. Written in 1940, the figure developed in Benjamin's Ninth Thesis "On the Concept of History" [1] as a comment on Paul Klee's "oil painting with touches of aquarelle"[2] from 1920, which was his most precious possession, represents a bleak view of history associated with the darkest hour of the European Twentieth Century. As has often been remarked, Benjamin's theses "On the Concept of History" constitute not only a microscopic summa and a testament of his thought, but, particularly in the figure of the Angel drawn in the Ninth Thesis, they can also be regarded as a condensation of his views on the task of the historian to confront the past from the perspective of a specific constellation with the present.

My title is a collage of three quotes from Benjamin's work: the essay "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility" (SW 3 101-33), the reference to the title of Paul Klee's painting in the Ninth Thesis, and the passage in the Sixth Thesis that defines the task of the historical materialist in terms of capturing "an image of the past as it presents itself spontaneously to the historical subject in the moment of danger" (*im Augenblick der Gefahr*) (SW 4 391). The continuous and worldwide reception of Benjamin's "Angel of History" in very different contexts and situations over the past decades raises questions about the conditions and implications of carrying Benjamin's icon across cultural, temporal, and political borders.

Benjamin's Ninth Thesis starts out as a description of Klee's "Angelus Novus" and, in a few lines, turns it into an allegory that reaches far beyond anything visible in the painting:

> A Klee painting named Angelus Novus shows an Angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the Angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The Angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the Angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (SW 4 392)

His wings ready for flight, the "Angelus Novus" would gladly return to the stance lent to him by Benjamin in one of the most famous allegories of the Twentieth Century. But the storm of fame that blows in his face from countless theoretical, literary, and visual reproductions blocks his path and drives him inexorably forward. The history of the reception of Benjamin's "Angel of History" who, with his back to the future, is prevented by the storm of progress from making whole again the heap of rubble constituted by world history , raises the question of the extent to which ideas of cultural memory can be transmitted from generation to generation, from one place, time and situation, from one historical and political constellation to another.

The prospects are different today than they were in 1940 when Benjamin wrote his theses, but even now there is no lack of a need for salvation. Still to be saved in our time is all that has been disgraced and denied by the victors, that has been forgotten, and to which the Angel bears witness with his petrified gaze and a silence expressing outrage beyond words. Yet, in the meantime, Benjamin's Angel has himself been victorious. Finding himself in the basket of desirable cultural consumer goods, he risks not only being subjected to wear and tear through globalised reproduction, but also being instrumentalized for the most arbitrary purposes. The question arises, therefore, whether and under what conditions this arguably most radical of canonised mnemonic images can be saved from conventionalization in order to continue to testify for the violence and destruction perpetrated in the course of human history. And today.

Here a few extreme examples of contrasting interpretations: although they appear only few years apart, an ideological gulf lies between Gershom Scholem's

and Otto Karl Werckmeister's complaints about the misuse of Benjamin's Angel. In 1972 Scholem rebukes those, who "quote him like holy scripture."[3] The guilty ones come from the "New Left," the 68' Marxists, at the moment when "the reception of Benjamin had just got into full swing" (BE 35). Scholem contrasts their conversion of the "Angel of History" from an "image of meditation" into a political weapon with a "true understanding of Benjamin's genius" (BE 35) and points these Marxist deniers of the true Holy Scripture (BE 46), towards Benjamin's "link to the mystic tradition" (BE 46). Admittedly, Scholem also holds the Marxist terminology Benjamin himself "slipped over" his thinking (*wobei das marxistische Element etwas wie eine Umstülpung des metaphysisch-theologischen ist)* (BE 35) partly responsible for this denial of his mystical inclinations. In 1976, Werckmeister, from a radically orthodox Marxist perspective, likewise complains about those who have turned the Angel into an "icon of the Left."[4] If Scholem described Klee's drawing positively as an "image for meditation," then for Werckmeister this term — he uses the German word "*Andachtsbild"* taken from the theological register — becomes a witness for the prosecution. The guilty parties, to whom the Angel has become a "devotional picture," are for Werkmeister too the "left-wing intellectuals" (BA 242), but his critique comes from a much different position in "Walter Benjamin's Angel of History" Werkmeister calls Benjamin's allegory "a composite literary icon for left-wing intellectuals with uncertain political aspirations" and "an icon of the left ... that has seemed to hold out an elusive formula for making sense of the senseless, for reversing the irreversible, while being subject to a kind of political brooding all the more protracted the less promising the prospects for political practice appear to be" (BA 242). Werckmeister objects not to an absence of mysticism but to a lack of political commitment. The leftist dissidence, now with the blessing of the Establishment, refers to Benjamin's Angel without the least *praxis* and existential risk. For Werckmeister, like for Scholem, Benjamin has himself fostered the misuse. He makes it easy for the "politically powerless" of today to hold on to the cultural superstructure without any true political practice and try to strike saving sparks from his "politically most helpless phase" (BA 243).

Scholem and Werckmeister counter what they consider to be the misguided reception of Benjamin's Angel with the history of its origins and genesis — one from a theological, the other from a Marxist perspective. Intending to provide evidence of the mystical origin of the Angel, Scholem introduces Benjamin's autobiographical sketch "Agesilaus Santander," probably written during a bout of malaria fever, which describes the Angelus Novus as a "newly created Kabala protector" and the Talmudic legend quoted by Benjamin, in which — allegory

of actuality — "angels, new ones, are created in huge crowds at every moment and after they have sung their hymn before God, cease and fade away" (BE 47). Scholem reconstructs the genesis of Benjamin's Angel from demonology, the Christian iconography of the Baroque, Jewish mysticism, anagrammatic poetic practice, and Benjamin's love life. In his early texts the Angel is first of all the beloved, later the figure of the self waiting for the Angel patiently and at a distance, and finally the "occult reality" of Benjamin himself (BE 62). In the last stage of the development of Benjamin's relationship to Klee's painting, as reconstructed by Scholem, the Angel becomes the emblem of ideas of a failed Messianic deliverance. Finally, it ends up in "distorting Marxist form" (BE 67) as the familiar history-blasting allegory, which, according to Scholem, is nevertheless — even in Benjamin's own imagination — still propelled more by messianic hopes than by materialistically determined means of production. Thus Scholem disposes of the political significance of the parable and rescues the Angel as evidence of his belief in Benjamin's close relationship to mysticism and to the Jewish cultural tradition as such.

Werckmeister's history of the origin of the Angel, augmented by much detailed knowledge, takes a somewhat different direction. Where Scholem criticizes Benjamin for giving in to Marxist seductions, with which he only masked his metaphysical — and Jewish — intentions, Werckmeister is critical of Benjamin's abandonment of a truly Marxist perspective and of having, in the 1940s, taken refuge in metaphysical speculations, replacing his commitment to a revolutionary *praxis* with a resigned vision of paralysis in the face of history. Werckmeister's interpretation of Benjamin's "Angel of History" unfolds primarily by way of references to revolutionary politics and to literature. He uncovers links to André Breton, Karl Kraus, Ernst Fuchs and Karl Jochmann, and discovers a fantastic analogy between the hope of Benjamin's Angel "reawakening the dead" and the novel *Moravagine* by Blaise Cendrars Benjamin was writing about at the time: At the end of Cendar's novel, a film-maker plays a scene backwards. In this scene, he has shot the destruction of Paris as announced by Angels above the portal of Notre Dame. But now the buildings are made whole again and the dead rise up (BA 259). This fascinating but also somewhat grotesque speculation about the origin of what inspired Benjamin's parable of the "Angel of history"'s redemptive aspirations could not be further removed from Scholem's celebration of Benjamin's hidden metaphysical claims. It is, however, ultimately unimportant whether the messianic-revolutionary hope of Benjamin's Angel derives from film reels played backwards or from holy scrolls, which Scholem supposes he discerns in the hairdo of Klee's

Angel. In either case it is questionable whether his story of the origin of Benjamin's allegory is sufficient to discredit its reception-history and to lament that it is unfaithful to Benjamin's original intention. It is after all Benjamin himself who, in "Literaturwisenschaft und Literaturkritik" writes, that the influence of works (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) "is by no means of less importance than their genesis" and that "only in their afterlife do they find their true purpose — not as art object but as political tools to shape history."[5]

One could indeed go on showing the extent to which Benjamin's "original" text is already a conglomerate of transpositions, displacements, and transferences. Giorgio Agamben, for example, supplements the history of the origin of Benjamin's Angel by linking it to neo-Platonic mysticism, late Hermetics, Gnosticism, early Christianity and Persian and Islamic Angelology, as well as the pre-animist studies of Preuss and Bachofen's primeval swamp myths.[6] Agamben also complains that Benjamin's theses have degenerated into clichés (P 152) and to him, too, it is the Left that is the guilty party, referring glibly to Benjamin's allegory in the name of the oppressed. Agamben, however, unlike Scholem and Werckmeister, is concerned neither with mysticism nor with political praxis. Instead, in a more philosophical vein, he calls for a gesture of destruction that would prevent a misunderstanding of what it means for the historian to save a past that has been silenced or forgotten. A mere reconstruction or restoration would only assimilate the mode of transmission of the cultural memory of the oppressed to that of the oppressor. (P 153)

For Agamben, Benjamin's radicalism lies in his belief that to redeem the past is "not to restore its true dignity, to transmit it anew as an inheritance for future generations." Rather, Agamben concludes that for Benjamin the redemption to be performed by the historian is to save the past and its artefacts "from a determined mode of its transmission" (P 152). In Agamben's understanding of Benjamin, the culprit is "the way in which it is valued as 'heritage'", something"more insidious than its disappearance could ever be" (P 152). For Benjamin, Agamben writes, what is at issue is "an interruption of tradition in which the past is fulfilled and thereby brought to its end once and for all.... To redeem the past is to put an end to it, to cast upon it a gaze that fulfils it" (P 153).

Agamben's rejection of the use of Benjamin's allegory for a new historiography written from the perspective of *concrete* losers and oppressed is in some ways justified. It corresponds to Benjamin's idea of salvation as a rupture that would put a stop to the existing bad state of affairs *altogether* and bring the past *as such* to its messianic conclusion. It is, however, doubtful whether a mere gaze would suffice to make whole again the pile of debris signifying the violence

of destruction in history and to awaken its dead. Benjamin's Angel "gazes" indeed, but his unfilled desire to save the past lies in an *action* that he cannot fulfil. Furthermore, it is perhaps also necessary here to draw Benjamin's own conception of the past into a new constellation with the present, which in the theses "On the Concept of History" is described as a relation to the past at the "moment of danger" (SW, 4 391).

If at the time and place of the Angel-parable's genesis — Nazi-occupied Europe — the danger was obvious and definable in world-historical terms, then today it is less unambiguous and appears more difficult to attribute to a single origin of destruction. Rather than pushing the abstraction of Benjamin's universal historical pile of debris any further — whether in a mystical direction like Scholem's, in a Marxist one like Werckmeister's, or in a philosophical- anarchist one like Agamben's, it may be more relevant today to measure the possible significance — the impact and limitations — of Benjamin's "Angel of History" against more circumscribed, localized and concrete danger zones in the Twenty First Century.

It may not be purely accidental that it is an Israeli art theorist who casts doubts on the dismayed powerlessness of the Angel critically regarded by Werckmeister (and before him by Bertolt Brecht) as the primary message of Benjamin's *Denkbild*. For Azoulay, it is precisely the Angel's speechless shock in the face of the disasters of the past that lends him a potentially active role about the dangers of the present. The art historian, theorist of photography, and political activist Ariella Azoulay stresses the positive and productive aspect of the Angel's silent paralysis and interprets this interruption of continuous speech as a condition of a different speech and other images based on Klee's painting and Benjamin's text. Azoulay's primarily visual reading of Benjamin's Ninth Thesis refers to an error initiated by its author himself and blindly adopted by his readers: that the Angel's "fixed gaze" stares straight at the heap debris in front of him. As a glance at Klee's *Angelus Novus* confirms, the Angel is indeed rather looking to the side and squinting beyond the edge of the picture. This observation allows Azoulay to designate the Angel as the paradigm of a transmission in which reader and viewer do not have "the passive role of saving and preserving a closed and sacrosanct relic"[7] but instead "the active role of the destroyer, of the apostate, exterminator", who is consciously unfaithful to the status and origin of the petrified image, in order "to tell the picture anew."[8] The sideways, squinting gaze itself also transgresses both the limits of the original picture and the bounds of Benjamin's allegory, in order to open a space in which it is both preserved and destroyed in new images and new texts.

Azoulay's comprehensive affirmation of a use of the picture that does not only reach beyond the original, but also, as Benjamin demands of citations, tears and quotes it out of its original context and possibly even destroys it. Such an affirmation can easily draw on Benjamin , to whom "the life of the original" only achieves its "constantly renewed most recent and encompassing development" through "translations, which are not mediations."[9] As Azoulay emphasizes, Benjamin himself borrows an image and translates it into a new one, without trying either to imitate the original or create a corresponding substitute in language. He takes from it, rather, an essential mode of relationship, in the light of which, out of the destructive transformation of the original countless new angels can emerge.

Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in: *Selected Writings* vol. 4 1938-1940, transl. by Edmund Jephcott et al. ed. By Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003): 389-400. References to Benjamin's *Selected Writings* henceforth (SW, vol., page number).

2. Georges Steiner, *The Poetry of Thought. From Hellenism to Celan,* New York: Laughlin, New Directions, 2011, p. 175.

3. Gershom Scholem, *Walter Benjamin und sein Engel*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp 1983, p. 35, henceforth (BE, page number). All translations from this book are mine.

4. Otto Karl Werckmeister: „Walter Benjamin's Angel of History, or the Transfiguration of the Revolutionary into the Historian", in: *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Winter, 1996), S. 239-267, here p. 242, henceforth, (BA, page number)

5. Walter Benjamin: „Literaturgeschichte und Literaturwissenschaft", in: *Gesammelte Schriften,* ed. by Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, Frankfurt a. M: Suhrkamp. 1972-1999, vol. 3, p. 290.

6. Giorgio Agamben, "Benjamin and the Demonic". In: ibid., *Potentialities*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, p. 145, henceforth (P, page number)

7. Ariella Azoulay, *Once Upon A Time: Photography Following Walter Benjamin* (in Hebrew), Tel Aviv: Bar Ilan University Press, 2006. Translated by Azoulay in an unpublished manuscript.

8. Ibid.

9. Walter Benjamin, "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers," in: *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 4.1, p. 9–21, here p. 11.

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Narrative with External Focalization in Lu Xun's Short Stories

Tan Junqiang
School of Humanities, Yunnan University
2 Cuihu North Road, Kunming, 650091, China
Email: jqtan@ynu.edu.cn

Abstract Lu Xun wrote 25 short stories collected in his *Call to Arms* and *Wandering* respectively. The majority of his stories use fully or partially internal focalization. There are only two pieces wrote in 1925 "A Public Example" and "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight" that use external focalization. In his writing, he appears to draw on some strong points in Western fiction and also to inherit some achievements from traditional Chinese fiction. Although these two pieces are small in number, their significance is considerable. These outstanding examples show a unique artistic style and they have an important influence on the creation of later Chinese fiction.

Key words narrative; external focalization; Lu Xun; "A Public Example;" "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight"

Author **Tan Junqiang** is a professor of Literary Theory and Comparative Literature, and Director of the Research Centre for Narratology at Yunnan University. His areas of research include narrative theory, comparative literature between East and West. His recent books are *Introduction to Narratology: from Classical Narratology to Postclassical Narratology* (2008, Second Edition 2014), *Aesthetical-Cultural Narratology: Theory and Practice* (2011, co-author), *Growth Ring of Narration and Others* (2012), *The Power of Narration: Narrative Study on Lu Xun's Short Stories* (2014), *Selected Academic Essays of Tan Junqiang* (2014) and *Literary Narrative: Multiple Interpretation* (forthcoming).

In the third book of Plato's *The Republic*, Socrates points out a distinction between two ways of rendering speech: *diegesis* and *mimesis*. The characteristic feature of diegesis is that "the poet himself is the speaker and does not even attempt to suggest to us that anyone but himself is speaking" (638). In mimesis, on the other hand, the poet tries to create the illusion that it is not he who speaks. In Anglo-

American criticism this contrast of diegesis and mimesis is often reproduced as "telling and showing" or "summary and scene" (Rimmon-Kenan 106-07).

Percy Lubbock regards "showing" as a superior technique to "telling": "The art of fiction does not begin until the novelist thinks of his story as a matter to be *shown*, to be so exhibited that it will tell itself" (62). Booth in *The Rhetoric of Fiction* criticizes this opinion. He argues that the line between showing and telling is always to some degree an arbitrary one: "though the author can to some extent choose his disguises, he can never choose to disappear" (20). Booth adds: "Whether an impersonal novelist hides behind a single narrator or observer, the multiple points of view of *Ulysses* or *As I Lay Dying*, or the objective surfaces of *The Awkward Age* or Compton-Burnett's *Parents and Children*, the author's voice is never really silenced" (60). *The Rhetoric of Fiction* is, to a great extent, a defense of "telling." Today, most critics have no preference: "each has its advantages and disadvantages, and their relative success or failure depends on their functionality in the given work" (Rimmon-Kenan 107-08).

Although one cannot generally decide whether showing or telling is ultimately better, many post-Flaubert authors have illustrated a partiality towards showing. In China too, one can see signs of this literary trend in the development of the nation's literature. "Telling" is more linked to traditional narratives, those with zero focalization, while "showing" is more associated with external focalization. Narrators with external focalization differ from narrators with zero focalization, who frequently engage in commentary. In zero focalization, a narrator says less than what characters know. Like outsiders unwilling to show their face, such narrators only describe speeches and activities, never entering the consciousness of the characters and making no subjective judgments or psychological analyses. In traditional narratives of zero focalization, the external agent can still see and know everything in every character's heart. In such narratives, the narrator-focalizer has no limitation. In narratives with external focalization, however, the narrator-focalizer's field of vision is limited, for he focalizes and narrates only what appears to the characters. Such narratives can give the reader more opportunity to participate in creating the text. Since the textual space of external focalization leaves more of the story unspecified, readers get a greater role in filling the text in. They can endow the narrative with their own individual meanings, in accordance with their differing experiences and expectations. As John Neubauer says:

> It is appropriate and legitimate to shift our attention away from those data of the text which were important to the author to those which we now discover

> to be of interest. [...] There are, in fact, good reasons for advocating as many perspectives and interpretations on a text as possible (440).

Lu Xun wrote only two pieces that are externally focalized, but these outstanding examples show a unique artistic style. "A Public Example" has a simple, even incomplete plot. It describes merely a few moments of a scene: on a hot summer day in a street in the west city of the model region, many onlookers gather to look at "a public example." More than ten characters appear on the scene in an extremely brief space. These characters are both opposite and complementary to each other, and can be divided into two distinct groups. The first consists of "a man in a blue cotton gown and white sleeveless jerkin," who is to be the public example and "a scrawny policeman with a sallow face in a yellow uniform." (*LXQJ* 2: 68-69; *Wandering* 63-64). They are linked by a rope that is held by the policeman and tied around the arm of the man at the other end. The other group is composed of onlookers in a semi-circle, who gather as soon as the policeman and the man appear on the scene. This is the focalized object of an external narrator-focalizer, who only shows the scene that happens in front of him, providing no explanation or contextualization. Many things remain unclear. What has the man done wrong? Nobody knows. There are some Chinese characters written on the man's jerkin, and his crime should be evident from this. However, when Baldy, standing almost directly opposite the man, stoops to study the characters and finally reads out: "*Weng*, *du*, *beng*, *ba*, *er*...," the words are meaningless. A rough fellow, who looks like a workman, asks Baldy in a low, diffident voice: "Hey, what has he done wrong?..." (*LXQJ* 2: 69; *Wandering* 65), Baldy gives no answer, simply glares at him till he lowers his eyes. So, flustered as if he himself had committed some crime, he slowly backs out and leaves. Why do the men, women, and children gather suddenly under the blazing sun? Nobody knows. The readers are informed only that "a semi-circle of onlookers gathered. After they were joined by an old bald-head, the little space left was promptly occupied by a bare-chested fat fellow with a red nose" (*LXQJ* 2: 69; *Wandering* 64). When the rough fellow leaves, his place is taken by a tall fellow with an umbrella. When a man with a stiff straw hat who seems to be a student withdraws, his place is taken by the oval face of a sweaty head caked with dust. What do the roped man and the policeman think? Nobody knows. We are told only that the prisoner's "new straw hat, its brim turned down, covered his eyes" (*LXQJ* 2: 69; *Wandering* 64). Apparently he does not like to be looked upon. When Fat Boy looks up he meets the prisoner's eyes. They seem to be fixed on his head. He hastily lowers his eyes to look at the white jerkin. The

policeman's face is also expressionless.

We do not even know the names of the characters, only nicknames or descriptions drawn from their physical features, dress, or actions. The prisoner, for example, is called "White Jerkin." Among the onlookers, there is "Baldy," "Fat Boy," "a bare-chested fat fellow with a red nose," "one lean fellow even gaping like a dead perch," "an even rounder fat face, like that of a Maitreya Buddha," "a tall fellow with an umbrella," an "Amah holding a child," "a feline face," "Oval Face" and "Longfellow." The onlookers want to linger on. To look at the prisoner becomes their only interest, making them forget everything else. Both the prisoner and the onlookers have blank expressions. The former shows neither panic nor fear, nor shame; the latter seem to feel neither sympathy and pity, nor anger and hatred. All the characters, without exception, are stupefied. Only when another interesting matter happens do they break up in a hubbub. A rickshaw man falls, and the onlookers higgledy-piggledy all make their way over, looking at the new matter until the rickshaw man rises to his feet, rubbing his knees. At this point "Five or six people had gathered round, grinning, to watch" (*LXQJ* 2: 72; *Wandering* 67). The reader is given no clues. Although the activities of all characters are clear, the absence of narrative directive forces readers to guess at the characters' inner thoughts and feelings. What they really are we do not know. The text implicitly makes an appeal to the readers' experience to fill in the spaces left often.

The entire story, in fact, heightens the social atmosphere through the portrayal of the onlookers. The author does not lay stress here on the depiction of a single character. Rather, one realizes the thing that truly makes them a collective: there are all eager onlookers and careless spectators. This feature does not shed light on their inner world, but readers can glimpse at their thoughts and feelings through the actions and surroundings.

Relating Lu Xun's experiences to his work, we find that the idea of apathetic spectators was deep, perhaps even foundational, in his thoughts as a writer. When Lu Xun was studying in Japan, he often discussed with his friend Xu Shouchang what the greatest deficiencies in the Chinese character were. Their answer was, "lack of love and honesty" (*The Lu Xun I Knew* 59). In Lu Xun's view, this often showed in the apathy of the masses, in the tendency to look on the misfortunes of people and become a mere cold passive spectator. When Lu Xun studied at the Sendai Medical College in Japan, a slide shown in a lecture radically changed his outlook. It was "a news-reel slide of a number of Chinese, one of them bound and the rest standing around him. They were all sturdy fellows who appeared completely apathetic. According to the commentary, the bound man was a spy working for the

Russians, to be beheaded by the Japanese military as a warning, while the others had come to enjoy the spectacle" (*LXQJ* 1: 416; *Works* 1: 35, slightly modified). This slide convinced Lu Xun that literature was more desperately needed by his people than medicine:

> The people of a weak and backward country, however strong and healthy they might be, could only serve to be made examples of or as witnesses of such futile spectacles; and it was not necessarily deplorable if many of them died of illness. The most important thing, therefore, was to change their spirit; and since at that time I felt that literature was the best means to this end, I decided to promote a literary movement. (*LXQJ* 1: 417; *Works* 1: 35)

Scenes of spectatorship appear frequently in Lu Xun's stories. About one year before writing "A Public Example," he said in his speech: "What Happens After Nora Leaves Home":

> The masses, especially in China, are always spectators at a drama. If the victim on the stage acts heroically, they are watching a tragedy; if he shivers and shakes they are watching a comedy. Before the mutton shops in Beijing a few people often gather to gape, with evident enjoyment, at the skinning of the sheep. And this is all they get out of it if a man lays down his life. Moreover, after walking a few steps away from the scene they forget even this modicum of enjoyment. (*LXQJ* 1: 163; *Works* 2: 91)

Thus Lu Xun seriously criticized this passive spectatorship. The spectator, who adopts an indifferent attitude towards anything and everything, is not only negative, but also of ill will. The stupid and attentive gaping, "with evident enjoyment, at the skinning of the sheep" is indicative of this.

Although Lu Xun is angry about spectatorship, "A Public Example" is quite calm and objectively detached. The author's voice is hidden quite well behind the external focalization, and his reliable narrator/spokesman does not make any direct comments or criticisms. It is exactly the author's silence and refraining from intervention through the narrator, leaving his characters "to work out their own fates upon the stages" (Booth, *Rhetoric* 7), that allows the story to achieve its aesthetic luminosity. In high summer, the dogs' tongues are lolling out, even the crows on the trees are panting for breath, but the onlookers do not mind at all to look at the public example. Their bodies exude perspiration, but their hearts

are deadly still, their concentrated expressions are just like the men who "gather to gape, with evident enjoyment, at the skinning of the sheep." Seeing this scene, the reader cannot but be jolted. This effect is like the one we find in Hemingway's fiction, which skillfully uses the technique of external focalization: "The success of many so-called hard-boiled detective and adventure stories written under the influence of Hemingway depends largely on the fear we feel as soon as we see danger as if through our own eyes" (Booth, *Rhetoric* 277). The calm exposition of the story, the ingenious camouflage of the authorial voice, and the keynote of strict narrative sobriety, add up to give Lu Xun's story its special power.

Genette thinks that the strictly textual mimetic factors come down to two sets of data: the quantity of narrative information (how developed or detailed a narrative is) and the absence (or minimal presence) of the narrator:

> "Showing" can be only a *way of telling*, and this way consists of both *saying about it* as much as one can, and *saying this "much"* as little as possible [*en dire* le plus possible, et ce plus, *le dire* le moins possible]: speaking, Plato says, "as if the poet were someone else" — in other words, making one forget that it is the narrator telling. Whence these two cardinal precepts of *showing*: the Jamesian dominance of *scene* (detailed narrative) and the (pseudo-) Flaubertian transparency of the narrator.[...] mimesis being defined by a maximum of information and a minimum of the informer, diegesis by the opposite relationship. (*Discourse* 166)

Although the reader cannot see the inner world of the characters, their appearance, action, and surrounding are shown in detail; the reader gets enough information to make independent inferences. Naturally, the quantity of information is in inverse ratio to the speed of narrative: the slower the narrative speed is, the more information the reader must digest. The narrative speed in "A Public Example" is quite slow. The time between the prisoner's and the policeman's appearance and the crowd's dispersal is probably less than thirty minutes.

If "A Public Example" embodies more of scene, then "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight" leans towards an embodiment of "the (pseudo-)Flaubertian transparency of the narrator." In this kinds of narrative, the narrator is nearly invisible, giving rise to a sort of "absolute imitation" (Genette, *Discourse* 169). Hemingway's "The Killers" and "Hills Like White Elephants" are canonic forms of this type.

The external focalization that emphasizes the words of the character and

seldom allows the narrator to intervene was influenced by behavioral psychology. In order to portray his characters, Lu Xun stresses character speech. He noticed that "Gorky marvels at Balzac's skill in handling dialogue, for without any description of his characters' appearance he conjures them up before the reader by their conversation." He thought that "novelists of this caliber have not yet appeared in China, though there are passages in *Outlaws of the Marsh* and *A Dream of Red Mansions* which enable readers to visualize the characters from their talk" (*LXQJ* 5: 530; *Works* 4: 80). When a writer builds up a character through dialogues, he has a mental picture of the man, which he passes onto his readers till they form a similar picture in their minds: "If you cut all extraneous matter and simply select what is distinctive in each one's conversation, I am sure others could guess their character from their talk" (*LXQJ* 5: 530; *Works* 4: 80). What kinds of words are then suitable in an externally focalized narrative of words? McHale suggests a progressive scale, ranging from the "purely" diegetic to the "purely" mimetic: 1) Diegetic summary; 2) Less "purely" diegetic summary; 3) Indirect content-paraphrase (or indirect discourse); 4) Indirect discourse, mimetic to some degree; 5) Free indirect discourse; 6) Direct discourse; and 7) Free direct discourse (249-87).

The conspicuous feature of "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight" is that the author paid special attention to the words of the characters. Although he uses several forms, direct discourse, which is a "quotation" of a monologue or a dialogue, is most conspicuous. It creates the illusion of "pure" mimesis, although it is always in some way or extent stylized. The heart of "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight" is, as the title suggests, a lamp that the "old folk" claim "was lit by Emperor Wu of Liang,[1] and it's been burning ever since" (*LXQJ* 2: 56; *Wandering* 54). Not even the Long Hairs put it out. This is a lamp that brings benefit to Lucky Light Village. People believe that if it is put out, the end of the village will loom: the village will become a sea and all the people in the village will turn into eels. The "madman" of the village decides, however, to put it out and touches off public indignation. The people of the village do everything to keep it lit.

The lamp has a symbolic flavor. It is a metaphor of tradition. It is by no means easy to do away with traditions that have survived intact for millennia. Therefore, it is not surprising that people who challenge these traditions are regarded as dangerous "madmen" by tradition's adherents. Lu Xun was a strong opponent to most old traditions. Only three weeks before he wrote "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight," he said in "More Thought on the Collapse of Leifeng Pagoda": "True, without destruction nothing new can be built;" he praised men like Rousseau, Stirner, Nietzsche, Tolstoy and Ibsen, who are, in Brandes' words, "destroyers of

old tracks." Lu Xun stated: "Actually they not only destroy but blaze a trail and lead a charge, sweeping aside all the old tracks, whether whole rails or fragments" (*LXQJ* 1: 192; *Works* 2: 114). At the same time, he keenly felt that there are "very few men like this in China, and even when they appear they are likely to be spat at by everyone" (*LXQJ* 1: 192; *Works* 2: 115).

The idea of this article is displayed artistically in the story. The "madman," who opposes tradition appears infrequently. The bulk of the story portrays the people of the village and their deliberations how to control or get rid of the madman. The narrator-focalizer does not intervene or peek into the characters' hearts, but shows their cruelty through their words and actions:

> "Still no change?" asked Triangle Face, picking up his bowl of tea.
>
> "Still no change, they say," replied Square Head. "He keeps repeating, 'Put it out! put it out!' His eyes are flashing worse than ever. The devil! Don't think it's a joke--the fellow's a menace to our village. Fact is, we ought to find some way to get rid of him!"
>
> "Get rid of him, by all means. He's nothing but a dirty bastard. When the temple was built his ancestors paid their share, yet now he wants to blow out the temple light! Is that unfilial or isn't it? Let's send him to the county court as an unfilial son!" Kuoting ended with a flourish, smashing his fist on the table. (*LXQJ* 2: 56; *Wandering* 53)

The narration consists here almost entirely of character remarks, with just a few introductions and additions by the narrator. It is very similar to some of Hemingway's short stories with external focalization, for instance "The Killers" (collected in *Men Without Women*), which was published in 1927, just two years after the "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight." In "The Killer," the narrator puts in very few appearances and the events are almost entirely depicted through the characters' conversations, allowing the narrative, as Lubbock said, "to be *shown*, to be so exhibited that it will tell itself." Yet it includes some things not mentioned in the conversations. What has Andson done, for example? Why do the two fellows kill him? The dialogues won't tell. We can ask similar questions about Lu Xun's story. What kind of person is the "madman"? Why does he really want to put the lamp out? We can only guess.

In "The Killer," the conversational quotes account for eighty to ninety per cent of the text. In the absence of physical description or emotional insight, the reader can only guess. In "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight," conversation takes

up more than half of the text. As for tone, the narrator of "The Killer" is more deeply buried and embedded in the text, more calm and collected. We can see this not only from the percentage of conversation in the totality of the text, but also through the descriptive words used. When introducing conversations, the narrator of "The Killer" does not endow the characters with emotional coloring, while the narrator of "The Lamp That Was Kept Alight" says things like "Kuoting ended with a *flourish*, smashing his fist on the table;" "Square Head spoke *scornfully*;" "asked Zhuang in *surprise*;" "her *glare* turned into a smile." "Fourth Master sounded both *stern* and *grieved*, and his voice was trembling" (*LXQJ* 2: 56-64; *Wandering* 53-60, italics added). These illustrative words yield more information, also about the informer.

"A character's speech, whether in conversation or as a silent activity of the mind, can be indicative of a trait or traits both through its content and through its form" (Rimmon-Kenan 63). Aiming at keeping the flame lit, people of various social circles gather and become a collective unit, forming a mass. As a collective, the people have common traits, but they also retain individual characteristics. For example, Kuoting, who frequently says extreme things like "Get rid of him," and "he'd be better dead" is truculent; Square Head is pretentious; Triangle Face is dull-witted and stingy; Old Guo, who is too old to speak, is thickheaded. The most noticeable one among them is the squire Fourth Master, whose words have a special style. In the village, Fourth Master holds power over the madman's life and property. His words are spoken slowly, sometimes sounding both stern and grieved. He has a murderous look but shows some solicitude for the man: "Every day I've been hoping for his recovery" (*LXQJ* 2: 64; *Wandering* 61). However, he is ultimately no different from the undisguised advocates of the madman's execution; he merely has more refined manners and puts prettier clothes on his meanness. He undoubtedly wants to lock up the madman, but he pretends not to think about it. Allegedly merely repeating the words of another, he says: "There's nothing for it but to lock him up as this gentleman suggests, to keep him out of mischief, lest he disgrace his father. This may be just as well, we owe it to his father" (*LXQJ* 2: 64; *Wandering* 61). The squire exposes himself with his own words.

Although the madman seldom appears in the story, his words clearly show his determination to blow out the lamp. He vaguely longs for a better world, but his words are distinctly crazy: "That lamp has got to be blown out. You see, they should all be put out: Blue Face with his three heads and six arms, Three Eyes, Long Hat, Half Head, Ox Head and Swine Tusk.... Out with the lot of them! When they're out we shall have no more locusts, no more plague" (*LXQJ* 2: 60;

Wandering 56-57). He is not afraid of the threats and cannot be cheated by the others. When Kuoting says that they will blow out the lamp for him, he can come back in a few days and see for himself, he answers: "Not you! I don't need any of you. I'll do it myself. I'm going to blow it out now!" He is undeceived by the others' attempts. When Square Head says to him that he has always shown himself an intelligent man, and urges him not to engage in folly, he replies that he will just be doing the best he can, and he is going to blow the lamp out. When somebody says to him that he cannot blow out the lamp and should go home, he answers "I'm not going home. I'm going to blow it out." They tell him that he cannot push the door open, that he has no way of opening it, his answer is: "I'll think of some other way then"; he will set the place on fire (*LXQJ* 2: 61; *Wandering* 57-58). At last the people deal with him collectively and lock him up in the west room. He still repeats that he'll set the place on fire. Like the symbolism of the lamp, the symbolism of the madman is uncomplicated. Since the story uses external focalization, we know nothing about the characters' hearts, including the madman's very different inner world, but we get a chance to see through his words. Both the madman and the rest of the village show their individual traits in conversations.

Note

1. *Liang* Dynasty (502-557), one of the dynasties in the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589) in China.

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In MemoriamJohn Neubauer

Jüri Talvet
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Tartu
Ülikooli 17-403, 51014 Tartu, Estonia
Email: juri.talvet@ut.ee

On the eve of our Estonian Association of Comparative Literature 11th international conference in Tartu, Estonia, I received an e-mail letter from my long-time good colleague and friend John Neubauer, from Amsterdam. His short lines from October 26, 2015, with the title "Farewell", put me in consternation. With heavy heart, John said, he had to announce his retirement from the academic advisory committee of our journal *Interlitteraria*, because his death was imminent.

Especially as John sent me his letter by e-mail and was himself an interdisciplinary scholar *par excellence*, first educated as a physicist, and then as a literary and cultural scholar, with an amazingly broad knowledge and erudition in sciences, music, psychology, history, his tragic announcement made me once more feel the sad truth summarized in its fullest quintessence by Pedro Calderón de la Barca in the short play *El gran teatro del mundo* (The Great Theatre of the World). Whatever wonderful illusions of future and progress man could produce and imagine on the earth, whatever roles he might take, whatever escapes could he scheme, the end is silence. No human mind, however clever, capable or prophetic, can claim to know if what we see during this short symbolic second of our lives, is reality or just a dream.

Yet despite that the same Spanish 17th-century playwright, poet and philosopher made stand forth in his drama masterpiece *La vida es sueño* (Life Is a Dream) a noble leitmotif of "doing good" and following the path of virtue, regardless of what life was. "Even if it is merely a dream, a good and virtuous deed will never be lost," Calderón claimed.

It can be said of John Neubauer's deeds in his life /dream. We met in Tartu in 1993, shortly after my country Estonia following the collapse of the Soviet empire had become a free independent state. I had been teaching Western literary history at the University of Tartu — Estonia's main university — since 1974. After the country's reestablished independence, in 1992, I was elected to the post of chair

professor of world literature. In parallel, I was in charge of coordinating a program of Spanish studies, for the first time ever introduced in Estonia.

At the time of John's visit to Tartu, he was an accomplished comparatist, an active member of the International Comparative Literature Association, one of those scholars who had substantially contributed to the research of literature's relations with science, language and music. After leaving as a young man his home country Hungary after the 1956 uprising and the following repressions, he settled in the US, where he got his academic degrees and taught German literature at different universities. In 1983 he moved to the Netherlands where he worked as the chair professor of comparative literature at the University of Amsterdam.

By contrast with John's international scope of scholarly activities, our Estonian academic life had been very much restricted in the SU. Our contacts with Western scholarship were scarce. The economic situation of the country at the start of the new independence was extremely meager, our salaries at universities were low. To visit other countries we nearly always needed visas. Lots of efforts had to be made for elementary daily survival, while at the same time there was an urgent need to restructure academic life, to write new manuals for schools and universities, etc.

At our meeting in 1993 John asked us: why could we not found our Estonian association of comparative literature, to become a collective member of the ICLA?

Indeed, we liked and accepted his idea. At the end of the same year we founded our Estonian Association of Comparative Literature. Since its admission in 1994 in the structure of the ICLA it not only started to propel literary research in Estonia, but contributed growingly to the international dimension of our literary life.

Naturally, not everything went so smoothly in the beginning. Our travels abroad were still very much restricted by the economic misery of those times. Thus evoking today my first ever visit to the Netherlands — following John's invitation for guest lectures at his home university of Amsterdam, in 1994 — sounds like a series of grotesque adventures of a picaresque novel. As air travel was too expensive for my budget, I with my wife Margit had the plan to reach the Netherlands by bus via Poland and Germany. The Estonian bus failed to appear in the evening of our scheduled departure from Tartu. The boss of the bus firm apologized and promised us air flight from Tallinn airport, the following morning. Yet nobody in Tallinn knew anything about that special deal. As the result, my wife had to stay at home, while I bought a one-way air ticket to Amsterdam, with the hope, as the bus firm boss had assured, that I could still return from the Netherlands

by their surface transport.

However, while in Amsterdam, I had to obtain Germany's transit visa and also the Netherlands return visa, as my plan included proceeding from Amsterdam to Paris, by Euroline bus, to visit there my sister who was at that time in charge of establishing Estonian embassy in the French capital city. In conclusion, I had to spend a considerable time of my short stay in Amsterdam visiting various embassies and consular offices. Indeed the Germans were kind enough and issued me their transit visa. In turn, the Dutch officials were reluctant to do what I asked. They advised me not to go to Paris. I still did. Luckily nobody checked my passport during that illegal night travel across the lowlands between France and the Netherlands … I still could not return by bus to Estonia, because the Estonian bus firm meanwhile had gone bankrupt… John was kind and tried to help me as he could, but he could not do much for a post-socialist East-European visitor who clearly did not fit into the system of the Western world.

After I had asked somebody in Estonia to lend me money and finally could take my return air flight, I felt as if I had fled from a "living hell"… I was happy to be back in my poor and miserable native country.

Gradually we managed to overcome these initial difficulties of the new independence phase of our state. Our country established its institutions and foundations that, however modestly, still provided some relief for cultural and academic activity. In 1996 we founded *Interlitteraria*, an international comparative literature journal. By today, it has become an important platform for European and world literary and cultural research. Also in 1996, we held in Tartu our first comparative literature international conference. Our scholars started to take part in the worldwide activities of the ICLA, while our efforts to contribute to the international field of comparative literary studies were appreciated and supported by a number of leading and merited world scholars whose articles and essays started to appear in *Interlitteraria*, in parallel with contributions of younger literary researchers from a great variety of countries.

John Neubauer belonged in the ICLA and in the comparative research field to the minority of international scholars who dared to undertake major tasks. In my opinion one of his greatest achievements was editing, with Marcel Cornis-Pope, a four-volume *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (2004-2010), to which all active literary and cultural scholars from our part of the world were invited to contribute. More than ever before and after our Estonian literary researchers became involved in the collective ICLA project of writing a new literary history, organized in a novel fashion, with a number of historical nodes as

points of departure for discussing all major East-Central Europe's literary-cultural issues and phenomena.

In his article "Globalizing Literary History" published in this cluster, John Neubauer shared with world comparatists the rich experience acquired by the editors in the long process of organizing and shaping this new experimental literary history. He did it in the background of all existing previous efforts in the mentioned field, as well as envisaged contours for those younger scholars who might undertake similar efforts, not only in the Western part of the world, but also in the East, in times to come.

John was open to new ideas and approaches, but he was far from sticking to certain "schools" or positions, which unfortunately have lead an important section of comparative literary scholarship to follow either formalist or sociological patterns, in oblivion of the primary moral tasks humanities have in the world. He welcomed the formation in China of a new movement of ethically orientated literary research and the foundation of the International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism. Time appeared implacably too short for John to contribute in person to the conferences of this newly founded association.

Yet moral orientation of literary criticism was by no means anything new for John. I guess his last article published in his life was under the title "Victims and Perpetrators: Two Novels on the 1942 Novi Sad Atrocities", printed in *Interlitteraria*'sspecial issue "Taming World Literature" (Supplement 1, 2015; edited by Liina Lukas and Katre Talviste), presented in Tartu just a few days before the great scholar and kind friend John Neubauer passed away.

Thank you, dear John. We in the Estonian academia of literary scholarship will remember you forever. You indeed did good deeds to us and the world of letters.

责任编辑：尚必武

In Memory of John Neubauer (1933-2015): Afterword

Jerusalem, October 2015

To John,

With your soft voice still resonating in me from our last conversation, after a night rereading our mails exchanged over nearly twenty years and recalling wonderful moments shared as colleagues, fellow members of various commissions and committees, co-editors of the journal arcadia, and above all as friends, I'm overwhelmed by sadness but also by the awareness of the privilege to have known you. We met almost twenty years ago at a scholarly meeting in Leiden and I walked over to you to express my admiration of your book *The Fin-de-siècle Culture of Adolescenceon* which I had based one of the first courses I taught as a professor of German literature — a course that I'm teaching, with variations, still today. One of our *jours fixes* and a highlight of my life as a teacher was your annual visit to Antwerp when you gave a guest lecture for this and other courses. I felt that I brought my students an exceptional gift. Your lively presence, your intellectual adventurousness, your enthusiasm inspired us all. These lectures and your talks at the many conferences we attended together demonstrated time and again how an astutely critical and lucid mind can also be infused with passion: for literature, for theoretical reflection, for conversation about books, thought, ethics and politics, music, and life *tout court*. Your writings embody for me the finest we can achieve in our work as scholars, readers, intellectuals. Your exemplary way of combining meticulous attention to details of literary texts with a broad understanding of historical, political and social contexts revealed the driving force of your work: bringing out the potential of literature to oppose discourses of manipulative power and opening up possibilities of resistance and sites of freedom paired with ethical and political responsibility. Your critical oeuvre includes true milestones. Your work on Central Eastern European literature not only challenged received views but redrew the map of an entire region. Your book on Voice, Text and Music, which you struggled — and succeeded — to finish in the last weeks of your life, is a true masterpiece that enwraps your love of music with the rigors and incisiveness

of authentic scholarly research and reflection. What I experienced in our shared work as editors of *arcadia* was less tangible, but nevertheless unforgettable: the exemplary way you dealt with articles that were sent to the journal we edited together for a decade. You attracted papers from all over the world, from Iran and China, from Pakistan and Egypt. They were often written in weak English. You devoted countless hours and days polishing them so that they could enter the scholarly conversation at the highest level. We once received a paper from a female scholar from a country where women had no voice; in her article she very cautiously expressed rebellion against her patriarchal environment. You were delighted, worked hard to straighten out the English and published it, despite the voices that were adamantly against doing so. Throughout the years of our cooperation and friendship I experienced how deeply the concerns that suffused your work were part of your being. Respect, fairness, generosity and a total lack of self-importance characterized your attitude towards your colleagues, your friends, your loved ones. Your admiration for Ursel's work was boundless, as was your love for your daughters and grandchildren. You had strong opinions, yet always remained open to the thoughts and views of others, delighting in discussion and always ready to revise and reconsider your judgments. When there was disagreement you fiercely defended your position and then wisely sought compromise. But when you were faced with unfair behavior or abuse of power — whether in academia, politics or private experiences — you were uncompromising and fought tirelessly for anyone you felt had been slighted, even at the price of personal advantages. That is how I will remember you: strong and gentle, generous and fair, charming and fierce, full of wisdom, yet carrying through life this boyish smile and the rare and precious quality that Walter Benjamin called "Herzenshöflichkeit" — politeness of the heart. It manifested itself in everything, from your delicate letters of rejection to authors who had submitted work to arcadia, to your last messages, in which you said goodbye without pathos and sentimentality, expressing appreciation, care and a boundless love of life, which you left in such a dignified way, leaving us all bereft but also infinitely grateful for your presence in our lives.

Vivian Liska
University of Antwerp

Kunming, October 2015

To John,

I repeatedly read your last e-mail sent to me on September 19th when you were in a serious sickness, in which you said, "Just a brief but deep thanks for your kind words. You were always a very special person and friend for me. We'll keep you posted about my illness." I can't believe that just two weeks later, you passed away. In the past few days, your kind face and your warm words always appear in front of me. I keep on remembering that we have known for almost three decades years. You have meant a lot to me.

It was in the winter of 1987 that I met you for the first time. I arrived at Amsterdam as a visiting scholar in University of Amsterdam, and as my advisor, you gave me a visionary proposal and suggested me to learn narrative theory, which I knew nothing at all at that time. From then on, this interesting field has been attracting me until now. Later, you encouraged me to pursue a doctorate degree and in the fall of 1989, I begun to write my dissertation under your guidance. Benefitting from your suggestion, I could write my dissertation from a perspective of narrative theory under the title *Narrative Modes in Lu Xun's Short Stories*. Over the years, in the process of following you to puruse scholarship, you gave me much more than any student could expect from his adivisor.You read my dissertation manuscripts over and over again, and devoted a lot of time revising and polishing it. Without your enthusiasm, support and help, Icould not have finished this hard work.

It was in the winter of 2012 that I last met you. You were invited by Dong Hwa University in Taiwan to have a lectur tour. Taking this opprotunity, you and Ursula went to Kunming, where we spent very nice days together. Invited by School of Humanities, Yunnan University, you made a very wonderful lecture on "Globalizing Literary History," and the lecture hall were filled with more than 200 teachers and students. By the end of your lecture, I said a few words to you and to all the audiences: "I'll express my gratitude to Professor John Neubauer, my promotor. I always remember your help during the the process of writing my dissertation. I always bear your strict requirement for dissertation in my mind…In my academic career, it is from you that I got my most rigorous academic training, from which I denefit for a lifetime. John is one of the best teachers, as well as one of the best friends in my mind." After that, you went to the platform once again and

we hugged together, my eyes were full of tears.

You will always be remembered by your love for your wife, your care for your daughters, your help for your students, and your friendship for your friends. Your wise thoughts and your erudite books will continute benefitting us and the future generations. Though you left us, you will be dwelling in our hearts forever.

Tan Junqiang
Yunan University
责任编辑：杨革新

Poetic Form and Literary Tradition: An Introduction

Luo Lianggong
School of Chinese Language and Literature, Central China Normal University
152 Luoyu Rd., Hongshan District, 430079, Wuhan, China
Emai: luolianggong@163.com

Poetic form has been a focus of contemporary studies of poetry. This is not only because poetic form is largely and deeply connected with literary and cultural tradition, but also because it is widely believed to be part of the meaning generating mechanism of poetry and thus become a necessary step in the pursuit of poetry meaning.

The six articles in this thematic cluster demonstrate the scholarly endeavor from different perspective. Charles Bernstein's article "Pitch of Poetry" offers a philosophical exploration to the relationship between the ethic and the aesthetic of poetry. William Baker's paper applies cognitive poetics to a reading of Harold Pinter's poetry, and by focusing on "meaning, affect, perceived qualities, and versification," he discusses the difference between traditional scansion of metre, sound and rhythm, and different modes of hearing speech sounds and their thematic meaning. Ilwan Yoon's essay analyzes the strategy employed by Wordsworth of a community integrating the loss of the dead into the community's natural and social surroundings without reduction of their differences, and thus the ethical power of Wordsworth's poetic strategy. Seongho Yoon's article examines W. B. Yeats's "Easter 1916" through an interpretative lens of Yeatsian temporality and discusses how Yeats employs a poetics of temporality in writing history into his own times. Zeng Mei and Sonwabile Mnwana's article, by exploring the poetic form of the Xhosa praise poetry that is deeply rooted in the Xhosa traditional culture, demonstrates its struggle for a cultural and aesthetical uniqueness in the context of high culture. Cao' article observes Milton's and Shelly's Poems from a perspective of ethical criticism and emphasizes the literary traditon of poetry's moral fuction.

The articles, whether re-reading classics or rediscovering contemporary works, offers an echo to Charles Bernstein's claim that "Poetics is the ethical refusal of morality in the name of aesthetics."

Pitch of Poetry

Charles Bernstein
Department of English, University of Pennsylvania
3340 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6293, USA
Email: charles.bernstein@english.upenn.edu

Abstract Edgar Allen Poe's aestheticism, as expressed in his essay "The Poetic Principle" (1848), favors sensation rather than moral sentiment. For Poe, didacticism leads poetry away from its true calling. This is a specifically Western conception of poetic value — poetry for poetry's sake — that makes a striking contrast to Chinese poetics. But there is a point of connection and that is in the idea of the "blank." For Poe, transient sensation in a poem allows for an engagement with temporality and process, as he says, in his most famous line from "The Raven, "Only this and nothing more." This force of "nothing" is explored in poems by Stephane Mallarmé, Emily DIckinson, and William Carlos Williams.
Key words American poetry; poetics; nothing; Edgar Allen Poe; Emily Dickinson
Author Charles Bernstein teaches poetry and poetics, with an emphasis on modernist and contemporary art, aesthetics, and performance at University of Pennsylvania, where he is Donald T. Regan Professor of English and Comparative Literature. In 2006 he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. His recentpublications include*The Attack of the Difficult Poems: Essays and Inventions* (Chicago, 2011), *All the Whiskey in Heaven: Selected Poems*(2012), *Recalculating* (Chicago, 2013), *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E POETICS*(Shanghai, 2013).

Poetry is a weak thing and that is its strength.

Moral Politics

In *Moral Politics*, the linguist George Lakoff has emphasized the linguistically of cognition, as in Ludwig Wittgenstein: relation to poetry/poetics.[1]

This connects to the work of sociologist Erving Goffman and his *Frame Analysis*: what the "event" is (including a poem) is determined by the frame (often

there is more discussion/commentary about an event than the event itself; the discussion brings the event into focus); new frames often push out other frames and some frames stick (e.g. "stigma"); frames are cued or keyed; what is out-of-frame is often most significant. Frames are related to ideology (in Louis Althusser's sense) and also "metaphors we live by" and categories: that through which we perceive/value. Compare also Wittgenstein's "seeing as" in Part II of *Philosophical Investigations* and especially his notion of "aspect blindness" (duck/rabbit).

Lakoff, in *Moral Politics*, contrasts the "nurturing parent" and the "strict father": relativist vs absolutist, contingency vs invariance, loose vs strict.

Poetics is an ethical engagement with the shifting conditions of everyday life. If it is poetic license to contrast ethics, as a dialogic practice of response in civil society, with morality, as a fixed code of conduct and belief, then poetic license I will happily claim.

Ethics is ironic, morality sincere. Ethics secular, morality religious. Poetics is the ethical refusal of morality in the name of aesthetics.

Poetics is an activity, an informed response to emerging circumstances. As such, it cannot claim the high ground of morality or systematic theory. Poetics is tactical, not strategic. Indeed, it is the lack of strategy, the aversion to the high ground, that often causes poetics to appear weak or confused or inconsistent or relativistic.

Yet, in the struggle between ethics and morality, ethics has the advantage even when it appears to be wandering in the wilderness. This advantage is too rarely taken advantage of. What is needed is a *poetics of poetics*; that is, a defense of the ethical grounding of poetics. In that sense, my approach is closely related to what George Lakoff argues in *Moral Politics*: that we must be as strong in our advocacy of our values, what he calls the values of nurturing parents, as the moralists are for their values, what he calls the values of the strict father(qtd. Bernstein,"Practice of Poetics" 34-35).

L=A=G=U=A=G=E (the approach to American poetry I advocate) acknowledges the inevitability of metaphor, the linguisticality of perception, the boundedness of thought, the passion of ideas, the beauty of error, the chains of logic, the possibilities of intuition, and the uncanny delight of chance. In contrast to the syllogistic rationality of expository writing and more convention poetry, this poetics is situational, shifts with the winds, courts contradiction, feeds on inconsistency(qtd. Bernstein,*L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E POETICS*X).

The Poetic Principle

The tomb of Edgar Poe is the birthplace of pataque(e)rics.

I love the irony that Poe's poetics — Poe is, after all, an emblematic American writer (to use his term from "The Poetic Principle") — remains largely unread, its aestheticism roundly rejected ("only this and nothing more"). "The Poetic Principle" (1848) is a founding document of the pataque(e)rical line of American poetics.

I would define, in brief, the Poetry of words as *The Rhythmical Creation of Beauty*. Its sole arbiter is Taste. With the Intellect or with the Conscience, it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with Duty or with Truth.[2]

Poe recognized early in American literary history that high-minded moral and didactic principles suffocate aesthetic creation, as a body buried alive, even in a coffin made of the finest Brazilian mahogany and lined with pages of Longfellow, slowly and painfully loses consciousness. Worse, aversion to transient and non-productive sensation cripples ethical judgment, as a steady diet of stale bread not only takes away the taste for fresh goods but also makes the habitué of the desiccated contemptuous of flavor.

In Poe's lampooning of poems with superstructural import that rely on ideas rather than "Taste," moreover that view taste and sensation with suspicion, he echoes William Carlos Williams's formulation 75 years later, "Say It! No ideas but in things" (263-66). Ironically, Williams would insert the relatively short multipart poem where his aphorism first appears — indeed he liked the aphorism so much he repeats it three times in that poem — into *Paterson*, his foray into the long poem form, which, to echo Poe, reads better as a series of short hits than an epic.

Poe's deadpan insistence that the long poem does not exist rests on Zeno's paradox by way of *The Confidence Man*. The logic is impeccable: no matter how much the long poem tries to make a whole greater than its parts, the parts, the "intense" "moments" of "excitement," as he puts it in "The Poetic Principle" are, "*when*" — not *where* — "the meanings are," to quote Dickinson (*The Poems of Emily Dickinson* 185). This is a poetics of temporal *now*ledge rather than atemporal knowledge.

Only This and Nothing More

> — Say it, no ideas but in things —
> nothing but the blank faces of the houses

and cylindrical trees
bent, forked by preconception and accident
split, furrowed, creases, mottled, stained
secret — into the body of the light — (263 265 266)

"Nothing but the blank": while Williams is alluding to the bareness of winter, "nothing but the blank" is "the cry of its occasion / Part of the res itself and not about it" in Wallace Stevens's famous formulation.[3] "Nothing but the blank," as Williams goes on to evoke it, is the pataque(e)rical sublime: bent, split, furrowed, creased, mottled, stained. The words reference themselves, mark their place in the poem, saying no more nor less than their bare enunciation. In "If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso," Gertrude Stein fires a series of blanks with a "Now. / Not now. / And now. / Now."[4] These nows and nots, which toggle presence and absence like a love-sick boy pulling at daisies, attain to a seriality that Poe, in "The Poetic Principle," terms "brief and indeterminate glimpses," as a strobe light makes a scene pulsingly vibrant with its flash moments of intoxicating intensity, what Emily Dickinson calls the "art" of stunning oneself with "Bolts of Melody."[5] Poe writes against the viral didacticism of duty-bound poems. Is it a wild leap to see this quote as relevant to us now, or is that merely the error of an ahistorical rhapsode?

It has been assumed, tacitly and avowedly, directly and indirectly, that the ultimate object of all Poetry is Truth. Every poem, it is said, should inculcate a moral; and by this moral is the poetical merit of the work to be adjudged. We Americans especially have patronized this happy idea; and we Bostonians, very especially, have developed it in full. We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake, and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true poetic dignity and force: — but the simple fact is, that, would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor can exist any work more thoroughly dignified — more supremely noble than this very poem — this poem per se — this poem which is a poem and nothing more — this poem written solely for the poem's sake.

"This poem which is a poem and nothing more": "Only this and nothing more" is Poe's better-known pronouncement, from a poem that wraps, rap, raps itself in kitsch to cast an indelible aesthetic spell.[6] "Only this and nothing more" marks its words' being in time, scores their presence, the utterance of immediacy, phatic (but not vatic) haecceity. It is the motto, as Poe insists, of art for art's sake,

art without ulterior purpose, in and as its presence in sound, its immediate, present (gift) of rhythm and, "nevermore," echo. Nothing/never: an echoic negation of all but the event of sound and rime as sublime and blank, full and empty, here / not here. *The thing itself*: "Nameless here for evermore"? A present absence, now / not now, the "shivering" (Poe's word) making loss palpable.

Dare I name her? *Lenore*. A figure of speech that is all. (Craig Dworkin takes up some 20th-century examples, such as John Cage's "4'33" in *No Medium*.)

"Le Corbeau dit: Jamais plus," as they say in France, at least in the signal translations of Baudelaire and Mallarmé. Baudelaire translates: "Only this and nothing more" as "ce n'est que cela, et rien de plus," while for Mallarmé the line becomes simply "cela seul et rien de plus." In "Un coup de Dés" Mallarmé gives his own version of Poe's insignia "cela seul et rien de plus" with silent insinuation: in the sixth spread, top left bottom right, mirrored, italic is "*COMME SI*" — *as if* — but also *like so* and *like this*, nothing more, marking a self-reflective "shivering delight" in the poem, if not to say, in the echo, a perfect semblance of a *mise en abyme*.[7] Four spreads later, on the upper left, on its own, is "RIEN," followed by a possible commentary on the crisis of its occasion ("de la mémorable crise / ou se fût / l'événement"). After all, what might seem to be the first word in "Coup de Dés," at the top of the third spread, is the Raven's echo:

> JAMAIS.
> Dickinson, the antinomian in Susan Howe's account, hears it: "Nothing is the force / That renovates the World" (*The Poems of Emily Dickinson* 1077).

Irremediation

Samuel R. Delany makes a compelling case that the homosexual dimensions of Hart Crane's poetry are inadequately addressed in the critical and biographical literature. His two essays on Crane provide an interpretive frame for understanding Crane's detractors. Extending Delany's intervention, I would say that Crane's "splendid failure," as R. P. Blackmur puts it in "Notes on a Text of Hart Crane," might more provocatively be understood as his irresplendent success as pataque(e)rical.[8]

> … Perhaps the most careful account of Crane's failure is first laid out in Yvor Winters's quite extraordinary [1943] essay, "The Significance of *The Bridge* by Hart Crane, or What Are We to Think of Professor X." ... There Winters

> relates Crane's enterprise to the pernicious and maniagenic [sic] ideas of Ralph Waldo Emerson via the irreligious pantheism (read: relativism …) of Whitman and the glossolomania of Mallarmé. … It is important to realize that the rejection — or at least the condemnation — of Crane, for Winters as well as for many of Crane's critics, was the rejection and condemnation of an entire romantic current in American literary production, a current that included Whitman and Emerson, with Crane only as its latest cracked and misguided voice. (Delany 192)

For his moralist critics, Crane's poem fails as unified whole, becoming at best a series of overwrought highlights and disconnected lyric bursts that cannot sustain themselves. "Only this and nothing more." But it is just this lack that, on Poe's terms in "The Poetic Principle," marks the long poem's only possible attainment: providing unrequited moments of "shivering delight":

> I need scarcely observe that a poem deserves its title only inasmuch as it excites, by elevating the soul. The value of the poem is in the ratio of this elevating excitement. But all excitements are, through a psychal [sic] necessity, transient. That degree of excitement which would entitle a poem to be so called at all, cannot be sustained throughout a composition of any great length. After the lapse of half an hour, at the very utmost, it flags — fails — a revulsion ensues — and then the poem is, in effect, and in fact, no longer such.

I want to apply Poe's flashpoint aesthetics ("brief and indeterminate glimpses") to Delany' insistence on the fact that, for Crane, the Brooklyn Bridge was an active gay cruising site; that is, a place of intense, promiscuous, transient, non-procreative sexual exchange. "Cutty Sark," says Delany of the third section of Crane's poem, "with its account of the unsuccessful pick-up, is the true center of unspoken homosexual longing, the, yearning for communication, in *The Bridge*" (221). The aesthetic power of *The Bridge* occurs not in spite of, but in connection to, its immediate (moralists would say perverse) bursts of sensation, analogous to transient sexual exchanges on the bridge. My point is not to use aesthetic process as a metaphor for sex but the other way around; indeed, Delany gives a very different frame for "failure" (*animalady*) as drawing a blank, in other words "unsuccessful pick-up" fueling the aesthetic fire ("only this and nothing more"). Moreover, this aesthetic of elevated, intense, excitement, in Poe's terms, let's call it *immediation* relates to Crane's habit of listening, on his phonograph, over and over again,

to the climax of Ravel's "Boléro," as if bolts of melody could obliterate self-consciousness.[9]

But a better word for what I am after is *irremediation*, which registers irremediable failure within an echoic poetics: "never more." "Focus on the loss: I once was timed, but now I am fixed rate."[10] In poetry's negative economy, loss prolongs intensification.

Crane and Poe are in the same boat, without life preservers. The argument against Poe and Crane is pursued, with paradigmatic force, by Yvor Winters in *Primitivism and Decadence: A Study of American Experimental Poetry* (1937) and *In Defense of Reason* (1947) and extends to William Logan's 2007 trashing of Crane's, yes, "failure," in the *New York Times* review of the Library of America's magisterial edition of Crane:

> Much of "The Bridge'' seems inert now — overlong, overbearing, overwrought, a Myth of America conceived by Tiffany and executed by Disney.… his grandeurs might easily be mistaken for grandiosity.... He was drawn to a high-amp schmaltziness he must have taken as the proper emotional tone for a visionary.… "The Bridge'' remains a fabulous architectural blueprint that wanted a discipline Crane could never provide. (18)

Logan, the *Times'*s go-to enforcer of cold war ideology, becomes, by means of his *ostensive* Superintendency, a figure of bathos, trapped under a headline, perhaps not of his own making — "Hart Crane's Bridge to Nowhere" — unable to acknowledge that *nowhere* is just where Crane and his readers might want to be.
Crane knew the type. As he writes in his 1926 letter to Harriet Monroe:

> The nuances of feeling and observation in a poem may well call for certain liberties which you claim the poet has no right to take. I am simply making the claim that the poet does have that authority, and that to deny it is to limit the scope of the medium so considerably as to outlaw some of the richest genius of the past.[11]

LXI. Debunking Debunking

Pataque(e)ricals[12] are aversive to what Wittgenstein calls "ostensive definitions": manifest and fixed connections between names and things, meaning and objects, as when we point to a *this* (§§ 6, 9, 28-38) (Only this and nothing more). It's queer, he

notes, that a figure will look one way in one context and another way in a different contexts.

The duck/rabbit is the paradigmatic pataque(e)rical figure because it is more than meets the eye: our "aspect blindness" may cue us to see it one way rather than other. What it is "is" we never can see in a single moment in the eye. We may be able to perceive it all at once, but we see it serially (oscillating dialectically).

Wittgenstein compares the inability to see things without contextual cues to not having "perfect pitch." (§257)We don't see *the thing itself* but *see as*, see with and through our metaphoric frames. It is our animalady to suffer from frame lock. Aspect blindness is a rigid adherence to one reading or interpretation of a figure (or poem), a repression of the necessity for context to establish meaning (and for different frames to establish potentially incommensurable meanings). This view is sometimes stigmatized as relativism, or in terms of poetry, as nihilism or aversion of meaning or affect. Wittgenstein suggests that the problem is not in the context dependence of meaning but in stigmatizing (getting stuck on) an ordinary feature of language.

> In our failure to understand the use of a word we take it as the expression of a queer [*seltsamen*] *process*. (As we think of time as a queer medium, of the mind as a queer kind of being.) (§196, Anscombe tr.)

What's queer is that we sublime "the logic of our language" (§38) from its everyday, context-dependent use into axiomatic system of rigid correspondences, which has the effect of creating chimeras (two-dimensional stick figures) in place of living beings. The chimera that holds us captive is that perception does not require mediation: when we reach out to touch it, thinking it is the living proof, it dissolves in our hands, leaving a faint mist in its place.

In Wittgenstein's account, ostensive definitions map nouns onto the world, as if the fact of the existence of objects in the world pushes language toward deambiguation: a compulsive (dis-eased) state of trying to strip language to its essentials, as if it were a set of labels for a pre-existing world.

> But what, for example, is the word "this" the name of in [a] language-game... or the word "that" in the ostensive definition "that is called...."? — If you do not want to produce confusion you will do best not to call these words names at all. — Yet, [queer / *merkwürdigerweisse*] to say, the word "this" has been called the only *genuine* name; so that anything else we call a name

> was one only in an inexact, approximate sense.… Naming appears as a queer (*seltsame*) connection of a word with an object. — And you really get such a queer [*seltsame*] connexion when the philosopher tries to bring out *the* relation between name and thing by staring at an object in front of him and repeating a name or even the word "this" innumerable times. For philosophical problems arise when language *goes on holiday*. And *here* we may indeed fancy naming to be some remarkable act of mind, as it were a baptism of an object. And we can also say the word "this"*to* the object, as it were address the object as "this" — a queer *[seltsam**er***] use of this word, which doubtless only occurs in doing philosophy. (§38, Anscombe tr.)

Only this! Perception is evermore remediated: remediation precedes essence.

My Poetics by Way of Emily Dickinson

By homely gift and hindered Words The human heart is told Of Nothing — "Nothing" is the force That renovates the World —[13]

I love this Emily Dickinson poem, which seems so much like a Paul Celan poem. According to Johnson, it's from around 1883, very near the end of Dickinson's life, when she was 53. Read as an ars poetica it feels so close to me it's hard for me to consider it on its own terms. Forty years ago, in 1973, I poured over that three-volume Johnson edition in the only class I took after college — a seminar on Dickinson taught by Robin Blaser at Simon Fraser University near Vancouver; but Dickinson's first impact on me was as a junior in high school, when I studied her work with Richard Feingold (who later went on to teach at Berkeley). Dickinson gave me a fundamental sense of what a poem could be (*be* not *do* as I would usually say). And just this Fall I returned again to Dickinson for my Poetics of Identity seminar, with Marta Werner speaking to us on the late manuscripts, letters, and fragments — the way Dickinson would write on the back of envelopes, transforming scrap to talisman. Werner and Jen Bervin call their recent Dickinson book *The Gorgeous Nothings* referring to this same poem and also what Werner calls, marvelously, Dickinson's "'Sudden' collage made of two, possibly three, sections of envelope": "the gorgeous / nothings / which / compose / the / sunset / keep."[14]

The first thing to say about this poem is that it is a gift: first to Susan Dickinson, to whom it was sent in a letter, and then to us, readers from a beyond Dickinson could address with more freedom and ferocity than perhaps any of her contemporaries because unconstrained by the demands of publication, or, perhaps,

better to say, constrained by the demands of nonpublication, what she called eternity. The possibility of any one of us receiving this gift is absolutely precarious (if you can accept the oxymoron — I have a feeling you are up for it), given the precarious state of her manuscripts or even the recognition of her poems *as* poems (rather than as sweet nothings, notings). The poem is a (hindered or delayed) gift both into and — that supreme fiction — *for* the unknown ("eternity's vast pocket").

Poetry makes *nothing* happen (DON'T EVEN THINK OF NOTHING HERE!), manifest in the cracks (delays, blanks) between words and the frictions of gift. A gift (this gift) is a present made present; as for reciprocity: nothing is given in return.

Mine is a homely poetics, both odd-looking (unattractive, disagreeable, low) and intimate (even private). The doggerel and generally deformed (as you rightly say, hindered, averse, thwarted, delayed, backwardly) rhythms and rimes, bathos, peculiarity and solecisms, have a double function of being unheimlich while also being — homesickness even at home and at home with homesickness. I know this sends mixed signals. But I don't think I am alone in feeling that the unknown is most familiar or that the normal doesn't feel right. I am not talking about alienation, quite the opposite: an alien nation, making a ground where you find yourself. Recently a reviewer dismissively assumed a hindered lyric of mine was mocking — because, for him, awkwardness signaled parody or more simply badness.

But awkwardness is home ground.

My motto has long been Dickinson's "Don't you know that 'No' is the wildest word we consign to Language?"[15]

That's different, if related, to zen. I agree with your sense of "socially-minded" but also because it suggests socially unminded. Mind the gap. Unmind in the gap too.

I have nothing to say and I am not saying it. I have nothing to not say and I am saying it. I have nothing to not say and I am not saying it.

I read Dickinson's poem as close to negative dialectics. Nothing in the sense of not one thing: variants around a blank center.

To be told about nothing is to come face to face with loss, despair, grief; the irreparable.

Nothing repairs the world.

Renovates is something else again: making new again, making new now.

The revolution of the word is the force of nothing.

Poetry is a weak thing and that is its strength.

Notes

1.See Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Thi*nks. See also Wittgenstein, *Lectures & Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology, and Religious Belief*. For a full account of the relation of Wittgenstein to poetics, see Perloff,*Wittgenstein's Ladder: Poetic Language and the Strangeness of the Ordinary*.

2. Edgar A. Poe, "The Poetic Principle," <www.eapoe.org/works/essays/poetprnb.htm>. See McGann,*The Poet Edgar Allan Poe: Alien Angel*, which restores Poe to his foundational role for American, and 19th-century, poetics; McGann's breathtaking scholarship makes Poe's work thrillingly present and hauntingly prescient.

3. Wallace Stevens, "An Ordinary Evening in New Haven" XII: "The poem is the cry of its occasion, / Part of the res itself and not about it."

4. Gertrude Stein, "If I Told Him: A Completed Portrait of Picasso" (1923): EPC Digital Library <writing.upenn.edu/library/Stein-Gertrude_If-I-Told-Him_1923.html>

5. See *The Poems of Emily Dickinson,* no. 505, vol. 2, 387-88. I discuss this poem in "Artifice of Absorption" in *A Poetics*. Poe's "brief and indeterminate glimpses" has a tenuous connection to Walter Benjamin's observation, in "Über den Begriff der Geschichte" (On the Concept of History) that memories, like pictures of history, occur in flashes: "Das wahre Bild der Vergangenheit huscht vorbei. Nur als Bild, das auf Nimmerwiedersehen im Augenblick seiner Erkennbarkeit eben aufblitzt, ist die Vergangenheit festzuhalten." (The true picture of the past darts by. Like a picture that is never seen again in its instant of recognizability, the past is recorded when, precisely, it flashes up.)" —*Illuminationen: Ausgewählte Schriften* (Frankfurt/ Main 1974), Bd.1, S. 25ff.

6. See Robin Seguy's digital edition of "The Raven" interwoven with the translations of Baudelaire and Mallarmé < http://www.text-works.org/Texts/Poe/>.

7. This is my son Felix's current favorite term. Once you start to see them, they multiple like rabbits.

8. Delany, "Atlantis Rose: Some Notes on Hart Crane."pp. 192-91. He acknowledges his debt to Lee Edelman's *Transmemberment of Song:Hart Crane's Anatomies of Rhetoric and Desire* (1987) on pp. 919-91. A related Delany work on which I have relied in this section is unpublished: Delany's extended review and critique of Paul Mariani's *The Broken Tower: The Life of Hart Crane*. "A Centennial Life from the Roaring Twenties" was first presented at the Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania on Jan. 25, 2007; audio available at PennSound <writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Crane.php>. Delany provided me a copy of the ms.

9. Reed, "Hart Crane's Victrola." Researching any prior use of the term "immediation," I discovered an article by Christoph Brunner, "Immediation as process and practice of signaletic mattering" in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Culture*, vol. 4 (2012): <www.aestheticsandculture.

net/index.php/jac/article/view/18154/22833>.

10. “Explicit Version Number Required” in *My Way: Speeches & Poems*, 191.

11. See <english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/a_f/crane/metaphor.htm>. The letter also appears in the Library of America edition of Crane.

12. Pataque(e)rical is my coinage. It combines the ’pataphysics of French writer Alfred Jarry (1873-1907) with “queer” and inquiry (query). Jarry created a “science of exceptions” with special emphasis on the “swerve.”

13. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, no. 1563 , vol. 3, 1076. Facsimile of the ms at <www.edickinson.org/editions/2/image_sets/76231?image=2771> suggests:

> By homely
> gift and
> hindered Words
> The human
> heart is told
> Of Nothing —
> “Nothing” is
> the force
> That renovates
> the World –

14. Werner, “The Flights of A 821: Dearchivizing the Proceedings of Birdsong,” 299. See also Werner and Bervin, *The Gorgeous Nothings*.

15. The *Letters of Emily Dickinson*, L562 to Judge Otis Lord.

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Pinter's Poetry: Cognitive Poetics and Other Approaches

William Baker
Northern Illinois University, USA
403 Ridge Drive, DeKalb, Il 60115, USA
Email: wbaker7777@hotmail.com

Abstract Nobel prize winner Harold Pinter is justly celebrated for his prolific dramatic achievements.Yet his poetic output has been neglected. His first love was poetry which he wrote throughout his life.This paper examines his poetic writing throughout his career culminating in his late poems focusing on mortality, the loss of his father,the diagnosis of Pinter's own terminal illness from cancer of the throat and other subjects. A brief comparison is suggested between Pinter's poetry and that of contemporaries such as Larkin and W S Graham. Cognitive and other approaches are utilized to illuminate Pinter's diverse and powerful poetry.
Key words Cognitive poetics; Pinter; Pinter's poetry; Eclecticism
Author William Baker is distinguished Professor Emeritus at Northern Illinois University and visiting Professor at Zhejiang University. The author or coauthor of more than 25 books, including three on Harold Pinter and over 150 refereed articles with Shang Biwu his "Chinese Ethical Criticism" appeared in the Times Literary Supplement, 28 July 2015. Baker's latest book is his edited "Studies in Victorian and Modern Literature: A Tribute to John Sutherland" Fairleigh Dickinson University Press / Rowman and Littlefield, 2015

Very little, if any, critical attention has been paid to the poetry of Harold Pinter (1930-2008), the Nobel Prize winner chiefly noted as a dramatist. His drama contains fine sustained poetic passages such as paeans to the bus routes of his native city London the setting of his plays, flights of fantasy, dreams, largely of a sexual nature of his characters, their memories real or imagined. These passages, too, have not merited the attention they deserve. However, my focus is not his dramatic texts but his poetry.

Poetry is a form Pinter was always interested in and practiced. His first publication was the poem "Dawn," which appeared while he was at school in his

school magazine, the *Hackney Downs School Magazine* in the spring of 1947 (Baker and Ross 127). For more than over sixty years, he produced in addition to his plays, film scripts and other well-known examples of his creative output, innumerable poems including nearly a hundred that were published.

In the present paper, I will select a few of the elements of cognitive poetics by Reuven Tsur (for instance) in his many articles and books and apply them to a late Pinter poem. Amongst other elements, I shall focus on "meaning, affect, perceived qualities, and versification" and the difference between traditional scansion of metre (although as it will become evident I have tried to avoid this), sound and rhythm, and different modes of hearing speech sounds depending upon who is doing the hearing and the reading. The poem chosen was written in the last years of the poet's life. Its focus is on "emotive content" (Tsur and Sovran 272) and is an expression of basic archetypes: death, love, war. It also marks a personal turning point.

The poem has a single-word title, "Death," and is dated following its final line "1997." Following the title, there are five words and a date surrounded by parentheses: (Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1953). This poem was initially published in the *Times Literary Supplement* (11). In her "Foreword" to *Poems*, Pinter's widow, Antonia Fraser, explains that the poem "was written just after the registration of his father's death at Hove Town Hall"(5). Such a bureaucratic formality is confirmed by the statement beneath the title of the poem reading(Births and Death Registration Act, 1953).

Verse form and content interweave most powerfully in what is a poem of personal lamentation for a dead father. The poem should be read slowly to convey its verbal sound effect of lament, liturgy, or even dirge. In fact, I cannot see that reading it quickly would have much impact. It is not a political poem in terms of being a lament for the consequences of a military conflict, or for someone who has died in battle. These were interpretations I heard from its French translator, Jean Pavans, during a private conversation at a conference on Pinter held at the Jean Moulin University in Lyons France in March 2007. Such interpretation was probably encouraged by the inclusion of "Death" as the final poem in Pinter's selection of prose and poetry published by Faber and Faber in 2003 under the title *War*. In fact, in this collection, the poem was published without the detail of the "Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953." This was omitted following the title as was the "1997" dating at the foot of the poem (21). These factual details are also missing from the text of the poem in Pinter's *Various Voices: Prose, Poetry, Politics 1948-2005* (2005). There, the poem can be found on p. 262, placed as the final text

in the selection.

Now, if this account were focused on biographical interpretation rather than adapting some of the tools used in cognitive poetics — especially by Reuven Tsur, one of its leading exponents — then the poem from the biographical perspective may be regarded in terms of Pinter's attitude: a complex one to his late father with whom he argued vociferously, especially over religious practice and politics. To put it mildly, they disagreed (Baker 4-5). His father had a formal religious burial; Pinter chose not to. In the reasonably strict Eastern European Jewish religious tradition to which his father basically adhered, there are religious ritual practices to be followed for burial. An important one is the washing of the dead body. From this perspective, the line "did you wash the dead body" might well be read as Pinter's father addressing and questioning his son or those preparing the body for burial.

The poem using a biographical reading has many strands of personal meaning related to the death of somebody with whom the poet had a love-hate relationship and to the poet's increasing awareness of his own mortality. Pinter was born in 1930; the poem is dated 1997, and by then, some of his closest friends had died. The year 1997 is also just before his life-threatening throat cancer was diagnosed. Very few survive this, and its diagnosis led to a series of operations that plagued Pinter's remaining years. He died in 2008. The obsession with mortality and mutability in the poem are, of course, found throughout his output. The archetypes are present: love, death, mortality, the passing of time, the transitory nature of existence, conflict, and war. "War" in this context means, I think, conflict with the self or the person being addressed rather than military engagement. It need hardly be said that archetypal patterns are important to cognitive poetics (Tsur, *Toward a Theory* 355-84).

To continue with some additional thoughts and ideas: the use of repetition with variation, a device common to many of Pinter's poems, is a time process. This raises questions related to time and history in relation to this particular poem and other poems such as will they last, will they mean anything in the future, and do they mean anything now? The application of cognitive poetic tools may allow for an affirmative answer to each of these questions. Regarding the speech-driven nature of the poem and the manner in which speech gives writing a direction, it gives a time as well as an embodied spacio/temporal situation. Pinter's drama is noted for its pauses that emphasize the arbitrary relationship between the written text and the duration or the non-use of the voice by characters re-creating the written pauses. The question marks found in the poem create pauses. As a dramatist, Pinter's interest in language would be speech (language) as much as

"written" language or at least the relationships between them (an observation I owe to Ian Davidson of the University of Bangor, Wales: private communication).

I will deliberately refrain from a metrical explication of this free verse poem, the reason being that to do so would be difficult and controversial and dependent upon performance. If undertaken the following are *unstressed words and lines*: the word "was" in the opening line; "when" in the third line; "was" in the last line of the opening verse; "was" in the second verse. Unstressed in the third verse: the opening line "was"; and the six occurrences of "or" in the third verse. In the fourth verse, both occurrences of "the"; and in its last line, "it" is unstressed. In the fifth single line verse, "the," "or," and "a" are unstressed. In the penultimate verse, in the first line, the words "made" and "the"; in the second line "the"; also in the third line and in the last line the word "was." Unstressed in the final verse: "the" in the opening line; "its" in the next; "the" in the third; "it" in the fourth. The rhythmic pattern depends upon the repetition of words, of sounds, of beats, of monosyllables, of questions, and a cumulative pronoun effect.

The poem contains characteristic Pinter hallmarks: repetition of words, letters, syllables, the language of interrogation through incessant repetitive questions, powerful echoing pronoun usage. Only the opening two lines of the third verse and the five lines of the final verse are run-on lines and do not contain questions. There are seven verses; of these, the first, third, and fourth have three lines. The second and the fifth verses are a single line containing a question: in the first instance, "Who was the dead body?" and in the other, "Was the dead body naked or dressed for a journey?" The sixth verse has four lines, each of which is a question that is either a direct question that expects a response from an understated presence or is rhetorical (as is the case in many of Pinter's plays).

Particularly effective also is the use of anaphora: "the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of each one of a sequence of sentences, paragraphs, lines of verse or stanzas" (Abrams 279). Anaphora reverberates throughout the poem. There is also in the poem in the first two lines of the fourth verse the use of epistrophe: the reversal of anaphora; in other words, the repeating of words at the end of rather than at the beginning of poetic units. Both anaphora and epistrophe may well serve as an important structuring element in free verse (Tsur and Sovran 523 and Tsur, *Toward a Theory* 471-72), as is the case in this particular poem. The word "was" appears as the opening word of the first two lines of the fourth verse and the word "abandoned" followed by a question mark is the final word of each of the three lines of this verse.

The final, seventh verse is the only one to have five lines without a question

mark at the conclusion of each of its poetic lines. The final verse is a variation from the pattern of the other verses. The first verse has four lines. The second verse one line. The third and fourth verses three lines each. The fifth verse is a single line. The sixth and penultimate verse has four lines, each concluding with a question mark in common with the proceeding lines in the poem with the exception of the opening two lines of the third verse. Each of the five lines of the final verse begins with the words "Did you" followed by a verb of action: to wash, to close, to bury, to leave and to kiss. These imply a question or questions but they are not followed by a question mark at the conclusion of the line.

The first line and second lines of the third verse are run-on lines. So are each of the lines of the final verse with the punctuation omitted even at the end of the last line of the poem: "Did you kiss the dead body." The vocabulary of this concluding verse is worthy of attention, too. There are five instances of the words "Did," with each instance being at the beginning of the line and the word capitalized, and the possessive pronoun "you" with each instance placed as the second word in each line. There are three instances in the verse of the definite pronoun "the": it is placed in the first, third and final line. The pronoun refers to another word used three times in this final verse, "body" also in the same lines as "the," in each case as the final word of the line. Where the pronoun is absent in the second and fourth lines, there is instead the word "it" and "its" placed as the penultimate word of the line.

The three words "the dead body" reverberate throughout the poem. They are found four times in the opening four line verse. Once in the second single line verse: in the third verse the third line has the two words "the dead" with "body" at the end of the line separated by two words "and abandoned" from "dead". In the fourth triple line verse, the triple formulation is found again. In the fifth single line verse, the words appear once. They occur on four occasions in the sixth verse where the placement is interesting. In the first two lines, the last four words read "the dead body dead" with the word "dead" repeated. In the third line, the formulation is "the dead body," and in the fourth line, there is a variant on the pattern of the opening two lines with the insertion of the past tense first and third tense of the singular "be": "the dead body was dead." Each of these four lines is followed by a question mark. In the final verse, the triple formulation "the dead body" is found twice, placed at the end of the opening and the closing lines. The noun "body" occurs three times and in each instance at the end of a line: the first, third, and final line. In the third line, it is "the body" rather than "the dead body" as in the other two instances.

To repeat, the lines of the last verse do not finish with the question mark device. The lines of the last verse are examples of "enjambment," they run on and

do not experience a natural pause that follows in grammatical or performativity a question mark. They are not end-stopped as the other lines and verses are but convey in this final verse what Tsur refers to as a "divergent, fluid structure" (*Playing by Ear* 154). This is somewhat ironic in terms of meaning as the subject of the poem is "Death" and the poet's reaction to it, with death generally perceived, as final, as end stopped rather than run on.

Let me return to meaning and interpretation subsequently. With exceptions — for instance of the adjectival "abandoned" occurring four times in the poem, three times in the fourth verse and in the penultimate line of the poem — most of the words in the poem are monosyllabic. Other exceptions in formal terms and in performance or recitation — an area explored in Tsur's most recent work (*Playing by Ear*) — occur in the third verse with the two-syllable words "father," "daughter," "brother" — possibly "uncle" — "sister," "mother," in the fifth single line verse "naked" and "dressed" and in the penultimate verse "declare," which occurs twice. There are, to my ear, no words that could be read as more than one or two syllables in the poem, except as stated the word "abandoned." Indeed, I would be most surprised to hear a variation in the perceptions of the transmission the communication of the one and two syllabic words in the poem.

This analysis has utilized a few of the tools of cognitive poetics found especially in the work of Reuven Tsur. Attention has been paid to rhythm, to patterns of versification, to linguistic patterns, to repetition and to performance, to speech sounds, to the poetic mode of speech perception. Tsur's ideas are complex and very theoretical. They are illustrations of what cognitive critics are interested in: how the mind "understands" the poem through repetition rather than just counting or enumerating the repetitions. My intention has been to demonstrate that the application of tools used by Tsur and others illuminate "meaning, affect, perceived qualities and versification" (Tsur and Sovran 273) in Pinter's poem "Death." But Tsur and the poetics of cognition are a potentially helpful tool rather than THE tool to understand Pinter's poem.

To conclude, I have primarily been concerned with my reactions as a reader, as a critic, and as an enthusiastic admirer of Pinter's poetry, to a single poem of his. This presentation has, to repeat, used a few of the tools of analysis suggested by Tsur in his work.

Reading through the special issue ofthe journal *Style* in the fall of 2014, devoted to the subject of "Cognitive Literary Study: Second Generation Approaches," I was struck by some observations that are particularly pertinent to what has been said. In their "Introduction: What is the 'Second Generation,'"

Karin Kukkonen and Marco Caracciolo write "as second-generation approaches to [cognitive] literary study develop, they will also need to find ways to address the embodied engagements of poetry (in particular with respect to the study of rhythm and meter)" (270). I take it that Tsur's work belongs to the first generation of cognitive literary study. By "embodied," I read them to mean those patterns inherent in the poem and in the reader's minds — the second is much more complex to determine than the first. Thus, for instance, to take two instances, if a poet chooses to use a sonnet form, then the assumption is that the poet is aware of the rules of engagement (the embodied engagements, 14 lines, for instance) with the sonnet, and I suppose, by implication the reader is too or the reader will learn these rules of engagement. With free verse forms in Pinter's case, there is no necessity to have a "combination of a regular metrical pattern and a consistent line length" (Cooper 522).

Another passage that struck me occurred in the excellent review essay in the fall 2014 issue of *Style* by Shang Biwu. In his "Cognitive Literary Science: Developments and Perspectives," Biwu draws attention to the diverse nature of cognitive literary criticism. He notes in one of the collections he assesses, *Cognitive Literary Studies: Current Themes and New Directions*, the "attempt to explore the cognitive processes of the syllable counting in metrical poetry and [the suggestion] that there are connections between the mental abilities involved in language, metrical verse, and music" (414). Such observations draw attention to areas as yet insufficiently explored — the connections between language, metrical verse, music and mental "abilities." Clearly such observations have relevance to perceptions of Pinter's poem.

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Wordsworthian Community on Death and Suffering:“Essays upon Epitaphs,” “The Old Cumberland Beggar,” and “The Thorn”

Yoon Ilhwan
Department of English Language & Literature, HanyangUniversity
222 Wangsimni-ro, Seodong-gu, Seoul, 04763, Korea
Email: ilhwan_y@hanyang.ac.kr

Abstract Theessay analyzes how in Wordsworth a community integrates the loss of the seemingly or actually dead into the community’s natural and social surroundings without reduction of their differences. In the *Essays upon Epitaphs*, Wordsworth treats the inherent communitarian value of the grave and the epitaph that binds together the living and the dead, which makes up the society’s encircled core. Through the burial practice and epitaphic writing social bonds are created and individuals joined. In “The Old Cumberland Beggar,” the old beggar is a kind of ghost, neither living nor dead; neither “properly” excluded nor incorporated in the community. He is constantly re-examined and re-interpreted by the villagers: observing the beggar leads them to a greater understanding of the self. Outside the community the beggar becomes a bond of compassion that binds all villagers and forges social cohesion. Martha Ray’s suffering in “The Thorn” also stitches together the community that is held in the grip of voyeurs and gossips. The narrator and the villagers repeatedly circle back to the enigma of her grief. They transmit and create her tales during which they constantly experience their togetherness in the community.

Key words Wordsworth; Community; Death; Suffering; “Essays upon Epitaphs”; “The Old Cumberland Beggar”; “The Thorn”

Author Ilhwan Yoon is Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Hanyang University. His research field is Romantic and Modern poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of the author’s recent publications are “Double Landscape of Nature and Symbol in Yeats” and “*The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: Speech, Subject, and Deferred Action of Trauma.”

Mourning and loss in Wordsworth's communityisthe object of a collective representation in which individuals relate to each other. The fundamental source of social cohesion for him is neither the economic interdependence nor the virtuous feeling nor the action *per se* but rather the shared mourning of the loss. In this essay I will analyze how in Wordsworth a community integrates the loss of the seemingly or actually dead into the community's natural and social surroundings without reduction of their difference by analyzing "Essays upon Epitaphs," "The Old Cumberland Beggar," and "The Thorn." For Wordsworth people in the community produce the discourses that would include and represent the loss of the dead without letting it be fully absorbed in the community. An analysis of how he mediates death and loss should provide us with the means to figure out how the notion of community functions in Wordsworth's thought, and where it ought to be located.

Wordsworth frequently introduces seemingly or actually dead figures in his poetry: the boy of Winander, the blind beggar, the drowned man, and the discharged soldier, to cite some examples in *The Prelude.* Hefrequently draws on a metaphysical absence or loss to show how a community is often built upon death and suffering. "Essays upon Epitaphs" gives a very good picture of how the notion of community functions in Wordsworth's thoughtin relation to death. He opens his "Essays"by devoting several pages to a consideration of burial practices from ancient time to the present. Burial and memorials of the dead were the earliest forms and an important part of ancient social practice. Wordsworth, quoting Camden, invokes the central place of burial in the constitution of community: "Never any neglected burial but some savage nations" (*PW* 2: 49). What he implies is that the body of the deceased in civil society is not like the carcass of some animal but must be respected as a human being. Each society has its own peculiar way of burying and respecting the dead. According to Wordsworth, there isa twofold desire of burial custom: "first, to guard the remains of the deceased from irreverent approach or from savage violation: and, secondly to preserve their memory."[1]Almost all the nations express the fact of death by a proper burial not only for reasons of hygiene but for honoring and remembering a deceased person. The respect for and memorial of the dead assume, Wordsworth argues, that some part of our nature is imperishable. The burial practice rests on the belief in immorality: "without the consciousness of a principle of immortality in the human soul, Man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the remembrance of his fellows: mere love or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it" (*PW* 2: 50). If we do not have an intimation or assurance of

immortality within us, there would be no wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death; thus, no burial practice that demands its proper place and a proper burial, and finally no constitution of the ideal community based on death and suffering.

How and where individuals bury the dead are determined by socio-cultural considerations.The particular mode of burying and commemorating the dead, which varies from one culture to another, represents a particular character of one's society, creating a symbolic tie between living and dead,as Michele Turner Sharp observes, "the return of the body to its proper place, giving it a proper burial, grounds the constitution of the ideal community" (391-92). In order to point out the places where their dead are interred, the grave was marked with certain external items as sticks and rocks. With the development of written language, epitaphic writing became the most efficient way to bury the dead and to memorialize the deceased."As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon these monuments: in order that their intention might be more surely and adequately fulfilled" (*PW* 2: 50). Since epitaphic writing was developed out of the need to point out the burial place, it is not essentially different from the rude sticks and rocks and mounds of earth. The well-wrought epitaph is a kind of fundamental glue in society for the maintenance of social structure. In consistent with epitaphic writing, Wordsworth discusses the figure of personification, or prosopopoeia. The passersby reading the epitaph are most likely to contemplate their ultimate death; the corpse becomes an image of what they will become. The epitaph asks them to remember the dead and to recognize their inevitable death: it makes them see themselves as double, though incomplete, of the dead. As Debra Fried argues, "Remember me[the dead]" means, in part, "repeat me" (617).

The burial practice and the epitaphare a key to producing and enforcing identity of idealized community that Wordsworth's "Essays" intends. Wordsworth conceives of his community being substantially dependent upon a coherent practice of burial and epitaphic writing, which stitch together the symbolic strands of community into a significant whole, the chain of elements now making up cultural identity. By the side of the grave, he says:

> We suffer and we weep with the same heart: we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit; our hopes look to the same quarter; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, good-will, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these

> acknowledgements to our common nature. (*PW* 2:59)

The death and ritual in the community forms a useful filter through which fundamental traits of a given community come into focus.Wordsworth argues that identity of community is here as a 'communion' which can only be based upon mourning of death. If one feels he belongs to a community, it cannot be because he has a face-to-face relation with its dead. And yet there is an undeniable 'reality' in this imagined communion. Community is conceived because, regardless of the actual inequality that may prevail in each in life, the grave "gathers all human beings to itself, and equalizes the lofty and the low" (*PW* 2:59). Through burial practice and epitaph, community is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Community emerges through people conceiving themselves to be part of a collectivity as communally bound.

The rural community to Wordsworth seems the sort of idealized community that unites the living and the dead: it is the site par excellence for the living's relation to death and loss. Neither too close nor too far, the rural community might ideally provide the living with a healthful and beneficent relation to the dead. The impression of death must be counterbalanced not only by the belief in immortality but also by a proper distance from the inhabitants of large towns and cities. The dead in the rural community is thus at a proper remove from the injurious effects on the living. The rural community thus not only involves territorial and geographic boundaries, but also possesses an emotional, spiritual and cultural basis. Wordsworth prefers among the rural community a village church-yard for the grave of the dead that is "lying as it does in the lap of Nature" and "most favorably contrasted with that of a town crowded population" (*PW* 2: 55). The dead are deposited in close connection with the community's site of worship upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind. Wordsworth describes the village church-yard rich in color:

> The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the Sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish-church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centreof a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both. (*PW* 2: 55-56)

The village church-yard is the ideal place for the burial of the dead, because both in cities and villages, it combines the place of burial and place of worship and successfully mediates death and the loss: it provides its visitors with the site in which they are most likely to contemplate their ultimate spiritual destination as well as personal or social sorrow and admiration, and to worship upon time and eternity. The church-yard situates the dead in the proper place with the proper burial,being neither fully present nor fully absent and belonging to a domain which allows the dead with and within the living. Wordsworth tries to present the rural community,best exemplified in the village church-yard, as the most proper place for the dead and universalizes itas a core of identity of community between living and dead. The grave in rural community is "the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living" (*PW* 2: 58). It visibly presents the "strength and sanctity of these feelings which persons in humble stations of society connect with their departed friends and kindred" (*PW* 2: 65). Burial within the rural community effectively promotes the communion between living and dead. Those feelings of attachment come from the inhabitants' desire for their body to return to their proper place of burial. The individuals are bound together by imaginative togetherness with their forefathers:"Strong and unconquerable still continues to be the desire of all, that their bones should rest by the side of their forefathers, and very poor persons should provide that their bodies should be conveyed if necessary to a great distance to obtain the last satisfaction" (*PW* 2: 65). Those feelings of belonging to the community forge the social, psychological and affective-sentimental link among individuals.

Wordsworth admits that the commonality is never fully communicated or made present.In "We are Seven," for example, a rustic child's stubborn refusal to distinguish between living and dead in her family also serves to demonstrate the fundamental relation of the living to the dead. The narrator, however, is uneasy at her refusal as though being too close to the dead would make his enlightened understanding of community fall apart. The proper distance from death is necessary for keeping the living and the dead together. While Wordsworth tries to imagine a cultural nexus in the grave around which various forces of community can congeal to constitute the ideal community, he also offers irresolvable difference between living and dead behind such a nexus. His assumption of a communal identity does not fall into a communal essentialism; his turn to burial, epigraph, the rural community contains ambivalent struggle between his efforts at cultural unity and the irreducible difference of the living from the dead. Wordsworth's ambivalent relation to death is well illustrated in his reverie:

> I have been roused from this reverie by a consciousness suddenly flashing upon me, of the anxieties, the perturbations, and in many instances, the vices and rancorous dispositions, by which the hearts of those who lie under so smooth a surface and so fair an outside have been agitated. The image of an unruffled sea has still remained; but my fancy has penetrated into the depths of that sea, — with accompanying thoughts of shipwreck, of the destruction of the mariner's hopes, the bones of drowned men heaped together, monsters of the deep, and all the hideous and confused sights which Clearence saw in his dream. (PW 2: 64)

Just as the smooth surface of the sea hides the shipwreck and the heaps of drowned men's bones, so does the sheltered interior of the tombcontain the horrible face of death that has the state of radical indeterminacy. The indeterminacy of death makes its absolute burial and mourning impossible: the ghostly voices hoverover any burial and resolution of mourning. While building the communal identity upon death and burial, Wordsworth are keenly aware of the impossibility of eliminating the ghostly domain between living and dead, real and ideal, history and myth. His reverie not only invokes the power of deathin constitution of community but also conjures up the indeterminable horizon that cannot be reduced to any identity. While community may bethreatened from within by a ghostly voice, the poet cannot exorcise it, because the voice does not have a determinate ontological status belonging toan utterly unknown domain without being closed in upon itself, and it is also because this would be to destroy the magic of constituting community itself.

The figure of the old beggar in "The Old Cumberland Beggar" gives a vivid illustration of the dead within the living. His decrepitude is too extreme to apply only to one already dead. The old man has endured so long that it no longer pains him. He is a kind of ghost existing between living and dead, neither fully present nor fully absent in the community. As an inassimilable being, he has no proper place within the community and yet stitches the members of the community into a significant whole. In order to stress the in-between state of the beggar, Wordsworth carefully describes the beggar and the surrounding about him. The poet details the beggar's meal, his seat by the road, the small birds that scavenge for crumbles. What is striking about his presentation of the opening stanza is that the beggar appears to straddle between an animal state and a ruined piece of nature. His seat, "a low structure of rude masonry / Built at the foot of a huge hill"[2] — that is, near a human construct and a natural feature, suggests his state between the

natural world and the human village. The combination of landmarks in order and disorder also emphasizes the old beggar's in-between state. The second stone step of old masonryupon which he sits is a well-ordered resting place. Yet his food he scanned seriously in "idle computations""scattered from his palsied hand" (l. 16). Wordsworth's careful description of the old beggar serves a function for locating the beggar within and without the community.

The beggar is isolated from the community and yet undeniably belongs to it. At first sight the old man seems to be an isolated figure: "Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills, / He sat, and ate his food in solitude" (ll. 14-15). But he is a part of the community and connected to the villagers — village dames, the post-boy, the girl who tends the toll-gate, and the villagers who live nearby. As the beggar proceeds on his walk, he creates the act of mild but habitual charity in those around him. Each of the villagers, performing certain act for him, recalls the common link of feeling of these acts. That the act of charity takes place along the road is of importance, because the path is the common space of the community in which the villagers participate in the regular social practices, as Nayar points out:

> Walking by members of a community constitutes a social practice through which the land or path becomes a common space. Thus the community is concerned about the paths available for walking, the nature of the walkers (whether they are vagrants or criminals), and the conventions of walking (making way for the carriages of lords, for example, or tollgates where one stops). The social practice of walking is different for different people. (81)

The old man walking along the road brings into being the moral relation among the villagers: the horseman lodges a coin safely "Within the old Man's hat" (l. 29); the girl "lifts the latch for him that he may pass" (l. 36); the post-boy,harried with business, shouts to him from behind, but if the old man doesn't hear,turns his carriage "with less noisy wheels to the roadside" (l. 41). The villagers incorporate the beggar in their lives by doing certain things for him. His extreme decrepitude calls forth the benevolence of others, and "his incorporation in the lives of other people humanizes the life of a community" (Bromwich 148). Wordsworth describes the good of the moral relations that the beggar brings into being for the villagers:

> While from door to door,
> This old Man creeps, the villagers in him
> Behold a record which together binds

Past deeds and offices of charity
Else unremembered. . . (ll. 87-90)

The beggar's sorry lot prompts the charity of the villagers around him: "the old man's excessive suffering can transform the gaze [of the villagers] from a hostile to a benevolent presence" (Collings 110). But he is not only an object of charity. The old man is also a living memorial to that kindness. He endows it with a human faceand connects his benefactors with their own better selves long past, and with one another.

The common link also is that the beggar disrupts and reforms the villagers' routines. As he proceeds along the road, he stops a succession of the villagers in their tracks or diverts them from their tasks. The beggar interrupts the villager's labor and daily schedules to form an unintended routine of charity: the horseman does not toss the beggar a coin, but stops, to make sure the alms are lodged safely in the man's hat; the tollgate girl stops her spinningand lifts the latch for him to pass; the post-boy slows down his horses and passes him on the roadside in order to avoid disturbing the man. Wordsworth defends the beggar's worth, however, not for an economy of mutually beneficial exchange; he repels every moral pretension of those who refer all conduct to a principle of economic utility. In fact, the beggar never returns thanks for his benefactors or pronounces blessing upon the heads of his benefactors. The common link of feeling that binds together the acts of the villagers does not come from the feelings that can be read into the beggar; rather it is not only from temporal interruption of a circular economy, of reciprocation and reappropriation, of generosity and gratitude. The old man ignores the social conventions that hold society together.

The ultimate factor by which the beggar causes the disturbance is the villagers' and the narrator's inaccessibility to the old man's feelings. We don't know what is going on in the man's mind.The man is so stooped, and his eyes travel the ground at the same slow pace of his walk, seeing one little span of earth for a moment. One cannot be sure howbadly he has a problem with his hearing which may be as bad as his eyes. Such an infirm man might not be able to hear. The possibility is implied when Wordsworth describes experiences that would be a blessing for the beggar in comparison to being pent up in a workhouse that would utterly drain him by "Those life-consuming sounds [of machinery and labor] that clog the air" (l. 181):

Let him be free of mountain solitudes,
And have around him, *whether heard or not*,

The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
Few are his pleasures. . . (ll. 183-186:*myemphasis*)

Even as the poet wishes the beggar willhave some pleasure as he listens to the "melody of woodland birds,"he reminds us that the old man might not be able to hear it. In addition to our inaccessibility to the old man's mind due to his infirm eyes and hearings, we are not sure that the beggar has been or will be happy because of his exposure to winter winds. His endurance of winter winds could be summed up either as suffering or as pleasure. The poet's wish may have nothing to do with the old man's experience of himself. Though the man is a familiar figure to the poet and the villagers, there exists a distance that cannot find a solidbridge between them. The feelings generated in relation to the old man begin and end in speculationwhile the beggar's feelings remain indecipherable. As Joshua King argues, "the quality of feeling generated by the beggar's description is important not for any revelation of the beggar's own feelings" but "for the way it can turn the beggar and his inscrutability into a provocative obstacle" (50). We confront the impossibility of imagining themselves into his feelings and thoughts.

The beggar belongs to nowhere. He is outside the community possessing nothing but the spot of earth he sees; hedoes not participate in the regular spatial practices; he ignores the social conventions of sympathy that expects gratitude for charity. Outside the community, however, the old man binds its members together as he walks along the common land or path. As the villagers do for him some act of charity, theyfeel they belong to the same moral community. The beggar vividly recalls their own peculiar link in the community, building their charity up as an assurance of a moral relation. In the old beggar as an entity between living and dead, Wordsworth envisions a unified community and fundamental glue for keeping social structure: the ghostly beggar creating both community and individual bound.

In "The Thorn" Martha Ray's grief attracts around her a community of voyeurs and gossips, producing social cohesion. The discourses of the villagers and the narrator are insufficient and interminable to interpret and fix her grief, ever recounting her repeated cries of "O misery! Oh misery!"[3] Obsessed by her grief and suffering of Martha Ray, the narrator responds to the mystery in insistentstruggles to measure and dissect its uncertainty throughout the poem. He desires to express the enigma of her misery, fixing the real of the mysterious excess that constantly displaces his desire and representation. His repetitive mind circles back to a single, grave-shaped plot associated with Martha's child.

Inhis struggles to control and stabilize the haunting spot, the narrator reduces

it to mathematical order and positive fact. Beginning with a brute and concrete fact — "There is a thorn" in the first stanza, he measures the thornin the third stanza in absurd precision: "Not higher than a two-years' child / It stands erect this aged thorn" (ll. 5-6). As he leads us from the thorn to a neighboring pond, and to a hill of moss, his concern with measurement becomes obsessive. The thorn is "five yard" from the path," and "to the left, three yards beyond" is the pond. He proceeds to measure it "from side to side" (l. 32): "'Tis three feet long and two feet wide" (l. 33). The narrator turns to numbers to resolve the enigmatic nature of the mystery to determine whether it is a proper size for an infant's grave. The telescope he carries to the mountaintop functions as a symbol of his obsession with clear and distinct evidence as well as with his curiosity of the voyeur. He conducts his telescopic observation to divide and analyze the thorn, pond and mossy hill, and to avoid all those causes of error, however minute. His observation reads, interprets, and translates the mysterious spots into an object of uncritical positivism. He then tells us about Martha Ray who often goes to the spot on that mountain top and weeps to herself crying "Oh misery! Oh misery!" In order to identify her, the narrator even said what he knows previously about this women's life concerning her abandonment, her pregnancy, and her madness.

Despite his repeated attempts to fix the thorn, pond, hill of moss in a conceptual order, and despite his long recount of Martha's life, the narrator imbues a tale of local superstitions with his own perspective, imagination and obsession. His mind describes the concrete landscape immediately personifying it. Even at the beginning the thorn looks so old and gray, like a human being,and struggles to reach the height of a two-year-old child againstthe moss that is pulling it to the ground. His obsessive curiosity transforms what he sees into what he craves to see. The narrator's first mention of "infant" remains figurative. In describing the "heap of earth o'ergrown with moss" (l. 49), the narrator makes it clear that it is "like an infant's grave in size" (l. 52). The mound is similar to, but different from an infant's grave. After reiterating his crucial meeting with Martha Ray, however, the figurative "infant" becomes literal. He says that he sees Martha's face close and hears her cry, "Oh woe is me! Oh misery!"Encouraged by his own testimony, he admits the rumors about Martha and transforms the fundamental object of his obsession into an undeniable fact:"I've heard the scarlet moss is red / With drops of that poor infant's blood" (ll. 221-222). The "infant" begins to refer to a specific child.Though cautious ("I've hear"), he attempts to represent the spot not as an enigmatic place but as a crime scene of Martha's murder of her child. The fantasy of this crime is intensified by a kind of looking into the pond where onecansee the

baby's face looking back.

At the most triumphal moment, the narrator suddenly shies away from the compulsive center of his interest: "But kill a new-born infant thus! I do not think she could" (ll. 223-224). He is reluctant to come to the core of his own fantasy. As a faithful observer, the narrator circles his attention back to the mysterious spot five times, and relentlessly narrows his focus on it. Yet just before he is about to encounter what he wants to see, he suddenly keeps away from the conclusion his desire may inevitably arrive at. His inability to face his own desire is already symbolized by his flight from Martha at their first meeting. It is the day when the visibility is wretched: "A storm came on, and I could see / No object higher than my knee" (ll. 186-87). Instead of the jutting crag he thinks he sees, he finds "A woman seated on the ground."When Martha suddenly appears close before him, he flees:

> I did not speak — I saw her face,
> Her face it was enough for me. (ll. 199-200)

As the narrator avoidsbeing face to face with her, he immediately denies the possibility of her killing her own child. Despite all the implication that he has literally measured the spot and that he meets her grief head on himself, he suddenly turns to the village gossip to hear a firm fact of her. Now he seems stuck "between disclaiming firm knowledge and thirsting for it" (Hartman 148). While wishing to have a fixed object, he evades everything that might satisfy it. He repeatedly displaces his desire to keep it going, only for its own sake. His desire exists in the movement from one meaning to another in its perpetual deferral. His repeated referral to the mysterious spot constantly gives shape to his fantastic surmising. While Wordsworth observes in his "Note to 'The Thorn'" how "the mind luxuriates in therepetition of words which appear successfully to communicate its feeling" (*PW* 2: 513), repetition here produces the object of his obsession: his obsessive repetition designates and shapes his fantasy around Martha's mourning and loss.

The desire for the narrator is a desire for another meaning, constantly slipping form one meaning to the next. This does not mean that his desire can be simply reduced yearning or pining for something inassimilable: it is not to have the final meaning but to produce another meaning. We are left, at the end of the poem, with the repetition of the mystery the narrator describes again and again: the thorn, the pond, the mossy hill, and Martha crying, "Oh woe is me! Oh misery!"His continual return to the mysterious spot and repeated recount of it can be seen as an attempt to

move his desire on and on. The objects of his obsession represent the inscape of his mind. As Stephen Maxfield Parrish argues, the events of the poem are unimportant "except [that] they reflect the working of the narrator's imagination" (155). The perception of the thorn, the pond, and the mossy hill shifts through the repeated retelling of his tale.The thorn is impersonated as Martha and becomes closely the symbol-laden scene in her absence. She, personifying his own anxious passion, remains a personification rather than a person. As Jerome Christensen explicitly points out, "she is herself a figure of passion and propagation" (276).Herattributes he gives us are so dominated by her grief and suffering without which there seems to be no way to identify her; she merely gives a face to an inassimilable obstacle of her passion. While the narrator attempts to represent her by a developing and exploratory description toward her, he perpetually displaces her and revolves around an inexplicable sigh or cry. Martha's body is possessed by the power of endless weeping and her cry "Oh misery! Oh misery!"What matters to himis not her grief itself, but his retelling of it and the process of translating the suffering into tale, even if the tale is only a representation of her mourning. The thorn, the pond, the mossy hill, and Martha's cry are taken up only on the basis of their value as his tale.

The narrator's tale is, however, only one of many different versions circulating around the village. Though he has only recently arrived in this"village or country town of which he was not a native" (*PW* 2: 513), and though he may be more prone to believe local superstitions, his account of Martha and his related tale are not much different from village gossip. Attempting to answer to a series of questions concerning the thorn, the pond, the hill of moss, he admits that he cannot answer them, but immediately proceeds to rely on the opinions of the other villagers (Some say[l. 216]… But all and each agree[l. 218]… Some say[l. 255]… some had sworn an oath[l. 232]). The incidents took place "some two and twenty" (l. 115) years ago and it was long before he came to the village, the narrator's taleis in concordance with the villagers'. Village gossip and recollection about Martha are dependent upon her inexplicable grief, hauntingand hovering over the village and the community. Stumbling over the enigma of her suffering, the community repeatedly returns to the site of her grief and attempts to interpret and translate its limit into another gossip. The circulation or creation of the gossip binds the community together around its limit, sustaining the communal core. In a sense Martha's suffering "exists for others" (Fosso 155). The community functions well, however, so long as the limit is veiled from the villagers. It is no wonder that some villagers, who averred that Martha should be brought to "public justice," stop their search

for the child's bone when "the beauteous hill of moss / Before their eyes began to stir" (l. 236-37). Martha's suffering cannot and should not be fully known to them, since the community is organized by her interminable mourning and sustained by its constant circulation and creation of the gossip about her. Thus, despite its unreliability, the village gossip of her suffering binds together the community experienced together by the villagers in their separation from the mystery of her suffering.

Wordsworth's community is built on mourning and loss that binds together the community experienced together by its members who constantly incorporates the loss without reduction of its enigma.In the *Essays upon Epitaphs*, Wordsworth treats the inherent communitarian value of the grave and the epitaph that binds together the living and the dead and that makes up the society's encircled core. Through the burial practice and epitaphic writing social bonds are created and individuals joined. In "The Old Cumberland Beggar,"the old beggaris a kind of ghost neither living nor dead; neither "properly" excluded nor incorporated in the community. He is constantly re-examined and re-interpreted by the villagers; observing the beggarleads them to a greater understanding of the self. Outside the community the beggar becomes a bond of compassion that binds all villagers and forges social cohesion.Martha Ray's suffering in "The Thorn" also stitches together the community that is held in the grip of voyeurs and gossips. The narrator and the villagers repeatedly circle back to the enigma of her grief. They transmit and create her tales during which they constantlyexperience their togetherness in the community.

Notes

1. William Wordsworth. "Essays Upon Epitaphs."*The Prose Works of William Wordsworth.*Ed. W. J. B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser.3 vols. New York: Oxford UP, 1974: 2: 50, which is hereafter cited as *PW*.

2. William Wordsworth. "The Old Cumberland Beggar."*The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth.*Ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. 5 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949: 5: 3-4.

3. William Wordsworth. "The Thorn."*The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth.*Ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire. 5 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949: 2: 252.

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“Of what is past, or passing, or to come”: Engaging Yeatsian Temporality in “Easter 1916”

Seongho Yoon
Department of English, Hanyang University
17 Haengdang-dong, Seongdong-gu, Seoul 133-791, Korea
E-mail: iamyam@hanyang.ac.kr

Abstract This article examines W. B. Yeats’s “Easter 1916” through an interpretative lens of Yeatsian temporality and discusses how such a lens maps the ways in which Yeats commemorates the Easter Rising by both questioning and affirming it — how to elegize the same people who had up to then been the object of his contempt and how to revise the ways in which he was making sense of contemporary Ireland. To that end, I first look into how the modernist temporality as belated reinvention of the archaic and the classical order meets up with the Yeatsian “belatedness” deeply rooted in the Irish literary tradition. I ultimately explores how the two voices, embedded within the poem in a ventriloquist fashion, both contest and complement each other and how this ventriloquism is simultaneously predicated upon the “belatedness” of Yeatsian poetics that cuts back and forth between the poet’s personal urge to make sense of the contemporary historical event and the bardic tradition that constantly returns in its engagement with the present, thereby bring into focus the poet’s self-divisive ambivalence and conflicting impulses.

Key Words Yeats; Easter 1916; temporality; commemoration; belatedness

Author Seongho Yoon, Associate Professor of English at Hanyang University in Seoul, Korea, is the author of *Writing as an Underdog: A Geography of Asian American Literature* (Seoul National University Press, 2012), winner of the English Language and Literature Association of Korea’s Prize for Distinguished Scholarship. His research interests include contemporary American literature & culture, American Studies, and Irish Studies.

1. De Mannian Modernity and Modernist Temporal Impasse

"Literature has always been essentially modern" — this provocative statement of Paul de Man haunts like a ghost his essay "Literary History and Literary Modernity," bringing into focus literature's "desire to wipe out whatever came earlier" and to possess "a true present, a point of origin that marks a new departure" (148). However, it should be taken with a grain of salt: it is not so much a statement *per se* as an *aporia* in literary studies since his assertive tone is immediately compromised by the ambiguity that permeates the essay in putting forward hypotheses and casting doubt on them. While associating literature with an "unmediated, free act that knows no past," de Man complicates such association by pointing to the "ambivalence of writing": writing is not only an "act" but also an "interpretative process" that can never coincide with the act it interprets (152-53). This temporal rupture is at the heart of de Man's critical insight, but it is insightful as long as (and because) it is always pitted against a strenuous but hopeless effort to accomplish a temporal rapport in the form of "a true present": "Modernity invests its trust in the power of the present moment as an origin, but discovers that, in severing itself from the past, it has at the same time severed itself from the present" (149).

As de Man elucidates this paradox of the (im)possibility of being modern through Baudelaire's ideas of "*représentation du présent*" and "*mémoire du présent*" that combine the repetitive with the instantaneous, such paradoxical temporality is what characterizes modernists' notion of time. In the wake of the postwar cultural crisis, modernists, devastated by spiritual hollowness and bereft of a reliable inheritance, were squarely confronted with the pressing question of how and what they were to write. Many modernists opted for escaping the confines of the world they inherited by constructing a formal replacement of that world as embodied in Joyce's Dublin, Woolf's Bloomsbury, Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha, Proust's Combray and so on. However, this imperative is immediately shadowed by the anxiety that the repressed and seemingly forgotten world always returns to gnaw at its brilliant replacement no matter how much it is repressed. It is this "return of the repressed" that results in the double bind of modernism — a compulsion to transcend the past and its concomitant treachery. While modernists has sought to enact a break with the dead past, it continues to retain its haunting power. As shown in the Faulknerian inexorable forces of tragedy of shuttling between attempting to transcend the past and being condemned to repeat it, modernist time is inextricably tied to the essential contradiction between a rejection of the past and the fated

repetition of the past already inherent in that rejection.

This double bind of modernism, always locked in the constant movement between the extremes of sheer repetition and "making it new," generates the Janus-faced temporality, which trade in the eternal and the ephemeral or the changeless and the contingent. Such duality of modernist temporality, for example, is true of T. S. Eliot's poetic practices. The pre-modern in his poetry represented by Fisher Kings and fertility cults, and the classic order in his prose are not only stealthily at work converting all that seems to be solid but never fails to melt into air (à la Karl Marx) into archetypal truths but also exemplify the modernist temporality in which modernists are seen "moving backwards into a future." In other words, modernists, casting a backward glance to the primordial while lured into an avant-garde future, are troubled by the sense of unresolvable temporal impasse and are, accordingly, coerced into questioning what "renewing" or "creativity" really means.

2. "Belatedness" in Yeatsian Poetics

Yeats and Afterwords (2014) is a recent noticeable contribution to Yeats studies. As its two editors, Marjorie Howes and Joseph Valente, explain in their introduction, it brings into sharp relief "W. B. Yeats's powerful, multilayered sense of cultural *belatedness* as part of his complex literary method" (1, emphasis mine). Structured by the divide of three tenses such as "past-pastness," "present-pastness," and "future-pastness" (8), the volume explores how Yeats engages time through the lens of the "pastness" that modifies each tense by the hyphenated temporal distance. The collection's achievement lies in its success in securing a key with which to unlock the door to understanding how revivalism plays a vital role in all of Yeats's engagement with time. If one of the knotty problems in Yeats scholarship is to bridge the gap between the two contesting chapters of his career, the so-called Celtic Twilight phase in his early career and the relatively traditional, authoritarian late period, the collection's primary argument that the Irish Revival is at the heart of Yeatsian poetics as an ever-enduring subtext for creating "a vibrant future for Ireland by resuscitating the past" (1) sheds light on the trajectory of his evolving poetic engagements:

> [T]he broad based cultural renaissance for which Yeats was a symbol, spokesman, and literary architect took up the Irish past not as a nostalgic lost origin, but as a reality that persisted, in suppressed or marginalized forms, in the ongoing Irish present and could, accordingly, provide a renovated cultural foundation on which to build the Irish future. As befits those engaged

> in a decolonizing enterprise, the revivalists tended to cherish the indigenous potential rather than the antiquity of "hidden Ireland," the contemporary urgency rather than the lost-ness of the objects they sought to recover. It is therefore at once curious and telling that, while the apparently backward glance of his own literary movement remained forward looking, Yeats eventually came to identify his literary circle with a re-"visionary company" who were of (and looked to) a bygone era. Whereas the Irish Revival instanced a kind of reverse vanguardism, its leader did not so much suffer as embrace a doubly reinforced belatedness in their name. (2)

What is telling here is that "the sense of fatal belatedness" as "Yeats's true muse" (3) constitutes a unique Yeatsian temporality that places Yeats in both Irish and modernist tradition. Irish literature bears a certain "relatedness" in the sense that one of its tendencies is to revisit a broken tradition and to rewrite the past. Occupying a liminal space where language confronts the "ineffable" such as memory of the lost origin, absence, the spectral, its temporality is fashioned in the way that the rhythms of myth, fairy tales, otherworld journeys, and the elegiac are juxtaposed with the violent interruption of the new and the disruptive. Such temporality is directly related to Yeatsian poetics that tends "*to move forward and backward simultaneously*, into a future" (*Yeats and Afterwords* 7, emphasis in original) and, by the same token, to the modernist temporality set in motion in the form of moving backwards into a future rather than moving backwards into the past or moving forwards into a future. It is precisely at this point that the modernist temporality as belated reinvention of the archaic and the classical order meets up with the Yeatsian belatedness deeply rooted in the Irish literary tradition. In what follows, I will examine with a focus on "Easter 1916" what constitutes an interpretive lens of Yeatsian temporality and how such a lens maps Yeats's poetry in ways that differs, if not crucially, from other readings of the poem.

3. Engaging Yeatsian Temporality in "Easter 1916"

One of Yeats's most well-known poems from the middle years of his career approximately in the first two decades of the twentieth century, "Easter 1916" commemorates the Easter Rising of April 24, 1916. Under the leadership of the Military Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, about 1600 members rose against the colonial rule of England to proclaim the independent Irish republic while the United Kingdom was heavily engaged in World War I. The rising lasted for six days, and the British army with vastly superior numbers and artillery

suppressed it. The British government executed 15 of the leaders in May 1916, surprisingly much earlier than was generally expected. It was so heavy-handed an action that it ironically contributed to escalating the initially unpopular rising dramatically into a national myth.

At the heart of "Easter 1916" are the mixed feelings of respect and annoyance, grief and horror. Whereas it was hard for Yeats to deny the deep impact of the rising on his outlook, he could not help feeling perturbed by both the outbreak and aftermath of the Rising. Yeats basically took the Rising to be shocking since he had difficulties understanding how those people of Catholic middle class he had so disregarded before could metamorphose themselves into martyrs reaching after a high ideal. In "Easter 1916," Yeats, as a result, was confronted with the question of how to elegize the same people who had been the object of his disrespect and how to revise the ways in which he was making sense of contemporary Ireland. In this regard, "Easter 1916" is a poem that reveals a divergence between the Ireland onto which he projected his poetic aspirations and the actual Ireland he bore witness to with his own eyes in his middle age. Such divergence engenders some lingering ambiguity that hovers over the poem and discomfits over and again anyone who seeks to arrives conclusively at a clear-cut understanding of the poem.

In the first stanza, Yeats introduces the insurgents and explains his passing acquaintance with them. The poet here does not hesitate to refer to the middle-class background of the revolutionaries, but the references to their middle class background are not necessarily cast in a negative light. He obviously does not disdain them, but he unmistakably does not show any sign of respect for them, either. His acquaintance with them is so perfunctory that it is merely characterized by "polite meaningless words" of which he later makes "a mocking tale or a gibe" in his club:

> I have passed with a nod of the head
> Or polite meaningless words,
> Or have lingered awhile and said
> Polite meaningless words,
> And thought before I had done
> Of a mocking tale or a gibe
> To please a companion
> Around the fire at the club. (*VP* 392)[1]

Nonetheless, when those ordinary citizens who have been up to then an object of

his "mocking tale" and "gibe" participate in the Rising, everything has "changed utterly": "All changed, changed utterly: / A terrible beauty is born" (*VP* 392). The oxymoronic phrase "terrible beauty" is indicative of Yeats's conflicted attitudes toward what has happened: their sacrifice for their country and people has transformed them into martyrs, and Yeats has no choice but to aestheticize, if not glorify, their sacrifice while still struggling with such a profoundly disturbing act. Yeats is thus vacillating between the two opposing poles of reaction: both drawn to and withheld from the Rising.

If such a drastic change is considered to be a sign of Yeats's approval of the self-sacrifice of them, the rebel leaders should be taken as martyrs who have been "changed utterly" through the mythic rite of blood-sacrifice and metamorphosed into visionaries with "hearts with one purpose alone." They have, in short, been redeemed from the contingencies of history and ritually inducted to the sanctuary of national martyrs to the extent that they scale almost the same heights of the mythic personages of the generations past. In this reading, "Easter 1916" is viewed as a poem that gropes its way to a rapprochement between Yeats the nationalist poet and the revolutionaries. However, apposite would be here to remember that Yeats's attitudes towards Irish nationalism, called "sanguinary nationalism" (Martin 269), have fluctuated throughout his career and he has tried to keep a critical distance from it as he matured into a visionary poet. In actuality, a lingering ambivalence in regard to the sacrifice of the martyrs is deeply embedded within "Easter 1916." If *Cathleen ni Houlihan* is Yeats's most acclaimed nationalist play commemorating the 1798 rebellion, "Easter 1916," I would like to argue, attests to the poet's complicated and mixed relationship with Irish nationalists' anticolonial struggle — straddling the fence between attachment to and detachment from the Easter rising martyrs.

In the last two stanzas, the internal distress of Yeats is aggravated as he goes back and forth between accepting the martyrs and questioning their sacrifice. The penultimate stanza is structured by the contrasting imagery of change and stillness, amplifying ambiguity of the poem: "Hearts with one purpose alone / Through summer and winter seem / Enchanted to a stone / To trouble the living stream" (*VP* 393). The very ambiguity arising from the use of the verb "seem" leads to a sense of insecurity — the poet who is appalled by violence and, at the same time, dragged into acknowledging, if not outright, that something could be achieved *only* through that violence. "Stone" is likely to be read as a symbol for immobility and "stream" for change. This static "stone" stands in stark contrast to the "stream" that stands for a dynamic and constantly changing life. By comparing the hearts of the

revolutionaries to a stone, Yeats seems to be critical of their bigotry and myopia not to be able to acclimate themselves to change. The nationalist are so bogged down by "one purpose alone" that they have become blind to the historical change. The very use of the word, "enchanted," is an intriguing allusion to how Yeats perceive their sacrifice — not necessarily "needless death" but something that lacks the profound understanding of historical contingencies. However, the same contrasting imagery of immobility and change also leads to the question of "whether their sacrifice is a part of life's flow or an impediment to it" (Castle 87-88). A stone can serve not only as a barrier to but also as a conduit for the flow of stream.

Yeats begins the final stanza by building upon the imagery of the stone from the penultimate stanza and reconsiders all the bloodshed and self-sacrifice from the outset:

> Too long a sacrifice
> Can make a stone of the heart.
> O when may it suffice?
> That's heaven's part, our part
> To murmur name upon name,
> As a mother names her child
> When sleep at last has come
> On limbs that had run wild" (VP 394).

Yeats is seen to be still perturbed by the resonances of the Rising and all he can do is just murmuring to himself. As David Lloyd suggests, his commemorating act in the form of a lullaby may be redundant because "the obsessive repetition of the child's name after it is asleep no longer serves as a lullaby, but only asserts one's own anxious continuity with it in its virtual absence" (70). The words, "wild" here and "bewildered" in the closing lines flesh out his conflicted reaction to the Rising and intensify his internal tension. Yeats concomitantly bares his lingering skepticism in the middle of the stanza by intimating that England might have granted Home Rule at the end of World War I. He finally poses an overdue question that has been delayed elaborately and intentionally:

> Was it needless death after all?
> For England may keep faith
> For all that is done and said.
> We know their dream; enough

To know they dreamed and are dead" (*VP* 394)

Yeats's uncertainty about the necessity of the Rising is epitomized by the very question, "Was it needless death after all?" and subsequently reinforced by his belief, if partial, that "England may keep faith." However, the concomitant awareness that he has to recognized the dream of the executed rebels implies that the poet does not fully disapprove their aspirations and the cause they died for. The mixed feeling of approval and disapproval thus once again insinuates itself into the poem.

Declan Kiberd's account of the fundamental skepticism and irresolution ingrained in "Easter 1916" strikes an insightful ring here:

> It enacts the quarrel within his own mind between his public, textual duty (to name and praise the warrior dead) and his more personal urge (to question the wisdom of their sacrifice). The poem speaks, correspondingly, with two voices, and sometimes enacts in single phrases ("terrible beauty") their contestation. The sanction for the first voice from bardic tradition was strong: but the force of the second was becoming more apparent to Yeats who increasingly defined freedom in terms of self-expression. He was abandoning the rather programmatic nationalism of his youth for a more personal vision of Irish identity. (213)

While concurring with Kiberd who locates the two voices at work in the poem, I would like to both build upon his insight and extend it to the discussion of how those two voices work in a ventriloquist fashion inflected by temporal divergence. To put it otherwise, when one of the voices is heard, the other, echoing in the background, still retain its resonance and puts on the slippery path the reader who has difficulty identifying which voice is being articulated. It is in this ventriloquist fashion that the two voices both contests and complement each other, and the ventriloquism is simultaneously predicated upon the "belatedness" of Yeatsian poetics that cuts back and forth between the poet's personal urge to make sense of the contemporary historical event and the bardic tradition that shapes such a personal urge and constantly returns in its engagement with the present. As a result, the poet's self-divisive ambivalence and conflicting impulses are brought to the foreground.

A ritual naming of the martyrs in the final stanza is enacted in the trance-inducing metric and repetition of a particular phrase ("A terrible beauty is born"),

generating its therapeutic effect. By building maternal imagery, Yeats scarcely hides a feeling of intimacy for the martyrs. The murmuring tone may imply the poet's on-going doubt, but it is certainly shrouded by his sense of affection for them. No matter how much he reserves his judgment, Yeats obviously closes the poem in a commemorative tone:

> I write it in a verse —
> MacDonagh and MacBride
> And Connolly and Pearse
> Now and in time to be,
> Wherever green is worn,
> Are changed, changed utterly:
> A terrible beauty is born. (VP 394)

Such a commemorative tone is, however, unusual as it is qualified by the oxymoronic phrase "terrible beauty," which means that Yeats cannot turn a deaf ear to the "terrible" aspect of the Rising while he cannot help embracing its beauty.

If the urgent task confronting Yeats in "Easter 1916" is both articulating historical contingencies and transcending them and both questioning and affirming the significance of the nationalists' sacrifice, he comes to terms with it through his split voices whose split-ness is put into motion by the "belatedness" of Yeatsian poetics. Viewed in this light, it is important to ask why the editors of *Yeats and Afterwords* compares Yeats to a Benjamin's angel of history "facing insistently backwards as he is borne ceaselessly into the future" (7). Paralyzed by a storm called "progress" that "propels him into the future to which his back is turned while the pile of debris before him grows skyward" (Benjamin 258), Benjaminian angel of history seems to be caught up in history's tangle as he is urged forward, yet incapable of disengaging himself from the past. What he incarnates are then a kind of empty time and the sense of a foreclosed future that rules out any significant change. In contrast, Yeatsian angel of history is hardly helpless to control what it sees and instead appears to want to intervene in a "now" through the belatedness conditioned by the two voices articulated in a ventriloquist fashion—the two voices contest and complement each other and such dynamics is exactly what enables Yeats to both question and affirm the nationalist sacrifice.

By the end of "Easter 1916," the past is bit by bit dragged in its incantatory rhythms and spellbound mood into the present in which the fading rhythms of a residual bardic tradition, the archaic, remnants, and revenants are juxtaposed

with the personal urgencies of "making sense of it" and "making it new." In this regard, the "now" in the last line, "A terrible beauty is born," takes on added meaning as that line is repeated several times throughout the poem as a refrain. It is a de Mannian "true present" that opens "perspectives of distance and difference within the apparent uniqueness of the instant" (de Man 157), layered not only in its contingencies but also in its implicit relations to other temporalities. It deals with not so much "what was, what is, what shall be" as "what may be and what should be" — not the tenses but the modalities inflected by wish, desire, necessity, and obligation. Thus emerges a future as a paradoxical replication of "a still unprocessed past" — "'the coming times' not just in relation to the unalterable past that has produced them, but as themselves a pastness, a lostness, located in an emergent future" (*Yeats and Afterwords* 5).[2] As such, Yeats is finally enabled to sing "of what is past, or passing, or to come" in "Easter 1916."[3]

Notes

1. All the quotations of "Easter 1916" are from *The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats* (1957). The edition will be cited hereafter as *VP* within the text.

2. Defining "complexity" and "honesty" as what truly characterizes the identity of Yeats, Richard Ellmann argues that "Easter 1916 has been castigated because it satisfied both the nationalist and the anti-nationalists, but Yeats, who had elements of both in his thought, expressed his whole position" (144). Ellmann's insight captures the Yeatsian paradox in "Easter 1916" through the lens of Yeats's "complexity" and "honesty"—articulating his complex position by both being blamed by and satisfying the nationalists and anti-nationalists. While arriving at the same conclusion that Yeats has finally succeeded in expressing "his whole positon," I have taken another path in this article to discuss how he maneuvers to circumvent the opposing demands of his contemporary Ireland with a focus on Yeatsian temporality in "Easter 1916."

3. The phrase, "of what is past, or passing, or to come" that also appears in the title of this article, comes from Yeats's poem, "Sailing to Byzantium."

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Improvisational Songs from Hearts: Traditions and Structure of Xhosa Praise Poetry

Zeng Mei
School of Foreign Languages, Shandong Jiaotong University
5001 Haitang Road, Jinan, Shandong, 250357, P. R. China
Email: zsandra@aliyun.com
Sonwabile Mnwana
Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP), University of Witswatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa
Email: sonwabile.mnwana@wits.ac.za

Abstract The Xhosa oral tradition has been persistent in the past two hundred and now is still flourishing. The Xhosa iimbongi compose praise poems at important and exciting occasions. General improvising, memorizing, the refined improvising of the imbongi and the writing form the Xhosa praise poetic traditions. Any Xhosa praise poem is composed with one of the activities. The textural features such as breath, intonation and gesture produce a division of the poem. Facing the influence of the "high culture," the Xhosa imbongi still keep their praise poem tradition and make the praise poems heard in their homeland.
Key words Xhosa praise poetry; activities and structure; Xhosa iimbongi
Author **Zeng Mei** is Professor, Vice-Dean of School of Foreign Languages of Shandong Jiaotong University, P.R. China and Vice-Chairman of Shandong Foreign Literature Academy. She is the author of *The Historical and Aesthetic Characteristics of African Epics*. She is researching on Xhosa praise poetry currently. **Sonwabile Mnwana** is Researcher of Society, Work and Development Institute of University of Witswatersrand. He is the author of *Mining and Rural Transformation in Southern Africa*. His research focuses on mining and land reform in South Africa. Meanwhile he is a collector and researcher of Xhosa praise poems.

In 1970, Ruth Finnegan published her milestone work *Oral Literature in Africa*. In her work, she pointed out, "Praise poetry, and in particular the Southern Bantu

form, is among the best-documented types of African oral poetry. Nevertheless, much remained to be studied… Though many texts have been collected, particularly from South Africa, full discussions of these are less common, and further detailed accounts are needed of specific forms in particular areas" (146).

The Xhosa in South Africa are the very people who have kept traditions of composing oral praise poetry. Xhosa-speaking people mainly live in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. The Xhosa court poet, or *imbongi (plural-iimbongi)*, is able to compose his praise poetry while performing it. The Xhosa praise poems record and show a person's qualities and deeds and they are the brief references to a person's moral and physical attributes, to his or her interpersonal relationships with others, and to his or her status in the society. Today in fact, many Xhosa speakers have also inherited the gift of their ancestors and can compose praise poems spontaneously. Dr. Mnwana, a Xhosa educator and a researcher, worked for many years as in several schools in East London of Eastern Cape Province and now a researcher in University of Witswatersrand, gave an account on how Xhosa poetry has become an integral part of extracurricular activities in many schools in the province. Dr. Mnwana described how some students in some secondary schools are able to speak out praise poems while they are performing in the ceremonies. It is a common occurrence, Dr. Mnwana averred that during school ceremonies young boys and girls will, at the very peak of the ceremony (when the dignitaries enter or when the key note speaker is about to address the congregation), jump up and eloquently and skillfully utter praises without being called upon. These young *iimbongi* are usually dressed in traditional attire, similar to the one often worn by adult *iimbongi*.

Any *imbongi* among the Xhosa people in the Eastern Cape can make praise poems on the spur of moment and literate poets may compose praise poems spontaneously or write Xhosa poems. However, more common people will memorize some famous and important poems of their clans so that they are capable to compose praise poems either on the spot or from their memory.

Four activities form the Xhosa praise poetic traditions. The most important one is general improvising. The other three activities are memorizing, the refined improvising of the imbongi and the writing. Any Xhosa poem is composed with one of the activities (Opland 5). As to the general improvising, which will be fully discussed in the paper, the common Xhosa men or women or even the teenagers in schools can be improvisers. Particularly in the countryside, where the western cultural influence is less penetrating than in the cities, it is common to see a person just stand up and improvise a praise poem on a wedding or a beer-drinking party.

In the cities, while watching football games, it is not rare to see a person stand up and improvise a praise poem. The poets are touched by the atmosphere and desire to convey his feelings through improvised poems. This kind of praise poems are improvised and spoken in a fast speed loudly, but not refined or with rhymes and to the music.

Dr. Mnwana has witnessed so many of such occasions. To a significant extent, it can be boldly said that the popularity of Xhosa poetry has remained strong. Unshaken by the winds of colonialism, unfazed by the waves of Western civilization and undaunted by the manacles of white domination, the Xhosa people in South Africa's Eastern Cape province have kept praise poetry at the centre of their culture and social life. The most common trend of preserving poetry is through its integration in schools' extracurricular programmes. Most schools, particularly rural schools encourage young poets (school girls and boys) to take part in and to develop their common innate gift of poetry. Although very few children actually display the rare gift of eloquently uttering an unprepared poem, many Xhosa children do give this a try.

It is, however, mainly through informal recreational activities that praise poetry penetrates Xhosa people from the early stages of their lives. For instance, one of the most enjoyable thrills to rural Xhosa herd boys is to watch a fight between two bulls. During mating season bulls often fight off over females (cows), which lets the boys enjoy their favorite spectacular bull fight and poetic feast. As the bulls begin to lock horns, boys will be jumping up and down, whistling, calling their bulls by names and eulogising them. It will be as if the bulls are instigated by these, and the fight will heat up immediately. In such instances, a boy is often heard praising his father's bull by saying 'Aah Dyamluthi [the name of the bull]!' Such spontaneous praising of bulls not only makes cattle herding more enjoyable to the boys but also helps boys to identify and develop their praise poetic gifts.

With the recent economic shifts and post-1994 massive urbanisation in South Africa, many Xhosa boys no longer look after cattle, but praise poetry has managed to find its way into the lives of Xhosa boys and girls. During the last quarter of 2011, Dr. Mnwana attended a huge school event: the formal opening of Byllets Combined School, one of the popular rural schools near East London. This event was well attended by dignitaries, including honourable Mr. Mahlubandile Qwase who was the MEC of Education in the Eastern Cape, and a horde of senior Department of Education officials, school principals, teachers and parents. It was at the very peak of this gracious occasion that a young poet emerged and shattered all the order and formality of the occasion into pieces. This 16-year old school

boy completely disrupted the programme just before a dignitary could speak, and he ran to the stage, grabbed the microphone and started to praise, eloquently and boldly. Suddenly, in a moment the quiet, orderly congregation busted into whistles, ululation and shouts. The atmosphere was never the same again in that occasion. The young poet had broken the ice. It was as if a great manacle of apprehension on speakers and boredom on listeners had been broken.

The role of imbongi goes far beyond entertaining and praising kings, chiefs, heroes, and other Xhosa notables. Even the word "praise" does not accurately describe what the Xhosa poet does when he or she performs. Indeed, long before Xhosa praise poetry could be written down and published iimbongi held a very prominent position in Xhosa society and culture. Historically, poets were highly venerated and referred as *iimbongi zenkundla* or *iimbongi zomthonyama* (the poets of the kraal). Although they were always found in the company of kings, chiefs, and other dignitaries, the role of *iimbongi* did not end merely in praising these dignitaries during "tribal" meetings and other important gatherings. Perhaps, the enormous respect that *iimbongi* enjoyed stemmed out of their strong character, fearlessness and outspokenness. Iimbongi were able to speak out openly and eloquently about anything including evil deeds by some feared individuals or groups in the society that would normally be concealed out of fear of the perpetrators. Owing to their vast knowledge of the history, culture and politics of the nation *iimbongi zomthonyama* were able to warn the nation in times of danger. SEK Mqhayi, one of South Africa's most illustrious Xhosa praise poets whose poems were among the earliest to be recorded in writing was a typical example of a fully fledge *imbongi yomthonyama*. A "praise singer" to Chief Ndlambe, Mqhayi went far beyond praising the chief. Due to his amazing knowledge and foresight he also took upon himself the duty of warning the Xhosa nation openly in some of his praise poems (izibongo) when he deemed necessary. Even in times of distress to the nation, Mqhayi, who had also assumed a status of "the poet of the nation" (imbongi yesizwe) would use his superb oratory skills to console the nation. A good example is the poem that Mqhayi dedicated to the nation after the tragic incident of the sinking of SS Mendi. The latter was a British-African steam passenger-ship carrying African members of the 5th Battalion of the South African Native Labour Contingent during the First World War. Mendi sank in the heavy fog, near the Isle of Wight on February 21, 1917 after it collided with the SS Darro (another ship). This war vessel (Mendi) was carrying more than 800 men on board, mostly isiXhosa speakers from the Eastern Cape and more than 600 lives were lost. It is a notable attempt to console the nation through his epic poem "Ukutshona

Kukamendi" (*The Sinking of Mendi*), Mqhayi said:

> Ewe, le nto kakde yinto yaloo nto.
> Thina, nto zaziyo, asothukanga nto;
> Sibona kamhlope, sithi bekumelwe,
> Sitheth'engqondweni, sithi kufanelwe;
> Xa bekungenjalo bekungayi kulunga.
> Ngoko ke, Sotase! Kwaqal'ukulunga!
> Le nqanaw', umendi, namhla yendisile,
> Na'igazi lethu lisikhonzisile! (Mqhayi 22-23)
>
> Yes, this thing flows as a normal thing from that.
> The thing we know is not scared of that;
> We say, things have happened as they should have,
> Within our brains we say: it should have been so;
> If it hadn't been so, nothing would have come right.
> You see Sotase, things came right when the Mendi sank!
> Our blood on that ship turned things around,
> It served to make us known through the world!
> (Translation by R Kavanagh and ZS Qangule)

As we have already hinted, Xhosa praise poets have a crucial role to keep the nation inform and to use their oratory skills to warn the people. Again we shall use one of Mqhayi's praise poems to demonstrate this role. In 1925 the British colonial administration in South Africa asked Mqhayi to welcome the Prince of Wales with a praise poem during his visit (Nxasana 47). With amazing eloquence and skillful use of words, Mqhayi presented what would appear to be praising at a shallow glance, but the deeper meaning of some of the words used in this praise poem pointed to the contrary. For instance, in the second stanza of his welcoming "praise" poem Mqhayi says to the Prince:

> Phumani nonke, nize kufanekisa! [Come out all of you, and let's observe properly and identify him!]
> Phumani, zizwe nonke, nize kufanekisa![Come out oh, nations and let us identify him!]
> Sisilo sini n' esi singaziwayo? [What creature is this that no one knows anything about?]

Singajongekiyo, singaqhelekiyo? [So difficult to look at, so hard to get used to?]
Yaz' ithi kanti yile nabulele; [It may be a nabulele - a huge mystical monster]
Isilokaz' esikhulu seziziba; [The huge monster that lives in the dark, deep waters]
Yaz' ithi kanti ngulo Makhanda-mahlanu, — [This could be Makhanda-mahlanu — the beast with five heads]
Inyok'enkul'eza ngezivuthevuthe; [A mighty snake that brings the stroms]
Yaz'ithi kanti ngulo Gilikankqo, — [This could be Gilikankgo — the nameless one]
Isil'esikhul' esingaziwa mngxuma. [The great monster that cannot be known by any lair — hole].

This definitely is not a praise to the Prince. Through the extended metaphor he portrays the Prince or perhaps even the British Empire as a fearful, powerful monster that the Africans have to watch out for. Such words carry a warning to the nation and are not a praise to the Prince. Ostensibly, due to political tensions and lack of freedom of speech during Mqhayi's era, he was unable to openly voice out his dissatisfaction with the British control over South Africa. However, he eloquently and skillfully employs figurative language in the above-mentioned poem to warn, particularly Africans, against the less understood "British Monster."

The second activity that forms Xhosa praise poetry is memorizing. Quite many Xhosa people have memorized some poems by heart. When they express their gratefulness or feel proud of somebody, they just open their mouths and recite praise poems without any change or a very little change. The Xhosa boys in the countryside may gather together to practice improvising praise poems. The Xhosa men may recite the praise poems of their clans while dancing and singing during cultural ceremonies. In the small town of Ngqamakwe in the Eastern Cape, where Dr. Mnwana's home-village is located, such people form the majority of the performers.

As to the refined improvising of the imbongi, which is the third activity that forms Xhosa praise poetry, the imbongi may memorize some izibongo, that is, the historical poems, the praise poems of clans, the poems of individuals as well as the improvisational praise poems produced by other imbongii. Now in South Africa, it is traditional for Xhosa praise poets to produce spontaneous poems in praise of

dignitaries.

The imbongi used to be the private performer and a herald announcing the arrival of an important person. The imbongi was also the person who could criticize the chief and in fact the chief paid much attention to the imbongi's criticism and improved his rule according to this as it was the voice from the people. In recent decades, most iimbongi are educated men. Their professions can be much diverse, from teachers to laborers. Although many Xhosa young people have now migrated to big cities such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, and East London, the majority of them still have strong connections with the countryside and most still submit to the rule of chiefs (now called traditional leaders) and poetry is still an integral part of their lives. So the iimbongi have to find chances to perform either for the chiefs who visit the cities or on some other occasions. However, when the iimbongi perform, they still wear the traditional garb of animal skins and still announce the arrival of a certain chief when he gets off a car. Many iimbongi, such as Manisi, Burns-Ncamashe, Msila, Mabunu, all have written and published their poems either in the traditional or modern way.

The last activity that forms Xhosa praise poetry is writing. The writers of Xhosa praise poems, many iimbongi write poems either with Xhosa or European structure. Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi is a great Xhosa praise poet and wrote with European structure. As the first Xhosa praise poet to write and publish his poems, he bridged the gap between an imbongi and a poet writer. Mqhayi is regarded as the "Imbongi yesizwe jikelele" (imbongi of the whole country). Manisi and Burns-Ncamashe have had their collection of praise poems published and some writes published their praise poems in the articles or newspapers. Many more written Xhosa praise poems remain to be published.

The Structure of Xhosa Praise Poetry

Praise poetry can be found Africa, Middle East, Polynesia, Asia and in early Western Europe. According to Opland, "praise poems are essentially exercises in individuation encapsulating in a concatenation of discrete nominal references the distinctiveness of a person, comprising often elliptical allusions to lineage, physical and moral characteristics, and actions in the subject's public career" (1997: 85). And Finnegan defines praise poetry as "the type for court poetry and is one of the most developed and elaborate poetic genre in Africa" (1970:111).

Xhosa, Shona, Sotho, Zulu and Yoruba are especially known for their praise poetry. The core of Xhosa praise poems is irreducibly names. A Xhosa name may convey some physical personality or peculiarity of a person. A Xhosa person

may be referred to by one of his or her many different names, which were given by parents, relatives, associates or oneself. These names can refer to a person's moral or physical qualities, or an event which he or she took part in. These names may be extended into parts of an izibongo. Xhosa personal praise names form part of the praise names about men, women, children, ancestors, clans, chiefs etc. The praise poems of a clan are a sequence of the praise names. Thus, Xhosa names form the core of clan praises, chief praises and personal praises of common people. The following poem by one of prominent Xhosa poets of our times, Zolani Mkiva demonstrates this. During the historical event of the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as the first president of democratic rule in South Africa on May 10, 1994, Zolani Mkiva displayed robust knowledge of Mandela's clan names, history and other biographic details as he praised this leader with an exhilarating poem titled "Ntengu-ntengu macetyana." Mkiva skillfully traces Mandela's clan and lineage as follows:

> Yinquleqhu ukubekwa kukaMandela,
> Iqadi lika Jongintaba ka Bhagrayi ka Nkonka, unyana ka Nosekeni.
>
> [It's a great assignment to inaugurate Mandela, of the house of Jongintaba, of Bhagrayi of Nkonka, the son of Nosekeni[1]]

This extract alone displays that this imbongi (Mkiva) has far more than average knowledge of President Mandela's lineage.

Clan names of the chiefs or other dignitaries who are being praised are also quite important. For instance, most poets who praise former President Nelson Mandela often recite his clan names like Madiba, Ngqolomsila, Yem-Yem, Sophitsho etc. Dr. Mnwana's clan names are Nkwali, Bhukula, Lusu, Mkhwanase etc.

All Xhosa praise poets tend to employ in their performance the stylistic tropes of anaphora and anadiplosis. They adopt a strained mode of articulation, with rising intonation at the start of a line and a tendency to drift down to the end of the line with a length of the penultimate syllable. They perform on public occasions of significance before traditional gatherings. The following are the characteristics of the structure of Xhosa praise poetry.

Firstly, a Xhosa praise poem typically starts with a few lines as an introduction. The openings are served as calls for attention while the poet gathers for what follows. A Xhosa praise poet would begin with "Iziizwee! Iziizwee!"

Secondly, a Xhosa praise poem always refers to the physical appearances of their subjects. References to physical attributes tend to be formulatic.

Thirdly, when the Xhosa imbongi composes his poems in performance, there is a correlation between breath groups and line demarcations. The pattern of breath groups is significant. The poet will take a breath at the very beginning. For instance, he will breathe before he says, Kuyavakala! [We have heard!]...[breath] Kuyavakala Thole Lesilo[2]! [We have heard from you Offspring of the Great BeasFourthly, rising intonations are mostly used at the start of some of the lines. The first five lines, for example, all commence on a rising pitch. Rising intonation may appear in the middle of the lines.

The fourth characteristic is the gesture, Xhosa poets usually wear a clock and hat of animal skins and carry two spears or sticks. They often walk around among the audience.

From the above analysis, we have known that four activities form the Xhosa praise poetic traditions, which are general improvising, memorizing, the refined improvising of the imbongi and the writing. Any Xhosa praise poem is composed with one of the activities. As to the textural features such as breath, intonation and gesture produce a division of the poem. Before Line —, the poet takes breaths at the start/middle, but after Line —, he breathes at the end of line. The poet takes his sticks/spears/something else in his right/left hand. The content of the praise poem indicates a transition in the certain part of the poem.

The Xhosa oral tradition has been persistent in the past two hundred and now is still flourishing. The Xhosa iimbongi were invited to recite praise poems at the inauguration of President Mandela in 1994 and at the welcoming ceremony of the Queen and the Pope to South Africa. Facing the influence of the "high culture," the Xhosa imbongi have never given in and now still make their voice heard in their homeland.

Notes

1. Nosekeni is the name of President Mandela's Mother.

2. Kuyavakala! Kuyavakala Thole Lesilo! These are the usual opening words when *imbongi* is about to praise the chief after the latter has uttered some wise words to the people.

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Poetry as Education: Moral Attitude in Milton's and Shelley's Religious Poems

Cao Shanke
School of Foreign Languages, Hangzhou Normal University
58 Haishu Road, Cangqian Street, Yuhang, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China
Email: caoshanke59@163.com

Abstract There are moral principles (or rules or standards) that are applicable to all people in all ages and areas, regardless of the diversity of their cultures. All literary forms or expressions, such as poetry, must be in accordance with the moral principles in that age and of that country, that is to say, both poets and their works must follow the development of that particular political ideology and social moral principles; if not, they will be driven away from the society. The religious poems, such as *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained* and *Prometheus Unbound*, etc., illustrate for us some ascetic life, which usually put the protagonists into a dreamy status or virtual reality. The dreams or virtual reality experiences that appear in the ascetics' meditation is just like the psychoactive drug, which can make the ascetics addict themselves to the factitious pleasures. The decline of morality, particularly in the modern society, has made readers turn to religious poems, in which awesome feelings will be aroused. They believe that apart from the man-made law, the divine-made law also can be the most important moral source. They are morally educated through the God-given love and human duty in some religious poems, from which they may find their soul and spirit in a pre-destined permanent solace and beauty.
Key words poetry as education; moral attitude; Milton and Shelley's poems; soul and spirit
Author **Cao Shanke**, Ph. D., is professor at the college of Foreign Languages, Hangzhou Normal University. His research area is foreign literature.

A form of life also has a moral order and, in the kind of cultures we frequent, there may be a multiplicity of interacting, overlapping and complementary moral orders. Literary works involve many different forms of life, therefore, they must deal with all kinds of moral problems. Moral principles provide the confirmatory

standards for our moral judgments, and any defensible moral judgment must be supported by a sound moral principle. The word *moral* or *morality* has a lot to do with religion. Any religion provides its believers with a world view, part of which involves certain moral instructions, values, and commitments. Let's take Christian tradition for example, it offers a view that humans are unique products of a divine intervention that has endowed them with consciousness and an ability to love. On one hand, we are finite, bound to earth, and capable of sin. On the other, we can transcend nature and realize infinite possibility.

Primarily because of the influence of Christianity, many westerners and others regard themselves as beings with a supernatural or immortal destiny, possessing a life after death. The purpose people have found in their life is to serve and love God. For Christians, the way to serve and love God is by emulating the life of Jesus, in whom they may find an expression of the highest virtue — love. They love when they perform selfless acts, develop a keen social conscience, and realize that human beings are creatures of God and therefore intrinsically worthwhile.

Religion involves not only a formal system of worship but prescription for social relationships. To do something good for others and to consider what is the best for others are the representatives of humankind's highest moral ideals and can be found in essence in all the great religions of the world. Although the law refuses to accept the idea that morality is based on the commands of God, many people believe that morality must be based on religion, either in the sense that without religion people would have no incentive to be moral or in the sense that only religion can provide us guidance. The religious world is but the reflex of the real world, which can, in any case, only then finally vanish when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellowmen and to nature. Karl Marx held this point of view (Mark 81), but the problem is that Marx's idea about religion and morality is some imagined ideal in a perfect society. As a matter of fact, the practical relations of everyday life offer man no perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations regarding his fellowman and nature. Since religion still plays a rather important role in human life, morality is certainly concerned with it. Anyone who fails to follow morality based on religion may have a phobic disorder, that is, in which he or she has an irrational, overwhelming, persistent fear of a particular object or situation.

There is more to living a morally good life, of course, than being good at your job. Many different ways of living our lives would meet our basic moral obligations. The type of life each of us seeks to live reflects our individual values, while the type of life each of the heroes seeks to live in the religious poems not

only reflects their individual values but also decides their individual values. No matter how people exist in the practical world or how the heroes exist in religious poetry, they tend to live a moral life for the purpose of showing their individual values through obtaining a sweet and virtuous soul, because

> Only a sweet and virtual soul,
> Like seasoned timber, never gives;
> But though the whole world turn to coal,
> Then chiefly lives. (Herber 1377)

I. Asceticism and Morality

> … in the Mount
> Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank,
> And forty days Eliah without food
> Wandred this barren waste, the same I now:
> — *Paradise Regained*, B. I. L37

When discussing *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* in his book *Authors in Their Age: Milton*, Esmor Jones points out that the fall of angels is ascribed to pride. They had turned from the worship of God to the worship of themselves (Jones 78). In order to prove his view, he cited a statement from an Elizabethan theologian Hooker on this point:

> The fall of the angels, therefore, was pride. Since their fall, their practices have been the clean contrary to those just mentioned. For, being dispersed, some in the air, some in the earth, some in the water, some among the minerals, dens and caves that are under the earth; they have by all means laboured to effect a universal rebellion against the laws, and as far as in them lieth utter destruction of the ways of God. These wicked spirits the heathen honored instead of Gods, both generally under the name of dii inferi "gods infernal," and particularly, some in oracles, some in idols, some as household gods, some as nymphs; in a word, no foul or wicked spirit which was not one way or other honored of men as god, till such time as light appeared in the world, and dissolved the works of the devil.

If Esmor Jones is correct, he only revealed one aspect of *Paradise Lost* and

Paradise Regained, more accurately, one of the aspects of *Paradise Lost*, and he ignored the most important fact: the asceticism hidden in these two poems. The word *asceticism,* originated from the Greek askusis, originally means "a course of self-discipline" such as that undertaken by athletes, and later was associated with rigorous self-discipline, abstinence, simplicity and the solitary and contemplative life popular in ancient society, early Christianity, and some forms of Buddhism and Hinduism. Some ascetics also follow exercises that consist in many means of tormenting themselves. Philosophically speaking, asceticism proposes that a person should repress desires. A strong version requires one to relinquish one's desires totally, while a weaker version demands only that one denies bodily or worldly desires. From a moral point of view, asceticism is seen as the way to free one's soul from the body's pollution, therefore, it is considered to be the way to gain truth or virtue and to be rewarded by God (Bunnin 81). Since the fall of angels is ascribed to pride (as Esmor Jones said), there must be a control over the pride in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, that is, the active propaganda of asceticism. When the man was created, God set up some obstacle, the tree of knowledge, to prevent human pride from developing:

> …He who requires
> From us no other service than to keep
> This one, this easy charge — of all the tress
> In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
> So various, not to taste that only Tree
> Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of life;
> So near grow Death to Life, whate'er Death is —
> Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
> God hath pronounced it Death to taste that Tree:
> The only sign of our obedience left
> Among so many signs of power and rule
> Conferred upon us, and dominion given
> Over all other creatures that possess
> Earth, Air, and Sea. Then let us not think hard
> One easy prohibition, who enjoy
> Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
> Unlimited of manifold delights;
> But let us ever praise him, and extol
> His bounty, following our delightful task,

To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers;
Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee sweet. (Lu 170)

Needless to say, the obstacle (the tree of knowledge) is predestined by God to prevent human beings from developing their pride, because it is the whole society then that needs a predestined obstacle to control people's ideology. As we know the age of Milton was a revolutionary one in which people sought freedom through religious reform. Take Calvinism for example. For Calvin the entire universe is utterly dependent on the will of the Almighty who created all things for His greater glory. Because of the original fall from grace, all human beings are sinners by nature, bound hand and foot to an evil inheritance they cannot escape. Nevertheless, the Lord for reasons of His own has predestined some for eternal salvation and dammed all the rest to the torments of hell. Nothing that human beings do can alter their fate; their souls are stamped with God's blessing or curse before they are born. But this does not mean, in Calvin's opinion, that Christians should be indifferent to their conduct on earth. If they are among the elect, God will implant in them the desire to live right. Upright conduct is a sign, though not an infallible one, that whoever practices it has been chosen to sit at the throne of glory. Public profession of faith and participation in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper are also presumptive signs of election to be saved. But most of all, Calvin required an active life of piety and morality as a solemn obligation resting upon members of the Christian commonwealth. For him, good Christians should conceive of themselves as chosen instruments of God with a mission to help in the fulfillment of His purposes on earth, not striving for their soul's salvation but for the glory of God. In other words, Calvin clearly did not encourage his followers to sit with folded hands, serene in the knowledge that their fate was sealed (Lerner 471-72). These creeds of Calvinism really enraged Milton then. When he mentioned the creeds of Calvinism, he said: "Nothing can force me to respect the God of this kind, even though I may be sent into hell thereby (Weber 82)." Although we do not know if Milton was really angry about the creeds of Calvinism, he did not mean to hate them in his *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. Obviously, there was a very sharp contradiction between Milton's view of Calvinism and what was described in his epic. On one hand, he pursued human freedom, on the other, as a puritan, he propagated ascetic ideas in his religious poems. We can find many examples of this kind from his *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, and the following is one of them:

Full forty days he passed — whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak
Or cedar to defend him from the dew,
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,
Till those days ended; hungered then at last
Among wild beasts. (*Paradise Regained I*, L303-09)
……
There he slept,
And dreamed, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.
Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn —
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought;
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and there he slept
Under a juniper — then how, awaked,
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second tie after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked. (Lu 82)

Here is a typical story about the ascetic activities of Jesus Christ. In order to do "Musing and much revolving in his breast / How best the mighty work he might begin / Of Saviour to mankind" (*Paradise Regained I*, Line24-25), he was led by the Spirit to walk into a wild desert, surrounded with rocks and far from the tracks of men. Through his ascetic activity, he wanted to be enlightened and to find out

some ultimate truth. Apparently simple and hard lives are usually regarded as ascetic activities, but behind which there is a factitiously concrete and living reality, which is obtained through the ascetics' meditation. Thus ascetic activities are not to give men a representation of the physical world but an imagined world full of dreams with which the individuals represent to themselves the world of which they are virtual members. In the above-mentioned lines of *Paradise Regained*, Jesus Christ was actually living in a virtual reality when he awoke he found it was only a dream. The dream or virtual reality that appears in the ascetics' meditation is just like a psychoactive drug, which can make the ascetics addict themselves to the factitious pleasures.

Why do I compare the dream or virtual reality in ascetic activities through meditation to a psychoactive drug? Because I think there is a striking feature both of them share, that is, both of them act on the nervous system to alter the ascetics' state of consciousness, modify their perceptions, and change their moods. From very early time on, when our ancient ancestors sat entranced around a communal fire, they began to search for some methods for producing pleasurable sensations and alter their states of consciousness. Among the methods that can alter consciousness are taking psychoactive drugs, such as alcohol, opiates, etc, and practicing meditation. Human beings are attracted to psychoactive methods because they can help them adapt to or escape from an ever-changing environment. Smoking, drinking, and taking drugs can reduce tension and frustration, relieve boredom and fatigue, and in some cases help people to escape from the harsh realities of the world. Psychoactive drugs provide them with pleasure by giving them tranquility, joy, relaxation, kaleidoscopic perceptions, surges of exhilaration, and prolonged heightened sensations.

Meditation is very common deep thought about spiritual matters usually in a very quiet situation, without being interrupted by any secular troubles. Only in this way, could Jesus Christ's mind become as transparent as a piece of glass, through which he saw meats and drinks, he saw "his supper on the coals prepared." There were no meats and drinks, and there was no supper prepared on the coals, of course, just a mirage — an illusion caused by some kind of purely imaginative daydreams.

The simplest and most convincing way of knowing the existence of anything would presumably be to meet it in experience. When the ascetic meets the existence of something or so-called mirage in an ecstatic state through meditation, he has actually the mystical experience. The ultimate purpose of meditation of any ascetic is to awaken him to know the existence of God. Then, is there really a way of knowing the existence of God that is like this way of knowing the existence of the

tre — equally immediate and indubitable? Of course God is not a physical object, and therefore is not to be sensed. Yet there may be another kind of experience, different from sense-experience in some way but like it in others, in which God is confronted directly, the way the tree seems to be confronted in vision. In such an experience, His existence and His nature, to some extent, would appear to the ascetics as clearly, as convincingly, as compellingly as the tree appears in daylight to the eye. This kind of way the ascetic come to have a direct experience of God in a meditative state is actually a mystical experience. If this experience is manifesting a radical difference from the experiences of daily life, it must be very hard for ascetics to have it. The purpose of it is to be an immediate acquaintance with some fundamental aspect of the nature of things lying beyond the natural world; it usually carries with it great emotional force and the power to transform the life of the experiencer. Jesus Christ seemed to get acquainted with some truth lying beyond the natural world: a feeling that there is a friendly power in nature, or an unseen spirit who is aware of him and concerned for him. In his most intense and compelling form of mystical experience, Christ found an overwhelming consciousness of communion with God, accompanied by visual imaginary and by sounds of superhuman speech. Then the consciousness of God becomes a transport of ecstasy, a feeling of utter oneness with the divine, of blessedness and more than natural aliveness. Christ was conscious of God, when he was in the wild desert, so he was in a great ecstasy, and he could survive the forty-day fasting. This story seems to be the reproduction of the ascetic life Milton lived when he wrote the epic:

> When I consider how my light is spent
> Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
> And that one talent which is death to hide
> Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
>
> To serve therewith my Maker, and present
> My true account, lest He, returning, chide,
> "Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
> I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
>
> That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
> Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state

Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait. (Lu 82)

The poem shows us what an ascetic life Milton lived, and at the same time, it has raised a question for us: what is the significance of life? The answer to this question could also further explain the ascetic life of Jesus Christ. Reflections on the case of asceticism presented in the previous lines of the poem lead us to make clear what is the meaning of life. If we can mold our lives into a pattern whose instantiation we can regard as having intrinsic value, then we can have respect for ourselves as the partial embodiment of something worthwhile. Many people try to find such aims and fail. This is the predicament of the people, portrayed so perceptively by T. S. Eliot in *The Waste Land*. Of course, in our actual life, there are people who never bother to formulate some aims in their lives. They may live by a vague principle of minimal coherence. We cannot say that such persons must fail to live in a morally acceptable way, or they must fail to live happy lives. We do not encourage people to give up this way, even though we do not think it is a well-lived life. As far as we know, there are three features of a well-lived life that are more likely to be realized by some one with living aims than by some one lacking such. One of these is "the retaining of interest" in things. For instance, we talk of people having retained interest or losing interest: having the will to live, or having lost that will. If one's interest fits into a general pattern, the interest is less likely to be lost. Another such feature is hope. If one has living aims in life, and thinks that one's life leads up to something, then one can entertain hope even under adverse circumstances in which the prospects of doing well appear dim. Without living aims such hope is more difficult to sustain. Finally, an over-all conception of what is worthwhile in a human life enables us to find acceptance of conditions beyond our control (e.g. aging, death) without lapsing into phlegmatic inactivity that prevents us from working towards changing what is not inevitable (Moravcsik 68). These three features of well-lived life are the essential factors that decide the mystical life of the ascetics. Milton himself was the very person to retain the interest in things, to entertain hopes even under adverse circumstances, to accept the conditions beyond his control. In 1663, Milton, in blindness, poverty, defeat, and relative isolation, set about completing *Paradise Lost*, "justifying the ways of God to men," which he had first envisaged many years before, and he got it published in 1667. It was recognized at once as a supreme epic achievement, despite the many difficulties

that it presented, despite its unfamiliar meter (blank verse was rare outside drama), despite the unpopularity of its attitudes and Milton's reputation as a dangerous man (Abram 1435). What is the dynamic power that drove him to insist on finishing his writing? Aims! In the poem on his blindness, he said: "my soul more bent / To serve therewith my Maker," and in another poem entitled *To C*yriack Skinner, Upon His Blindness, he wrote: "yet I argue not / Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot / Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer / Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask? / The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied / in liberty's defense, my noble task, / Of which all Europe rings from side to side" (Lu 84). Obviously, Milton had a very clear aim when he wrote *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, that is, to work for God and to defend liberty, the noble task. It was just because of his clear living aim that he still had the will to live on even when he was blind, that he was full of hope that could lead up to something even when he was in a terrible situation, that he was brave enough to accept the conditions beyond his control (his blind eyes) and lived an ascetic-like life.

Like Milton, Jesus Christ had a very clear aim predestined by God in his life: But first I mean / To exercise him in the Wilderness; / There he shall first lay down the rudiments / Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth / To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes (*Paradise Regained I*, Line:155-59). This predestined aim has explained the ascetic spirit of Jesus Christ in *Paradise Regained*, which is closely associated with the requirement of early capitalism in Britain. Max Weber, the great German sociologist, noticing that the economically advanced territories of England, Holland, and North America had all been Protestant, argued that Protestantism, particularly in its Calvinist forms, was especially conducive to acquisitive economic enterprise. According to him, this was because Calvinistic theology, as opposed to Catholicism, sanctified the ventures of profit-oriented traders and moneylenders, and gave an exalted place in its ethical system to the business virtues of thrift and diligence (Lerner 476). The predestined aim exists not only in *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, but also in *Prometheus Unbound*:

> Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,
> And moments aye divided by keen pangs
> Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,
> Scorn and despair,— these are mine empire.
> More glorious far than that which thou surveyest
> From thine unenvied throne, O, Might God!
> Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame

Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
Insect, or beast, or shape, or sound of life.
Ah me! Alas, pain, pain ever, for ever! (Shelley 120)
……
I would fain
Be what it is my destiny to be,
The saviour and the strength of suffering man,
Or sink into the original gulf of things:
There is no agony, and no solace left;
Earth can console, Heaven can torment no more. (Shelley 128)

Prometheus was one of the Titans, a gigantic race, who inhabited the earth before the creation of man. With the aid of Minerva, he went up to heaven, and lighted his torch at the chariot of the sun and brought down fire to man. With this gift man was more than a match for all other animals. It enabled him to make weapons wherewith to subdue them; tools with which to cultivate the earth; to warm his dwelling, so as to be comparatively independent of climate; and finally to introduce the arts and to coin money, the means of trade and commerce. Therefore, Prometheus has been a favorite subject with the poets. He is represented as the friend of mankind, who interposed in their behalf, and who taught them civilization and arts. Jupiter had him chained to a rock on Mount Caucasus, where a vulture preyed on his liver, which was renewed as fast as it was devoured. This state of torment might have been brought to an end at any time by Prometheus, if he had been willing to submit to his oppressor; for he possessed a secret which involved the stability of Jove's throne, and if he would have revealed it, he might have been at once taken into favor. From the above lines of *Prometheus Unbound*, we know that Prometheus would rather be chained to a rock for three thousand years than submit to his oppressor. Why could he endure such a miserable torment, or why must he live such an ascetic life? Aims! With the aim to set the suffering human beings free from the miserable world, and with the aim to realize his ideal society in which "*There is no agony, and no solace left*," he would rather suffer for human beings, as if in this way he could bring human beings back to the Golden age. I cannot make comments on Prometheus this way without any reason. Milton once envisaged, in one of his early poems entitled *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, such a golden age:

XIV
For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back and fetch the age of Gold;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die;
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell it self will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

XV
Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace-hall. (Lu 13)

Here, we can still find the aim of the ascetic spirit of Jesus Christ, that is, to find out the ultimate truth for the moral standard through the ascetic way of life.

II. Sin and the Wrestling against It

For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered
The high Injunction not to taste that Fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurred, what could they less, the penalty,
And manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
— *Paradise Lost*, B.X. L12

Why does there exist an ascetic life of the protagonists, as discussed, in the religious poems mentioned above? It is because of sin. All the Christians who try an ascetic life are actually fighting against sin.

Theologically, sin is taken to mean rebellion against God or to mean the

severe wrongdoing or faults in moral character due to disobedience of a Divine command or a violation of natural law. A person's sense of sin is one paradigm of religious experience. According to the *New Testament*, all men are sinful, because we inherited original sin from Adam and Eve, the common father of humankind. Christians believe that the death of Jesus was a sacrifice for human sins. A person after death will be sent to hell if judged by God to be an unrepentant sinner. In a loose sense, sin is synonymous with evil, but strictly speaking, sin is an evil committed towards God, rather than other persons. Only God may be asked to pardon sins. On some interpretations, sin results from our following of our sensory nature against our rational nature. It is committed when we do not do the good we know that God requires of us (Bunnin 930).

When sin is taken to mean rebellion against God, it seems to indicate that an individual and his God deal with each other so directly as to shut out relations of the individual with other individuals, but usually the relationship between an individual and God is taken to involve the relationship between the individual and his fellow men. As we know, individuals are not isolated individuals, but the social individuals, that is, they are the most important and decisive elements of the society. While society exists as an objective fact above and apart from us, it is also a social construction — created, reaffirmed, and altered through the day-to-day interactions of the very people it influences and controls. The interplay between personal and social forces is the defining feature of everyday life. The effect of social structure on our personal actions is often felt when we are compelled to obey the commands of someone who has authority over us, but the authority no bigger than that of God.

However widely or narrowly one's social relations and responsibilities may be interpreted as entering into one's relation with God and thereby affect the range of ideology, the consciousness of sin is felt. The test for sin is ultimately whether or not one has rebelled against God or one has committed the severe wrongdoing or has faults in moral character due to disobedience of a Divine command or a violation of natural law. Socially, morally and psychologically there are five types of sins.

Sin as a Particular Fact

In our daily range of ethical interpretation, it is more likely for a person to interpret sin with reference to particular facts in his experience, rather than with reference to great drifts in his conduct. This is especially noticeable in the lives of children, but it is common in many persons of mature years and limited experience and outlook. For example, a child is often instructed that to take an apple from a

fruit-stand without paying for it is wrong and will be displeasing to God. Once that idea is firmly implanted, to take an apple from any fruit-stand anywhere will be felt to be wrong and displeasing to God; that is, it will be felt to be a sin. Similarly the child can be instructed and made to feel that to take something that belongs to a schoolmate is wrong, or that to pluck a flower without permission from the neighbor's yard is wrong. Although his experience is too limited to grasp immediately the significance of the moral law that to take anything that belongs to somebody else without paying for it or being given permission to take it, is wrong and sinful, he will grow into the appreciation of such a law inductively as he gradually accumulates enough experiences of particular things that are wrong to do so. In religious poems, the poets provide readers with many experiences of particular things so that they can make readers grow into the appreciation of moral laws quickly:

> But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st
> The only righteous in a world perverse,
> And therefore hated, therefore so beset
> With foes, for daring single to be just,
> And utter odious truth, that God would come
> To judge them with his Saint — him the Most High, (*Paradise Lost*, Book XI, L700-06)
> ……
> The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;
> All now was turned to jollity and game,
> To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
> Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
> Rape or adultery, where passing fair
> Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils. (*Paradise Lost*, Book XI, L713-18)
> ……
> The floating vessel swum
> Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
> Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
> Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
> Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,
> Sea without shore: and in their palaces,
> Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped

> And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,
> All left in one small bottom swum embarked. (*Paradise Lost*, Book XI, L745-53)

These are some descriptions of the experiences of typically particular things that are wrong to do. We might say that, in our first attempts at these lines of verse, we tried to formalize what they indicate, that is to say, we can find some truth from these lines of verse just like the case in which a child can find a moral law inductively from an apple and a flower. In trying to analyze these lines of verses as a particular thing, it reminds me of the seven deadly sins listed in medieval philosophy and theology as pride, covetousness, envy, gluttony, anger, sloth, and lust. These seven deadly sins have shown themselves as the permanence of some sinful patterns of spatial organization which the history of ideas and myths allow us to call the reference moral standards, against which the common moral laws have been formed into people's mind. The critical impact of the reference moral standards is not the fact of the model itself, but the difference between the model and reality; these differences being exhibited by the moral pictures. But this critical impact, which is a latent characteristic of all moralities, is not separated from the dominant systems of ideas and values: it expresses itself through the structures and the vocabulary of those systems by which readers can come to understand the real conditions of their existence. Against the reference moral standards, the existence of the these kinds of terribly perverse behaviors such as "All now was turned to jollity and game, / To luxury and riot, feast and dance, / Marrying or prostituting, as befell, / Rape or adultery, where passing fair / Allured them" is powerful enough to make people sinful, and God angry. Therefore He starts a flood to eliminate the immoral people as some severe punishment. It is this necessity of the particular description of *Paradise Lost* that makes people know what is wrong to do and what is right to do, and it is people's awareness of what is wrong and what is right that forms the foundation of the moral code.

Sin as a General Discrepancy in Oneself

Another common form that the sin idea takes is that one is wrong in his whole relation to God, rather than in one particular or other. Sometimes this general discrepancy is sensed through a variety of misdemeanors, which conspire to convince one that his whole life is wrong; but sometimes the feeling arises in another way. If one is taught from infancy that all men are naturally sinful, the idea of his own inherent sinfulness will take root and work itself out in a conviction of sinfulness, which may have in it no reference to any specific acts. Even if one is not

taught from infancy, one can certainly get the same idea when he is old enough to read some religious poetry:

> "Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
> The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
> In some to spring from thee, who never touched
> The excepted tree, nor with the Snake conspired,
> Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive
> Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds." (*Paradise Lost XI*, L423-28)
> ……
> Whereas he inly raged, and , as they talked,
> Smote him into the midriff with a stone
> That beat out life; he fell, and, deadly pale,
> Groaned out his soul, with gushing blood effused. (*Paradise Lost XI*, L444-47)
> ……
> "These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
> Our of thy loins. The unjust the just hath slain,
> For envy that his brother's offering found
> From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
> Will be avenged, and the other's faith approved
> Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
> Rolling in dust and gore." (*Paradise Lost XI*, L454-60)

To read the above mentioned lines of verse from the religious poems, such as *Paradise Lost*, will make the reader conscious of the idea of his general sinfulness, just like John Bunyan, who became so imbued with the idea of his general sinfulness that he needed to go through some experience of conversion from general sinfulness before he could be at peace with himself. He wrote in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* in this way:

> Once as I was walking to and fro in a good man's shop, bemoaning to myself in my sad and doleful state, afflicting myself with self-abhorrence for this wicked and ungodly thought, lamenting also for this hard hap of mine, for that I should commit so great a sin, greatly fearing I should not be pardoned; praying also in my heart, that if this sin of mine did differ from that against the

> Holy Ghost, the Lord would show it to me: and being now ready to sink with fear, suddenly there was as if there had rushed in at the window the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I had heard a voice speaking, Didst ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ? and withal my whole life of profession past was in a moment opened to me, wherein I was made to see that designedly I had not ; so my heart answered groaningly, No. Then fell with power that word of God upon me, See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. This made a strange seizure upon my spirit; it brought light with it, and commanded a silence in my heart of all those tumultuous thoughts that before did use, like masterless hellhounds to roar and bellow and make a hideous noise within me. It showed me also that Jesus Christ had yet a work of grace and mercy for me, that he had not, as I had feared, quite forsaken and cast off my soul. (Bunyan 1855)

From Bunyan's psychological reaction towards general sinfulness, people will become aware that the feeling of general sinfulness may come about through some new vision which has broken upon an individual's consciousness of what holy living means. When we catch a vision of great personal superiority in another, the reflex feeling we are bound to experience is that of corresponding inferiority in ourselves. Let such a new ideal come into the consciousness of a person, and instantly he begins to feel that some kinds of behavior which he had before felt to be innocent are now sinful; and this feeling is retroactive, laying a more or less rigorous hand upon all of the individual's experience from his moment of enlightenment back to the days of childhood.

Sin as Venial or Mortal

In some theological theories a distinction is made between venial and mortal, or deadly, sin. The venial sin is that which may be forgiven or pardoned, whereas the mortal, or deadly, sin is that for which no forgiveness can be expected. Thus Prometheus on the part of a rebeller stealing fire from Heaven in favor of mankind is looked upon as the most venial of offenses. But such sins as pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth, are looked upon (especially by the Roman Catholic Church) as the seven deadly sins that, if they become triumphant in human nature, mean spiritual death and utter banishment from the presence of God. Thus Satan on the part of a rebeller seducing Eve to eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge is always looked upon as the most mortal sin, for which no forgiveness can be expected, and thereby Satan was horribly punished:

…He wondered, but not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more.
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
Each other, till, supplanted, down he fell,
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinne
According to his doom.… (*Paradise Lost X*, L509-17)

Satan was no more pardonable, for he had committed unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. His seducing Eve to eat the fruit was directly to rebel against God and God's will under the drive of pride, envy and anger, three of the seven deadly sins. In *Paradise Lost Book IV*, when Satan saw the happy life of Adam and Eve, "Aside the Devil turned/ For envy; yet with jealous leer malign / Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained: — / Sight hateful, sight tormenting! Thus these two, / Imparadised in one another arms , / The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill / Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust, / Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire, / Among our other torments not the least, / Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines!" (*Paradise Lost IV*, L502-511) Satan had been imbued with the heinous idea of crimes before he seduced Eve. This kind of description is very powerful, for the fear that one may become the perpetrator of unpardonable sin sometimes acts as a powerful deterrent from sinful modes of behavior. Thus religious poems may often preach about the unpardonable sin, with the hope of implanting in their readers a desire to escape such a horrible condition of life.

Sin as Selfishness

In so far as sin is held to involve one's relation with his neighbors, it becomes practically a synonym for selfishness. Selfishness may be an action or a kind of consciousness concerned with or directed towards one's own advantage without care for others. Deep inside the selfish person, there is an interests-centered motive drive. In its original form, drive theory was used to explain various biological functions such as eating, drinking, sleeping, and having sex. The hunger-eating cycle illustrates a presumed chain of event: food deprivation →hunger (drive) →seeking food and eating →drive reduction (Kasin 296). Obviously, drive theory can be applicable to some selfish behavior of the protagonists in the religious poems. The following is one example:

Unreal City
Under the brown fog of a winter noon
Mr. Eugnides, the Smyrna Merchant
Unshaven, with a pocket full of currants
C.i.f. London: documents at sight,
Asked me in demotic French
To luncheon at the Cannon street Hotel
Followed by a weekend at the Metropole. (*The Waste Land*, L207-14)

In these lines of verses from *The Waste Land*, the merchant, Mr. Eugenides is designed by the poet to live in an "Unreal City". Because he is selfishness and because the merchant is usually selfish, just like Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, Eugenides is to set himself against the will of God. Nothing can really happen against God's will, and an omnipotent being who can not prevent the moral evils — the selfish acts he foresees is because of human beings' free will. It is not strange that the world Eugenides is in is a world full of human free will and far from the requirements of God. Free will derives from the natural feeling that we can choose what we do according to the dictates of our own soul, without being compelled (Bunnin 396). The dictates of our own soul, as a matter of fact here, refer to the motive drive in our mind. Eugnides must be selfish when he is in the "Unreal City," the dictates of his soul drive him to dream for more wealth. His desire (drive) for more wealth or money has brought him to a dreamy world, in which any success in money or wealth gain will make his psychological tension (caused by the desire or drive) relaxed, thereby he will be greatly satisfied through the drive reduction. Some readers would find that this argument only makes things logically worse, for if we say that God could will a person not to perform a certain selfish act, and yet that person, in his free will or in his motive drive, could still perform it, then we seem to be saying that God is not omnipotent (for not everything he wills to happen really happens). As a result, this argument has killed God. The death of God is certainly to cause a great deal of hallucination-like puzzlement, bewilderment and confusion in human beings, therefore, people, just like Eugenides who lives selfishly to set himself against the will of God, in *The Waste Land* live not only in the real waste land but also in the unreal city.

Sin as the Violation of Group Morality

In the simpler stage of society, as we have noticed, there seems to be no clear idea of sin apart from the tribal mores. The principle customs of the tribe are embedded in religious sanctions, and they lay upon the members of the tribe a

religious obligation to observe them exactly. To break them is not merely crime, in the sense in which it is crime to break the laws of a civilized state or society; it is sin, for it threatens to bring upon the head of the offender the wrath of the god of the tribe, and not upon him only, but also upon his whole tribe. Even in our most developed society there is a marked connection between group morality and sin. The prevalent conception of what actions are sinful is based almost wholly upon standards erected, or at least recognized and adopted, by particular groups; and each group has more or less distinct ideas of what is right and fitting on the part of its members. As far as this point is concerned, we are the same as primitive men, that is to say, sin is a matter of violated social standards. Any violation of social standards is regarded as sin and must be horribly punished by God, the king of Egypt was cruel to the descendents of Adam and Eve and was punished together with his country and his people by God:

> … Whence of guests he makes them slaves
> Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
> Till, by two brethren (those two brethren call
> Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
> His people from enthralment, they return,
> With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.
> But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
> To Know their God, or message to regard.
> Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire:
> Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
> With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
> His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
> Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
> And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
> Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
> And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
> What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
> A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
> Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
> Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
> Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
> Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
> Of Egypt must lie dead... (*Paradise Lost XII*, L167-90)

Milton told us the story from Old Testament about how the descendents of Adam and Eve were put into slavery and how they were pitilessly slaughtered. The inhuman slaughtering act of the king of Egypt was, as a matter of fact, severely against the common standards of any society, and therefore it was a sin. After reading these lines of verses, we may allow that there is some room for the conviction of sin over and above this loyalty to the standards of the group, for occasionally some person will feel the very things which his group accepts as right to be wrong. We cannot say that the brutal act of the king of Egypt toward the Israelies failed to represent the interests of his people, that is to say, what the king had done was in accordance with the standards of that particular society in that particular time; and yet whatever the excuse might be, it is a sin against the common standards of a civilized society and God's will. Anyway, the civilized man's standard of what constitutes sin is certainly more comprehensive than the primitive man's, and it is adjusted to the higher demands of a broadened and more seasoned ethical temper, but nevertheless it is still largely formed about what the group thinks is right and wrong.

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Call for Papers

The 6th International Symposium on Ethical Literary Criticism: Ethical Literary Criticism, Comparative Literature, and World Literature

Oct. 1-7, 2016 Tartu, Estonia

In order to promote international academic exchange in the field of literary criticism, The International Association for Ethical Literary Criticism (IAELC) will collaborate with Estonian Association of Comparative Literature (EACL), University of Tartu, the EACL international journal *Interlitteraria*, the A&HCI scholarly journal *Foreign Literature Studies*, and the International Center for Ethical Literary Criticism at Central China Normal University (CCNU, Wuhan, China) in hosting "The 6thInternational Symposium on Ethical Literary Criticism" in Tartu, Estonia from Oct. 1 to Oct.7, 2016. Scholars all over the world are warmly welcome.

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Language: English, Chinese

Place: Tartu, Estonia.

Time: Oct 1-7, 2016.

Contact: Prof.Jüri Talvet, Department of Literature and Theatre Studies, University of Tartu, Ülikooli 16-113, 51014 Tartu, Estonia. **Email**: juri.talvet@ut.ee.

The online registration and abstract submission is expected to be completed by April 30th, 2016 (The conference website is to be announced soon). The official invitation will be sent by mail or e-mail in May 2016.

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