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

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

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

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

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Présentation du rédacteur / Editor's Introduction

Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research has entered a new phase of its existence. As was discussed at the General Assembly of the Congress in Paris, the costs of mailing our journal have increased significantly over the past few years, producing a strain on the organization. Last year's volume cost over US$18,000 to mail to our members. It is for this reason that you received a communication recently. We realized that there may be a considerable number of members who prefer to read this journal electronically. For this reason, the General Assembly voted to offer the members the option of receiving the journal either in print form or as an attachment sent directly to their email accounts, if they so desire. If you prefer to receive the print version, you can continue to receive it in this form. We make this offer only now, because we have received permission from all the national organizations to access their email addresses. In the past, one of our large national organizations felt that they could not share their data with us for security reasons. Fortunately, they have changed their policy. It is my hope that this electronic option will cut down on the mailing costs and free up funds to be used in other ways for the benefit of the membership as a whole. I feel strongly that the members should receive the organization's official journal in the form they desire. *Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research* is really the only tangible thing we receive for our ICLA membership fee! For this reason, there will be a lag time between when you receive your print or electronic copy and when it becomes available on the website in archival form.

As we have done these past few years, the current volume consists of book notes, reviews, and review essays. Since this is the year of our Congress, we also include Steven P. Sondrup's evocative Presidential Ad-

dress on poetry and the possibility of gifts. As has become our custom, the issue includes reports of various comparative literature conferences and workshops that our members would find interesting but did not or could not attend. I see these reviews and reports as serving the same purpose. We cannot read everything and we certainly cannot attend all the interesting conferences available in all sorts of fascinating locales and institutions. What we need, and what *Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research* attempts to provide, are impartial and balanced assessments of books and conferences we cannot otherwise access. An objective review or conference report allows us to draw our own conclusions on the legitimacy of certain approaches, interpretations, and varieties of analyses. It allows us to perceive of ourselves in the general schema of the discipline and fix our position within current trends in scholarship in order to best direct our energies for personal intellectual development. I ask you then to read the reviews and the conference reports in this light. This is not a journal in which I, as Editor, will seek assessments from "the opposing camp." Aside from the noxious social repercussions of such attacks in a world beset with pettiness and violence, I avoid such assessments because I would rather place confidence in the autonomy of the reader.

In this issue, we have a particularly extensive report on the recent conferences and initiatives involving World Literature. Since the discussion of World Literature significantly impacts Comparative Literature as it is currently configured and practiced, César Domínguez and Asunción López-Varela Azcárate keep us current in our thinking regarding the interface between Comparative Literature and World Literature, their convergences, differences, and similarities under different initiatives. I would also like to call your attention to the Association's website for notification of upcoming conferences of interest to our members, as well as other useful information. Great efforts has been made in the previous cycle to upgrade the website (ailc-icla.org), making it more user-friendly and pertinent to the needs of our far-flung membership.

Finally, in the interest of greater transparency and inclusion of members in the research projects of the ICLA, I refer you to the reports from the various research committees. As I repeat each year in these pages, the work of this organization is primarily to be seen in the activities of its research committees. These committees can be permanent or time-limited. The committee chairs are given the opportunity to publicize to the entire membership their vision statements, activities, and output in these pages.

Those interested in participating in the work of a given committee are advised to contact its chair for information regarding future panels and conferences. I also direct you to the call for submissions for the Balakian Prize. I am particularly proud of how this prize has taken off since, with the help of the late Douwe Fokkema, I established it and secured the funds during my brief pro-tempore Presidency of the ICLA. In just three cycles, we have gone from relatively few submissions to quite a large number of books that the Balakian Prize Committee reviews each cycle.

This present issue has been subsidized by my home institution, the University of Georgia, as well as the ICLA. I want to thank the ICLA members and others who have contributed with their reviews and reports to the effort of producing this volume. I request that any member of the ICLA who wishes to write reviews for *Recherche Littéraire / Literary Research* please contact me (figueira@uga.edu) with a brief sketch of their specializations, so that I might assign reviews judiciously. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank Deans Alan T. Dorsey and Noel Fallows of the University of Georgia for their continued support. I am ever grateful to Jenny Webb of Webb Editorial, Kelly Stevens Anderson and Sharon A. Brooks of the Department of Comparative Literature at UGA for their administrative assistance, and the production crew in the Office of Print Services at Brigham Young University. I also wish to thank John Schweppe for volunteering his artwork to grace the cover of the volume.

Dorothy Figueira
University of Georgia (USA)

Poetry and the Possibility of Gifts
Presidential Address, Paris Congress 2013

The thoughts I would like to share today are part of a larger project with which I have been working for some time and have written on before but here to other ends. It deals with the relationship of the gift as a social construct—albeit highly problematic—and poetry and what they have to do with world building and the constitution of self. Individually and particularly each is a well-known area of investigation that has already attracted a great deal of penetrating scholarly attention, but it is my contention that when taken together with the avowed intention of looking at the necessarily discreet and subtle pattern of intersections and interstices, they emerge for the willing observer as an interlocking complex of ideas whose relationship at least begins to suggest an important but frequently obscured potential for human expression and an ethically consequential mode of self-constitution. Understood as modes of human communion, moreover, poetry and gifts manifest a common ground in subverting the principle of reciprocity and the prevailing mode of exchange. Although much has been written—or, perhaps, precisely because so much has been said—on the nature and even the possibility of the gift, a few words of introduction are necessary for the sake of orientation. The dynamics and nature of the gift are not as obvious and self-evident as they may at first seem.

Although meditations on the gift in its simplest terms—as an unmerited and disinterested bestowal fundamentally different from an act of exchange—date back centuries, it is only in relatively recent times that the question has been approached critically and with enough philosophical-ethical rigor that its very foundation and possibility have been drawn into serious question. Ralph Waldo Emerson's reflections on the gift have often been taken as a convenient though somewhat arbitrary point of departure. Freud's analysis and intellectual enthronement of the

pleasure principle and the central importance of need gratification in modeling and accounting for all modes of human behavior played an ancillary though enormously important role in reconfiguring contemporary thinking about the gift. Clearly, however, it was the pioneering anthropological work of Marcel Mauss (*Essai sur le don: Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques*) that has emerged as the seminal point with which all contemporary thinking must come to terms in some way or other. George Bataille's always challenging and often disturbing probing of the dynamics of the gift (*La Part maudite*) invite similar considered and measured attention.

Following the leads and seeking to expand on the central ideas of these precursors, Derrida, Lévinas, Bourdieu, Marion, and Cixous—among many others—have recently joined the sonorous but sometimes contesting chorus of voices exploring the complex rhythms, sinuous modulations, and suggestive harmonies of contemporary thinking about the gift. In so doing, they have called attention to the extremely important earlier but not always recognized and appreciated work of Emile Benveniste and Claude Lévi-Strauss and have cast new light on consequential aspects of Martin Heidegger's thinking, both that in *Sein und Zeit* as well as that of his later and more overtly poetical deliberations. Explicitly in Derrida's *Donner la mort: L'éthique du don: Jacques Derrida et la pensée du don: Colloque de Rayaumont, déc. 1990* (1992), *Donner le temps I: La fausse monnaie* (1991), *Donner la mort* (1999), and eloquently in "En ce moment même dans cet ouvrage me voici" in *Textes pour Emmanuel Lévinas* (1980), Derrida has directed his thinking into relatively new terrain. Although many have made important recent contributions to the contemporary understanding of gifts, Derrida's interrogation of these issues opens some vistas that are important for the perspective I want to bring to the question. While clearly drawing on the thinking of predecessors—most notably in this case Heidegger—his examination of some of the gift's necessary undergirding precepts has led him inexorably and relentlessly to the conclusion that the gift as an unmerited and disinterested bestowal different, distinct, and independent from any form of exchange or circulation is in all practical terms impossible and ends necessarily, like justice, in an aporia. In the giving of a gift on the one hand, a responsibility to reciprocate is incurred ultimately extending to an unending regression of bequests, expectations, counter-bequests, and counter- expectations. But more significantly on the other hand, disin-

terested benefaction is deemed at best highly problematic. In defending the biblical injunction (Matt. 6:3) not to let the left hand know what the right is doing—specifically in regard to his reading of Kierkegaard's *Frygt og bæven* (*Fear and Trembling*) and his analysis of begging and the giving of alms—Derrida champions the notion of secrecy even though the giving of good gifts seems to him inescapably contaminated with the contagion of self-interest, even if only in the context of achieving a degree of self-definition fundamentally grounded in the socially-valued characteristics of generosity, benevolence, and altruism. Derrida's conclusion is that the true gift necessarily leads to the subversion of economics and especially economic systems as they derive from the Greek notion of *οἶκος,* i.e. home and hearth. What abrogates the possibility of the gift is, precisely, the impossibility of its necessary condition.

Lévinas, not so much in opposition to Derrida's interrogation of the gift but in suggesting the possible existence of fissures through which the sweet scent of true generosity might rise before reaching the seeming impasse of the logical impossibility, argues that the good faith encounter with the Other puts an end to power by putting into question the notion of the possessions of the Other as well as the right of the Other to exist. In *Totalité et Infini: Essai sur l'extériorité,* Lévinas concurs in fact that the gift is an impossibility within the order of being characterized by any form of reciprocation, that it can only conceivably occur as an interruption of that order, and that it is not sayable or even thinkable from within the conceptual framework of exchange.

Contrary to Heidegger's proposition that authentic being (*seinend*) is heeding the call and demands of Being (*Sein*), Lévinas importantly holds that ethics necessarily precede ontology. This precedence of ethics above and beyond being—I would argue—potentially offers a possibility for a fracture in the received order of being thereby rendering the gift *qua* gift possible. To approach the Other, thus, is to welcome his expression in which at each and every instant he overflows and extends beyond what any idea or conceptualization could enclose.

Poetry similarly disrupts and sunders the economy of linguistic exchange when the coin of the realm is taken to be deictic reference, paraphrasable content, or sheer statements and commensurate responses. The cradle of poetry is unbounded, unrestrained, and at times unruly language itself. Precisely in the disruption, severance, or displacement within their respective orders, poetry and gifts find their common sustaining ground.

The validity of this assertion obviously depends in substantial measure on what honest poetry is understood to be. Rather than essaying even a tentative definition, I should rather like to describe some of the suggestive qualities that may point toward what I understand poetry of the highest order to be. To my mind, it is grounded in the inherent interstices between the saying and the said, the *énonciation* and *énoncé,* the *Äusserung* and the *Geäusserte.* A necessary consequence of this position is that the meanings of a poem cannot be extracted, distilled, or retrieved and made accessible to others in the way euros, for example, can readily be converted into other currencies. A reader is not primarily a receiver of content susceptible to entry into the world of reciprocal exchange but inhabits a space that allows the poem to speak, grow, and develop outwardly independent of any presumed value of exchange.

Poetry arises with the important realization that understanding originates in and is a function of language per se, not primarily language's referential potential, an insight that has recently come into ever greater prominence. I must stress that I am not arguing that there is no extratextual reality; it is not my position that *il n'y a pas de hors-texte.* Rather, honest Western poetry in part subverts the deeply ingrained convention of referentiality and invites an interrogation of the possible references of a text. A healthy skepticism toward the often unconsidered and usually unwarranted assumptions that the language of poetry is best understood as a mediation, which like money is a means of exchanging value should well be cultivated. Since, moreover, the interrogation of the possibility of univocal and monovalent referentiality leads to rigid determinacy, the reader who approaches poetry in good faith can live in gratitude for the openness and potential the irresolvable question of referentiality affords.

Perhaps no one more than Mallarmé has problematized and celebrated this consummate irresolvability evoked in the title of his poem "Un coup de Dés jamais n'abolira le Hasard" as well as in the structure of the poem and its prominent imagery. In this regard, an important aspect of the poet's craft consists of disrupting reading practices that are too often automatic in their nearly immediate tendency to be understood in terms of the economy of exchange that points outward to the world rather than inward to the possibility of reposing transparently though precariously in the intimacy of language. The poet's cunning consists in part of setting up obstacles that impede highly automatic, facilely referential reading: the art of poetry is the art of being difficult. Poetry is, among

other things, the art of impeding the cursory exchange of information, which threatens to obscure the value of language as such and in so doing transform the locus of poetry from a place of production (*ποίησις*) to the depths of profane and sullied exchange.

If for these reasons poetry can serve to exemplify the disruption without which the gift is an impossibility within the received order of being, poetry may be addressed as an act of gifting. To formulate the question as to whether poetry is dialogic or monovalent is not helpful in that it misses the point. More subtle and nuanced criteria are necessary. In terms of the considerations Lévinas has advanced, I should like to suggest that the poem can be understood as a gift to one oriented toward and open to the primacy of the ethical over the ontological. The honest poem opens space for examination, reflection, and communion. The addressee is welcomed into the discursive space where the poem assembles itself around the one who in any moment is the recipient of the gift. But in this condensation of the poem, the addressee—who through being named has become a you or a thou, to echo Buber and others—can rejoice in its inherent, inalienable, but intimate alterity. "Tout autre est tout autre." In the here and now constituted by the open attentiveness to a poem and its heightened immediacy, the honest poem beckons to and invites participation that modulates the distinction of same and other. In these terms, there can be no question of reciprocal exchange.

One of the many poets frequently celebrated for enacting this poetic disjunction, disruption, fracture, or rupture that facilitates the relationship necessary for the bestowal of the genuine gift is Paul Celan. My reading of his poetry sees it as a speech event—as opposed to a speech act—that disrupts the received economy of exchange. The lyric voice is so frequently endowed with such resoluteness in approaching the Other that it, bearing a gift of honest poetry, implicitly acknowledges and welcomes the being of the Other while advancing no necessary anticipation of reciprocation. In a famous letter to the well-known psychologist Hans Bender, Celan distinguishes between verse that is verbal virtuosity presumably expecting adulation and poetry that is the labor of honest hands. He then succinctly observes:

> *Gewiß, es gibt Exerzitien—im geistigen Sinne, lieber Hans Bender! Und da-neben gibt es eben, an jeder lyrischen Straßenecke, das Herumexperimentieren mit dem sogenannten Wortmaterial. Gedichte, das sind auch—Geschenke an die Aufmerksamen. Schicksal mitführende Geschenke.*

Honest poems are true gifts or endowments for those openly engaged and receptive, for those who vigilantly attend to the ruptures and even crevices through which poetic utterance can approach in subverting the economy of exchange. They are gifts that bear the great moments of destiny implicit in those who eschew empty verbal virtuosity.

Far from an adornment, honest poetry offers an alternative to the economy of reciprocity and exchange as well as the competitiveness and the infinitely receding chain of expectations that only thinly mask the potential for violence lurking insidiously beneath the smiling façade of false generosity. Poetry invites a deeply probing interrogation of modes of living that foster strength, independence, and aesthetic prosperity, but at the same time it illuminates a richness and wealth it cannot fully contain. To the extent that poetry can offer the aesthetic and ethical, and ontological basis for openness toward others and other modes of thinking, it may suggest a paradigm that accommodates gifts and giving includes the gift of beneficent life.

Steven P. Sondrup
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Essai / Review Article

Philippe Chardin. *Musil et la littérature: Amours lointaines et fureurs intempestives.* Dijon: Éditions Universitaires de Dijon, 2011. Pp. 288. ISBN: 9782364410046.

Robert K. Weninger. *The German Joyce.* Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2012. Pp. x + 258. ISBN: 9780813041667.

Luigi Ferdinando Dagnese. *Alla ricerca del tempo sprecato: L'idillio burrascoso di Marcel Proust e Lionel Hauser.* Roma: Robin Edizioni srl, 2012. Pp. 278. ISBN: 9788873719199.

Benjamin Boysen. *The Ethics of Love: An Essay on James Joyce.* Odense: University of South Denmark Press, 2013. Pp. 656. ISBN: 9788776746919.

This set of virtually simultaneous studies is remarkable in several respects. Each of the principal novelists under scrutiny (Musil, Joyce, Proust) stands out in high profile as temperamentally different from his peers; yet each convincingly serves as a touchstone for exploring the literary web of modernism. There are several kinds of contextualization at play that together give us a satisfying sense of the many ways in which we can cross-section and anatomize the enormous creativity of the age. Chardin juxtaposes the reader Musil, with his likes and dislikes, and the author Musil as a major intellectual, whose view of his times is realized in his private and public writings, rather than in a huge treatise. Weninger shows us how and why the reception of the exile cosmopolitan Joyce served to reinforce powerful patterns in the literary development of a major culture, and the reciprocal relevance of the German tradition for Joyce. Dagnese offers the very first truly professional (rather than ideological) analysis of how Proust fits in the actual economic world of the early twentieth century and how this connection has bearing on his multi-volume masterpiece. Invoking Joyce's vast reading and the entire

body of his imaginative works, Boysen construes phase-by-phase Joyce's search for a universal key to the human story of all time. One commonality arises from behind the welter of differences and sharings in themes and structures among these three modernists and a multitude of referenced contemporaries closest to them: Their "totalizing" novels attain a commanding epic dimension that (as Mann believed) is required to exhibit and demarcate the complexity of their times with any meaningful adequacy. Besides writing significant essays generically labeled as such, the major novelists of the first half of the twentieth century succumbed to the logic of producing fictions that are thinly disguised mega-essays, thereby producing a mosaic of commentary that extensively reconstituted the grand narrative of their civilization.

Awareness of the high goal toward which they sought to strive may well explain, in part, why Proust and Joyce avoided closeness in Paris, or why Musil felt aversion toward Mann, or Joyce deprecated Goethe, and similar phenomena signaling an anxiety of influence and rivalry among the best workers in the vineyard. Chardin offers a detailed and useful picture of the enormous range of Musil's acquaintance with nineteenth-century and newer writers across Europe and his special interest in major French and Russian figures. It is striking how, among the contests of attitudes which Musil imports into *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften,* he uses cultural tokens such as a dismissiveness toward Goethe by Ulrich versus admiration for Goethe on the part of Arnheim, and depicts an array of dissatisfied women viewed under a Flaubertian optic. Musil displays an impressive typology of human and social types in terms of their cultural predelictions, and his erudition has the capacity to sustain the novel's general theme of culture as reflected by what hypothetically can be assimilated and ordered in an "archive" (well in advance of the Argentine Borges or the American Barth, the reviewer would add). Musil's depiction of the "patriotic campaign" to assemble such a treasury is doubly sardonic in view of the fact that the Austro-Hungarian Empire, with all its slogans, is about to vanish as a political reality and appears already as a ghostly memory in the novel's opening pages on the eve of the Great War. Chardin does an excellent job of showing Musil's strong spiritual affinity with the stark disillusioning in Flaubert's *L'éducation sentimentale* when the dreams of the romantic era collapsed in the Revolution of 1848, as

well as Musil's added Nietzschean streak in regarding such modern problems as the psychological twists in the subsidence of traditional religion, one by-product being the survival of mysticism that seeks a channel.

Chardin's second chapter examines the powerful impact of Dostoevsky's works on Musil, most apparent in *Die Verwirrungen des jungen Törless,* but also in the manifold theme of transgression and the fascination for criminal character in *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften.* Musil's Nietzschean approach is carefully differentiated and emphasis is placed on his insights into a strange anomie or amoral indifference connected with the rise of the sciences. Chardin could readily reference Mann's treatment of this important thematic linkage in *Dr. Faustus,* but seems almost to follow Musil in blocking out such a major rival in the German language. The initial part of the third chapter is dedicated to comparing the two major Austrian writers, Musil and Roth, in their depiction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and of Europe going into World War I, notably in *Törless* and *Der Radetsky-Marsch*. The common denominator in both works, nominally *Bildungsromane,* is the interplay of order and disorder, of a surface and underground reality, of privileged center and restless periphery; the struggle of a collapsing cultural-political myth to sustain itself is reflected in the juxtaposition of hapless individuals and the enormous complex in which they are situated. Chapter 3 takes up Musil's and a host of other European writers' agonizing over the question: why did the catastrophe happen and what is or can Europe be? Here Chardin does offer a fine outline of Mann's participation in the postwar discourse on the crisis of civilization in *Der Zauberberg.* This is followed by an extended comparison of Musil and *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* with Jules Romains and his massive multi-volume *Les Hommes de Bonnes Volonté.* Both authors are seen in their striving to exhibit the enormous complexity of simultaneous existences and factors in their world as it went through a series of convulsions. The analysis of structural features is nicely enhanced by bringing in references to other "totalizing" fictions such as Dos Passos's experiments with point of view and focalization in the *U.S.A.* trilogy. Chapter 4 essays to sort out the fine differences among the brace of major examples of a new kind of *Bildungsroman* in Musil, Joyce, Proust, and James and how Musil and Proust employ "analytic" irony. Chapter 5 embarks on a searching examination of Musil's views on mental illness in both his fictions and essays, and how he detects the operation of folly in historical moments, pathologies in individuals and

in societies. Chardin compares Breton's attitudes and finds in Musil a similar propensity to transform folly into a form of anarchic protest, often verging upon the territory of surrealism. Chapters 6 through 9 fill out the portrait of Musil as an intellectual and his involvement with literary forms less studied in prior criticism. The emphasis is on his vision of love and dissatisfaction with the direction of ordinary psychiatry, his tendency to suggest a sacred or true realm of experience, and to sense a fluctuating boundary between reason and folly. In a very fine epilogue on Musil as a disciple of Nietzsche, Chardin revisits the "library complex" in great detail as a key and discerns Musil's skepticism toward grandiose universalism (not unlike Goethe's, one could add), because Musil sees the danger of ignoring the contradictory impulses in humanity (and here, one could adduce the critical insights of a twentieth-century thinker like Eric Vögelin). This volume presents a very demanding, wide-ranging appreciation that succeeds in promoting the case that Musil is one of the great modernist authors of Europe.

Comparative literature scholars who are serious economists make up a tiny fraction of our guild worldwide. Among the notable few, one can name Paul Cantor who has treated both older and newer writers with regard to the acuity with which they describe economic motivations and behavior. Cantor's subjects extend from the Renaissance to the present and he includes more than high literature in his purview, as his recent book *The Invisible Hand in Pop Culture* (2012) attests. Giancarlo Maiorino has proposed the term "econo-poetics" to cover the range of sociopolitical and economic analysis he practices in the book *At the Margins of the Renaissance: Lazarillo de Tormes and the Picaresque Art of Survival* (2003). Now a fresh voice has appeared in these ranks of keen interdisciplinarian researchers that is all the more remarkable because the economic analysis practiced is not tinged by any particular school such as Marxian or Keynesian or Austrian, but rather puts us to the test of inventing a new term; and tentatively, I will venture to call it "existentialist." This voice belongs to an unusual talent, the Italian novelist Luigi Ferdinando Dagnese who just happens to be, under another hat, an economist and social scientist by training. Dagnese's recent novels of intrigue, *L'imbarrazzo della scelta* (2010) and *Il libro del respiro* (2011), run the geocultural gamut from the secret backstairs of Cairo on the eve

of the Arab spring to the *locus mirabilis* of Silicon Valley—and we sense we are being guided by a social critic with almost preternatural powers for penetrating into the myriad intertwined patterns of these peculiar worlds. In *Alla ricerca del tempo sprecato: L'idillio burrascoso di Marcel Proust e Lionel Hauser* (2012), Dagnese has now published an interdisciplinary work unmatched by anything in Proustian scholarship. It does not stop at fashionable thumbnail statements about Proust's social status and financial circumstances; rather it takes us on a year-by-year journey through Proust's decisions and omissions as he dealt with economic reality and somehow squared his own nature and drives with the sometimes tumultuous historical events shaping the French and European economy. *Alla ricerca del tempo sprecato* (In Search of Time Squandered) has the intellectual muscularity that we associate with master critics like the late Roger Shattuck.

Dagnese has an unusual gift for pinpointing the meaning of a string of moments that he brings to light through meticulous examination of the actual financial records pertaining to Proust and of the interaction between Proust and his principal financial advisor and friend, the considerably older, heterosexual, unsnobbish Lionel Hauser. This volume offers no ordinary analysis of a double ledger in which, having lined up Proust's investments, income, and expenditures after painstaking research, the critic stops in satisfaction over dry positivistic facts of bookkeeping. Rather, Dagnese, with his fine instinct as a creative writer, is more interested in profiling Proust's private and public life against two backgrounds. We get to observe the week-by-week and year-by-year financial habits and decisions of Proust against the historical picture in general and against the rhythms by which Proust was creating his early writings and then undertook his monumental novel as an all-consuming mission for the remainder of his days. We hear real numbers, actual names of holdings, and inside commentary by the novelist and his closest confidants. All this hard information is spun into the running account of Proust's life, with an intense focus on the years from the start of his friendship with Hauser (1909–1911) who had arrived from Central Europe and became quickly integrated into the banking world in which Jewish financiers were prominent, with the Rothschilds at the pinnacle. We witness the glorious year of the appearance of *Du côté de chez Swann*; enter the crisis of World War I as experienced personally by Proust; see the initially disastrous investment choices by a man eating up his patrimony who, finally achieving success

and switching to Gallimard as publisher, nonetheless ends up far richer toward the end of his life and in the postwar moment by virtue of his uncommon ways; and we are privileged to expatiate in several dense chapters on the last years of Proust's life. Dagnese leads us through a finely detailed examination of the seemingly odd counterpointing between Proust's huge extravangances (e.g., in giving lavish gifts to his runaway chauffeur and lover Angostelli, one real-life avatar of "Albertine"), his hermitage in medical decline, and his unswerving devotion to his mission as author.

The drama of Hauser, who believes "time is money," trying to steer Proust in a practical direction, but of Proust managing in the long run to go his own impracticable way, is all the more gripping because we readily grasp that Hauser is so honorable and decent that Proust never would include him in *Recherche.* The great *roman fleuve* is populated mainly by defective human beings in society's privileged ranks, while the family cook Françoise epitomizes the solid old-fashioned French who keep the show going. As the social and economic facts pass in parade, as the evidence of Proust's amazing labors accrues, Dagnese produces one of the most fascinating close-to-the-bone biographies of a great author ever attempted. Facing the heroism of Proust's sacrifice to the truth of his book, Dagnese does eventually shift his mode of commentary and lifts our thinking onto the plane of final criticism, daring to ask us to render value judgments. Should we really consider Proust to fit into some ordinary paradigm as a "victim" of his obsessions or of societal decadence, or should we regard him as a "waster" of resources who failed to "contribute" to the welfare of the broader public, in a vein fashionable in much of contemporary sociological writing in Western discourse? In brief, should we evaluate his "investment" of his limited time not as heedless squandering, but as a triumph, as deeply courageous, indeed as one of those human miracles we finally cannot explain away? Dagnese's closing sentences are a breath-taking re-invocation of Proust's ending of *Le temps retrouvé.* The economist and sociologist insists that we ponder "value." The challenge is metaphysical, and it involves that troublesome idea of love and dedication. *Alla ricerca del tempo sprecato* plumbs profound issues that Proust discovered in the web of contingent being in time.

In *The German Joyce,* Weninger powerfully argues the case for viewing Shakespeare as the most significant English-language author for the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in German-speaking lands, and Joyce as filling that role in the twentieth century and down to the present. Weninger duly points readers to instructive studies of the reciprocal importance of German authors for Joyce's work, but concentrates in Chapter 4 on the paramount instance of Goethe, whose shadow was cast over the more immediate European past as Joyce struggled for his own place and strove to relate to a formidable series of canonical exemplars and rivals from Homer onward. This focus is appropriate because Goethe was the colossal figure with whom German authors, too, on the modernist threshold had to cope. Weninger makes crystal clear that *The German Joyce* is only secondarily about Joyce's reception of newer or older German writers, and primarily about Joyce's enormous presence in German modernism and afterwards. He borrows two celebrated German phrases from the "Proteus" chapter of *Ulysses,* the *nacheinander* and the *nebeneinander,* to divide his own book into two parts, and into two basic modes of analysis. Part one treats the German reception of Joyce starting as early as 1919; part two, in addition to examining the Joycean co-reception of Goethe, traces intertextual echoes which show how Joyce fits in the artistic repertory of his times, and here Weninger sorts through the many decades of German Marxist literary history in which Joyce has served as a crucial touchstone for asserting critical positions, whether or not the many disputants have any direct or intrinsic relationship to him. In combination, these several approaches amount to more than an enhanced exercise in reception aesthetics. We are treated instead to perspectives in a larger vision of intertextuality.

While awareness of Joyce started with the production of his play *Exiles* in politically volatile Munich in 1919, Chapter 2, building on the research of Breon Mitchell, expounds what became and remains the main body of the German reception of Joyce, the reception of *Ulysses* from 1919 to 1945. Chapter 3 then investigates the institutionalization of Joyce after 1945 as an iconic presence in German-speaking postwar culture, including his further fortunes in translation. Notices in both literary and academic periodicals demonstrate German efforts to understand Joyce's relation to artistic currents such as Impressionism and Expressionism and the awareness that he was an innovator in techniques of spatialization, interior monologue, use of pornography, and portrayal of operations of the unconscious. Besides the early interest of the great scholar Curtius, an indication of Joyce's rapid and serious reception, is the fact

that eminent figures like Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Georg Kaiser, and Hermann Keyserling were among 167 signatories to a petition on Joyce's behalf in 1927. The well-orchestrated publication of *Ulysses* by the Rhein-Verlag that same year in an error-ridden German translation helped spark further attention by important writers on both sides of the Rhine. The excitement of a writer like Ivan Goll over Joyce as a revolutionary in literature comparable to Lenin in politics was counterbalanced by negative reactions, such as C.G. Jung's ambiguous tribute in 1932. With a sharp eye for crucial emphases, Weninger touches on a plethora of interesting cases of artistic and critical response in addition to the better-known assessments such as those by Alfred Döblin and Hermann Broch. With the advent of the Nazis to power, Joyce joined anti-fascists in assisting his great admirer Broch's escape to safety and eventually found himself seeking refuge again in neutral Switzerland. The desire of the Nazis to curry international favor during the Olympic Games of 1936 and the relatively low circulation of Joyce in translation contributed to the delay in assigning *Ulysses* to the category of banned degenerate art by the Nazi regime. But of course, inevitably, Nazi critics excoriated its Jewish component and deemed other themes repugnant. In one of the fascinating odd crossings in real history, the first in a long series of basically positive German dissertations treating Joyce began to appear from 1933 onward despite Hitler's ascent to power, and even *Finnegans Wake* garnered some attention in the German and Swiss press in the year of its appearance, even as World War II broke out in full. Meanwhile Joyce was an active topic in exile circles, and he also served as a sounding board for a debate about formalism and Expressionism from the late 1930s onwards, which Weninger covers in Chapter 7. The truncation imposed by the Nazi period and war on the domestic front was followed by an intensive peacetime institutionalization of Joyce as a kind of standard for positive and negative measuring of contemporary writing.

Especially rewarding is Chapter 3 because it reviews the waves and types of reaction to Joyce by various generations according to when particular authors or academics received their secondary education and either gained or missed exposure to an entire range of modernist writers and artists as a whole. The deficit obviously was destined to play into postwar eagerness to "catch up" both on the recent European past and on lost decades in German-speaking lands. New experimentalists like Arno Schmidt, following upon the Expressionist pioneers like Döblin,

approximated Joycean accents even prior to reading him with care. Repatriated writers, like the Joyce enthusiast Wolfgang Hildesheimer, were keenly aware of the yet untackled higher challenge of the *Wake*. Newer translators like Hans Wollschläger (to date, along with Dieter Stündel, one of the most accomplished), Ernst Jandl, et al.—some inspired by Dada, Expressionism, concrete poetry, and other movements—threw themselves into the heroic, virtually hopeless task of producing mainly renditions of parts of the *Wake*, and/or sought to imitate the Joyce found in the *Wake* in their own writing. Weninger also offers a densely populated and finely differentiated history of the second great era of Joycean scholarship undertaken by German speakers. This postwar surge has been dominated by figures such as the redoubtable Fritz Senn, and marked by numerous conferences and the success of crucial research institutions such as the center established in Zürich. The Munich-based scholar Hans Walter Gabler has entered the global sphere of Joyce reception with his assiduous re-editing of Joyce's works in English. The fine Wollschläger translation of *Ulysses* in the 1970s solidified Joyce's presence in German, and today the odds are in favor of his broader public reputation resting on his earlier stories and this more accessible masterpiece.

Part 2, on "intertextual echoes," starts off in Chapter 4 with a most welcome expansion upon Joyce's abiding love-hate relationship to Goethe, the literary titan of the preceding age. The virtue of such a broadening of attention to this relationship is twofold. First, directly and indirectly, it helps us make better sense of why German readers of a later time might be predisposed to find certain subject matters in Joyce interesting. (An historical analogy is the way in which English readers of the romantic age discovered attractive matter in German writing after the Germans had become acquainted with British literature in the eighteenth century.) Second, the two authors, Goethe and Joyce, extensively exploited the same mythological, historical, and literary subplots and pre-texts and many key themes. In their notable late works, they reached out to establish profoundly deep dimensions of cultural context and were eager to align themselves with, even while superseding, canonical predecessors from Homer onward. Chapter 5, entitled "Joyce, DADA & Co.: Modernist Confluences," proffers another kind of reciprocal illumination which is, necessarily, more scattered, because our attention is spread across a large number of writers and we are concerned more with the traces of the *Zeitgeist* manifest in particular artistic tics and habits, less in common

themes or actual filiation. Weninger covers a medley of delightful illustrations, dealing both with explanations and with practices of techniques, as well as with language play by Joyce's contemporaries across Europe. The chapter grows very profitable as Weninger moves into the still unsettled debates in the philosophy of culture regarding the value or deeper tenor of movements such as Surrealism and Dada—from the first observers of the role of "abstraction," "absurdity," the "unconscious," "free play," etc., right down to postmodernism. Weninger makes a convincing argument that Joyce's movement away from older empathetic "realism" does not reflect a self-emptying deconstructive rebellion but rather is positive and "distinctly symphonic"(157) in character.

Chapter 6, "The Epitome of an Epiphany," presents us with a mini-monograph, this time not mirroring Joyce's ineluctable anxiety vis-à-vis a recent giant, but broadly appreciating remarkable analogies between aspects of the young Joyce's and the young Rilke's experiences and efforts. It is a matter of spiritual affinities despite many personal differences, including the fact of one author being predominantly a novelist and the other a poet. The findings are instructive and enrich our picture of both authors by constantly reminding us of their continental context and of the cardinal fact that both are primarily European, not national, but cosmopolitan, in orientation. (In fact, it would have been a good supportive move if Weninger had referenced the materials now available in Manfred Engel's new Rilke edition to point out that, since Rilke left us close to 1,000 French poems, and extensive correspondence in French, he should legitimately be described as an author who usually wrote in German, not as German or German-Czech.) The focus is mainly on Malte's clarified mode of seeing in the novel *Die Aufzeichnungen* in relation to Joyce's theory of epiphany that received its early stamp in the speculations in *Stephen Hero.* Rilke's sense of epiphanic experience is judged to be more tied to perception of objects; Joyce's, more tied to events or occurrences; but both writers formulate and strive to express epiphany in a manner that is unlike the Expressionist mode. Weninger arrives at the reasonable speculation that, although we have adopted Joyce's term in actual history, the epiphanic pattern important in modernist literature would have been evident via Rilke even if Joyce had never written. (Here the reviewer believes it is crucial to point out briefly a relevant and powerful linkage Weninger omits: the shared relationship of the two young artists to the Mallarméan heritage, and, in the case of Rilke, specifically to the explicit

theory of a new novel genre in *Die Aufzeichnungen* as an epiphanic chain of "prose poems," a concept that directly repeats the theory stated in *A rebours* by Mallarmé's contemporary Joris-Karl Huysmans.)

In dealing with nine decades of German reception, Weninger carries us with energy in Chapter 9 along the highways and byways of debates about Joyce whose mere existence repeatedly animated discussions by intellectuals on the Left. (One of the few notable mentions missing here is the fact that the great filmmaker Eisenstein stoutly defended Joyce at the Soviet Writers' Congress against orthodox opinion; in fact, he and Joyce personally exchanged views on montage in Paris.) That artist-with-artist bond accords in general with the core of Weininger's cultural history detailing the persistent inner quarrel that often surfaced between certain influential academicians like Georg Lukács and many artists who were in the ranks of Expressionism, or were tainted by newer social psychology like Bergson's and Simmel's, intellectual history like Dilthey's, and philosophy of abstract art like Worringer's. It is good for the health of our own current critical discourse that Weninger does not over-emphasize political ideology as a factor but meticulously teases out the strands of values cited in attacks on Joyce as being a manifestation of late capitalism, a supposed surrealist, a relativist, an anarchic subject, a "grotesque-montage of the late bourgeoisie" (181). Whereas Lukács reasoned in line with the Soviet doctrine of Socialist Realism and was largely unhappy with much of avant-garde as not useful for the people, many public intellectuals fought against his canon as restricted academism. Among the more important artists who were tenacious resisters, Brecht in his notebooks regarded Joyce and Dos Passos as better models than Mann, and saw some parts of modernist literary experimentation as valuable. Among academics, in the postwar Adorno is credited for appreciating the truth values in Joyce's techniques, seeing a variety of productive "alienation," and this kind of greater leftist openness on his part contributed to the overall dynamics of reception. There is a huge gain in the way Weininger intelligently revisits the Left's century-long gnawing on the Joycean bone, because once again we obtain a confirmation of two key phenomena. One is a surprising documentation of the cultural process of broadening acceptance of Joyce as "canonical," whereby he becomes refashioned as a multi-purpose "calibration instrument" (Weninger's apt term, 202) of our times. The other major finding is that Joyce has emerged in that role for the twentieth century down to today in a way comparable to the role

fashioned by and for Goethe in the later eighteenth and over the course of the nineteenth century. Whatever may come next in this regard, the thoroughness of the German reception of Joyce—thoroughly and admirably documented by Weninger—is proof that Joyce won his struggle to insert himself in the canonical top line of the grand narrative.

In subtitling his book "an essay," Boysen experiments with reading the entire output of James Joyce from the perspective of the Irish cosmopolitan author's wish to celebrate secular love as the vibrant and pervasive power that needs no metaphysical constructions or excuses. Since Boysen knows ancient and medieval literature and philosophy, this ambitious exercise does not suffer from a certain kind of shallowness that often afflicts readings by scholars restricted to modern literature. Boysen demonstrates convincingly how in Joyce's writings love not only is grasped as positive empowerment through inter-human relationships but also is detected as potential in language. Interpreting Joyce's last work *Finnegans Wake* as a verbal act of love on a cosmic scale, Boysen concludes his treatment of Joyce's creative career on a triumphant note. Divided into five main sections each with subdivisions, the main emphasis of Boysen's study finally rests on *Finnegans Wake.* This profusely documented finding adds new depth to understanding Joyce in relation to a grand heritage, following in such footsteps as those of Dante. Boysen argues that over his lifetime Joyce shaped a belief in love as the primary principle by which human identity and meaning were or could be experienced in a "post-metaphysical" world. The thesis, that Joyce's examination of the power and efficacy of love in radically natural, de-romanticized terms that nonetheless led him to celebrate life, profiles him in marked contrast to the negative worldview of many of his modernist contemporaries and many of their postmodernist successors.

Boysen skilfully mobilizes comparative and contrastive references to the enormous body of Western thought found in Joyce and in his legacy. One often cited group includes significant contemporaries of Joyce, such as Freud and Jung; a far larger group from subsequent generations includes psychiatrists such as Kristeva and Lacan, philosophers such as Derrida, and numerous academic commentators and public intellectuals. As is appropriate in the case of a writer like Joyce, there are many occasions when older thinkers and authorities from Antiquity, the Middle

Ages, the Renaissance, Baroque, the Enlightenment, and Romanticism are adduced to illuminate Joyce's ideas. Present in less frequency are allusions to Joyce's closer predecessors (Goethe, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, et al.) and contemporary novelists (Proust and Mann) and other writers (e.g., the spiritualists, surrealists, existentialists, et al.). Boysen enriches his book by extensively citing materials in the original wordings from a large assortment of older and newer languages, showing a real sympathy for Joyce's own love of languages (as well as a remarkable scholarly capacity!). Section 3 is devoted to Joyce's early works, *Chamber Music, Dubliners, Exiles, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* These analyses lead up to section 4 on *Ulysses*. Of exceptional importance is the demonstration of how Joyce's ever expanding use of irony and multidirectional referentiality did not cripple his capacity to move toward an affirmation of life and how he came to regard both language and music as "amorous" and interactively linked to life as its own essential medium. Without elaborating the rich sources in romantic thought, Boysen starts off with Joyce's exploitation of the already extant concept of humankind's androgynous unity and the ways self or identity relates to the "other"/"otherness." As Boysen richly illustrates, this is for Joyce a natural process in which the particular and universal achieve reciprocal expression, for love and art create mirroring universes. Quite exciting is Boysen's interpretation that Joyce turns upside down the idea so widespread in the early twentieth century, namely that the presumptive death of God is a happening which debilitates or abolishes love. Rather, in Joyce's emerging system, love is all the more necessary because of our "unbelonging" (62 ff.); our encounter with otherness opens universality for us.

Boysen is very helpful (a) in explaining Joyce's interest in heterosexuality and his privileging of woman, which of course draws on older sources(e.g., for the coincidence of opposites, Cusanus and Bruno); likewise (b) in connecting Joyce's obsession with holes and bodily excretions to concepts of the earthbound human organism as a container, boundary, and means of access in a drama of separation that is overcome and in a very real manner yields a human continuum via propagation of the species (curiously, Joyce's great predecessor Rabelais is not mentioned here, but obviously could be added); and (c) likewise in connecting Joyce's hypostatization of music as the grand analog to love in all its manifestations (here a nod to Schopenhauer's and the Romantics' contribution, prior to the obvious beneficiaries Wagner, Nietzsche,

and Pater, would enhance the discussion). All in all, Boysen's argument, which links Joyce's early concept of epiphany with the overcoming of narcissism, with regression to unity with the maternal, and with analogous peak experiences, is quite original; Joyceans will digest this impressive new interpretive synthesis with zest.

Boysen basically eschews the pursuit of sources as a merely philological goal, but felicitously he highlights spiritual affinities with and echoes of other artists in Joyce's stories as nudges which guide readers to better understanding of characters, motivations, and plots. For example, he ranks (justifiably, I believe) the deep humanitarian ethic in "The Dead" alongside Mann's "Snow" subchapter in *The Magic Mountain* as one of the great humanistic statements of the twentieth century. The exposition of the multiple stages of Stephen Dedalus's struggle in *Portrait* and *Ulysses* to overcome repressive ideas and realize his own sexuality and nature is detailed and intricate. But because poetic creativity is properly analogized to motherhood and simultaneously to godhood, does that mean that we as readers should adopt a negative, even condemnatory tone toward Dedalus? Boysen's moralizing coloration of the developmental facts presses perhaps too far. The fact that Joyce was to soon discover the Stephen phase receding behind him as he grew older in his own life does not diminish the status of his achieved character Stephen, any more than, let's say, Goethe could or should revise the life of Werther, or Thomas Mann do anything retroactively about Tonio Kroeger, after having movingly captured actual existential anguish in their stories and cultural moments. Stephen clearly envisions a "consubstantiality of father and son" in *Ulysses,* as the novel also indicates through his symbolic rebirth as he exits through the garden gate. Not just Stephen, but also Bloom disappears into the plethora of life types and the family romance in *Finnegans Wake,* so that we can readily argue that Joyce moves on beyond *both* figures. With his magisterial exposition of the *Wake,* a splendid monograph in its own right, Boysen more than makes up for the occasional exaggeration resulting from his deep appreciation of the Bloom figure. His strategy of first positing his own general overview of Joyce, as seen in the unfolding of poetic means and thought through *Ulysses,* yields a truly impressive grand thesis. *Finnegans Wake* then emerges as a natural mirror on Joyce's own entire artistic evolution. Boysen engages in an exhilarating *tour de force* as he follows Joyce's use of sources and resources in ancient, medieval, and modern languages,

and of complex self-referentiality as the author relates intertextually to himself. It would be dizzying and require massive space to cite here just the major figures in the Western tradition who appear in various guises in the *Wake,* a task which has of course already brought forth a library of specialized reference works.

In part five on *Finnegans Wake,* we move with Boysen onto a plane of reflection where Joyce can legitimately be viewed in two lights. From one perspective we can credit him with accomplishing a titanic cultural shift in which, through *Finnegans Wake,* he replaces the decadent or moribund European tradition or grand narrative. From another perspective, we can understand his work as in fact a heroic act of renewal, because without the all-pervading Joycean discourse on love we would not so likely have rekindled our interest in the immense lore he brings back to our attention and re-infuses with energy, much as his predecessors Rabelais and Cervantes rescued the pre-Renaissance world through their respective critical acts of renewal. Boysen has contributed a coherent new framework within which to view the creative life and writings of one of the now most studied figures in literary history. This is no small achievement if we take into consideration the virtual army of interested scholars and the dozens of eminent artists and thinkers who felt challenged by or responded to Joyce—a veritable encyclopedic subject still demanding the attention of serious high-caliber comparatists, among whom Boysen now assumes his own place.

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Comptes rendus / Book Reviews

Jarrod Hayes, Margaret Higonnet, and William J. Spurlin, eds. *Comparatively Queer: Interrogating Identities Across Time and Cultures.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Pp. 234. ISBN: 9780230104365.

Comparatively Queer: Interrogating Identities Across Times and Cultures, edited by Jarrod Hayes, Margaret R. Higonnet, and William J. Spurlin, hails from an appropriately itinerant origin. Growing out of a panel at the 2004 MLA conference in Philadelphia and a series of International Comparative Literature Association sessions that spanned Hong Kong, Venice, and Rio de Janeiro, this powerful collection of essays examines how twenty-first century queer studies and comparative practices ought to influence each other. The editors offer a cogent collection of thought that easily vindicates the disciplinary fusion heralded by the volume's title. In their introduction, they describe the presentist bias in queer studies and the frequently Western assumptions of comparativism as two catalysts for *Comparatively Queer*'s intervention in both discourses. The editors' commitment to identity's intersectionality poises the volume to explore "new sites of heterogeneity and difference" that resist totalizing assumptions of any discourse (7). Moreover, by calling readers' attention to the established reliance of queer theory on postcolonial strategies of investigating alterity while emphasizing the assumptions of each discourse, the editors prepare their audience to see the book's interventions as both a logical consequence in the development of these critiques and an imperative interrogation of their unexamined axioms.

The first and most intellectually aggressive section of the book, "Crossing Time" interrogates and elaborates the historiographical phenomenon that Eve Sedgwick, the volume's dedicatee, identified when she wrote in *Tendencies* that for too long "heterosexuality has been permitted to masquerade so fully as History itself" (Sedgwick 11). "Crossing Time"

attempts to rethink dominant narratives of history and their teleological assumptions. Carla Freccero and Anjali Arondekar theorize alternative approaches to historiography itself, and they both disrupt the comfortable linearity that History, like a family tree, often presumes. Susan Lanser inverts Foucault's famous title and demands a "sexuality of history" which acknowledges "that history is also sexually constructed and that the large movements of societies and cultures can be read as and through sexuality" (72). In the other two contributions, Francesca Canadé Sautman invites us to reevaluate the "queer possibility" of "differenced bodies" in dynamic, migrant spaces from the past, and Kofi Campbell explores the linguistic and sexual ambiguities that the rise of vernacular languages instituted throughout medieval Europe (101). All of the scholarship in this section reexamines our understandings of the past and transforms any notions of a static, fixed history of sexuality into one that accounts for the fluid heterogeneity of lived experience.

Campbell's "Queer from the Very Beginning: (En)Gendering the Vernacular in Medieval France" is an appropriate opener, as it locates debates about queer sexual practices at the very moment of the first possibility for a comparative study of Western literature. Examining three texts that conflate the rise of vernacular languages with the practice of sodomy and gender instability, Campbell uncovers a dynamic linguistic and sexual world. Alanus de Lille's reactionary *De Planctu Naturae,* for example, laments the loss of Latinate grammar's ability to organize meaning and, with its inflections that forestall the confusion of genders, the sexes. De Lille explores reactions to a postlapsarian Europe that has fallen from both the linguistic Latinate ideal and Nature's heterosexual prescription. Campbell examines how these texts conflate the practices of grammar and sexuality to understand how medieval texts sought to police sexual practice and restrict gender indeterminacy. Highlighting the comparative nature of medieval literature itself, Campbell demonstrates the productive engagement of queer, comparative scholarship in medieval studies.

In "Figural Historiography: Dogs, Humans, and Cyanthropic Becomings," Carla Freccero presents the volume's most ambitious theoretical piece: an attempt to recuperate history from productive, teleological narratives (the "generative" histories Lee Edelman has aligned with hetero-reproductivity). In place of the stale practices of linear history, Freccero tracks "the promiscuous and errant movement of figures

across times and spaces" in "phantasmatic historiographies" that trace affective forces across time (46). Freccero's haunting figures unmake strict periodization and thereby reveal linear history as both pathologized and incapable of suppressing its lived traumas' eruptions into the present; figural historiography offers a practice of history that is "comparatively queer relative to any progressive, ameliorative rational accounts of historical process" (61). Freccero models this history in a case study that, like a collage, resists strict sequentiality with a series of observations and interrogations of our historical relationship with dogs, "partners in the crime of human evolution," as Donna Haraway has suggested (47). Tracing the figures of the "devouring dog" and the cynocephalic man across times and cultures and especially as guilty compatriot in violent New World conquests, Freccero discloses these figures as desires for both "unalienated masculine subjectivity" and "anarchic counterorder" before revealing how colonial cyanthropic encounters haunt our contemporary discourses of dog-human violence (56–57).

The next chapter approaches history more traditionally with a Foucauldian sense of epistemic shifts in historical process. In "Mapping Sapphic Modernity," Susan Lanser examines the sudden appearance and significance of representations of female, same-sex affection in early modernity and argues for their significance as signs of a changing social order. For Lanser, these representations mark an epistemic break and catalogue patriarchal western Europe's anxiety about maintaining hierarchical control over a culture moving steadily away from vertical assignations of power through the rise of Protestantism and print culture. Lanser charts an extensive number of female homoerotic representations around the turn of the seventeenth century, notices the narrative turn in most of them, and reveals that the ends of this narrative are nearly always to redesignate as male one of the female, homoerotic bodies and thereby curtail the possibility of relationships without men. These narratives allowed a Europe witnessing women rise to great positions of political authority in France, Spain, England, and Scotland to exorcise its anxieties about the "radical autonomy of Europe's largest subordinated caste" while also relieving these concerns by relocating female homoeroticism within the comforts of heterosexuality's familiar architecture (83). Lesbian existence, Lanser shows, threatened to upend patriarchal epistemology, ideologically overturn the entire chain of being, and destabilize the "logic of rulership" that

not only institutionalized men's power over women but also licensed divine right and even colonial authority (81). Because these representations occurred most frequently in Western Europe's coastal nations with the deepest colonial investments, Lanser's sapphic subjects provide a domestic "correlative in the notion of unfamiliar bodies, desires, and practices" and hints that "some of these 'others' might rise up to claim not only autonomy but also rulership" (85).

The other two essays that constitute "Crossing Time" have a more exact purview than Freccero's new historiography and Lanser's seismic, epistemic shift. Francesca Canadé Sautman explores histories of turn-of-the-twentieth-century sideshow and circus performers and considers how their exhibited differences could challenge gender identity and in turn an entire social matrix of normality in "'Fair Is Not Fair:' Queer Possibility and Fairground Performers in Western Europe and the United States, 1870–1935." Canadé Sautman broadens the intellectual scope of *Comparatively Queer* by rethinking "queer possibility" as a "multipronged" schema "that encompasses gender, nationality, social status and body configuration all at once" (107). The fairgrounds offer a fertile landscape for "queer possibility" as performers negotiated the demands of their particular act with "the compelling pull of normative socialization" (99).

Anjali Arondekar's closing chapter, "Time's Corpus: On Sexuality, Historiography, and the Indian Penal Code," completes the first half of the volume and develops an ethical methodology for confronting an unstable and ungraspable past that, the essay argues, must be acknowledged in epistemological, national, and social undertakings. Arondekar's "comparative imaginaries" indicate this indeterminacy and demand a historical practice that does not simplify or coerce, as "certain forms of nationalist and queer historiography" have attempted to do (113, 117). Arondekar examines the Naz Foundation's petition against Indian Penal code 377, which criminalized sodomy, and argues that, by attempting to recognize homosexual acts as indigenously Indian rather than imported practices from the West, the petition "merely inverts the language of historical ontology" (119). Arondekar hopes instead for a more radically uncertain historiography that channels the powerful indeterminacy of sexuality into a reevaluation of our past.

Clearly, "Crossing Time" does not limit itself to one half of spatio-temporal comparisons; each author considers spatial dynamics in her

analysis. Canadé Sautman's traveling fairs, Lanser's historical cartography, and Arondekar and Freccero's engagements with colonialism's legacies all bespeak an awareness that breaking a presentist disciplinary bias in order to cross time encourages thought that traverses geographical borders as well. Likewise, the second section, though committed to "Crossing Cultures" and more engaged with the recent past, also reveals the imperative of thinking time in area studies. Marie-Paule Ha examines the "incommensurate synchronicities" of Eastern and Western ideas of gender in present-day Hong Kong (222), and Bianca Johnson implicates all generic forms of narrative in a historical continuum. Though demonstrating how a presentist comparativism can benefit from queer intellectual interrogation, this section also reveals the necessity of theorizing history in transnational considerations.

Marie-Paule Ha interrogates the applicability of Western theories of gender and sexuality to geographies and populations outside of the West in her lucid and vigorous contribution "Double Trouble: Doing Gender in Hong Kong." Noting that the Chinese words for "sex" and "gender" entered the language only at the dawn of the twentieth century when Chinese intellectuals were inspired by the May Fourth emphasis on science, Ha turns our attention to Chinese cosmological understandings of corporeality that identified both masculine and feminine energies in each body. A person was predominantly male or female relative to the predominance of yin or yang within the self. This body is "truly androgynous" and exists in a "continuum of probability" (141). Contrasting a hegemonic, Western anatomical understanding of the body with the cosmological system of Chinese medicine, Ha suggests that women in Hong Kong, who when pregnant may visit Western-trained prenatal specialists and also observe classical Chinese medical wisdom, experience a "double embodiment" responsive to both Eastern and Western conceptions and practices of gender (144). Ha's intervention into the discourse of gender studies does not dismiss the influence of the West but demands a fresh "research framework" that would preserve cultural heterogeneities and resist the universalizing influence of Western theories (146).

The next essay argues similarly for the recognition of differences in queer comparisons; however, Thomas J.D. Armbrecht locates the sites of difference within the West itself, where nations like France and the United States "share consumerist, postmodern cultures" but approach

queer politics and liberties quite differently (154). Armbrecht cautions us against misaligning Western queer politics underneath an umbrella of hegemony that obscures distinctions like those he explores between France and the U.S. "Universal Particularism" examines the political ideologies of universalism and communitarianism (or particularism) as they have been practiced in France and the U.S., respectively, as the nations attempt to ensure equal protections for their citizens. Centering his argument around two 1999 articles of French legislation that attempted to give all non-procreative couples legal protection and increase the number of female representatives in government, Armbrecht deconstructs the border between universalism and particularism by showing how the French government attempted to negotiate equality for particular populations while still struggling to preserve their democratic ideal of universalism. His essay crescendos into a demand for intellectual queering that reevaluates the heterosexual paradigms on which Western nations try to arbitrate this equality, regardless of the ideological foundations on which they operate.

Bianca Jackson's contribution, "'Words Create Worlds': Rethinking Genre in the Animal Fables of Suniti Namjoshi and Vikram Seth," examines the posthuman stories of two queer Indian writers in diaspora. Jackson reveals how both authors align queers and beasts in a biaxial consideration of the commensurability of "the sociopolitical marginalization of animals and sexual dissidents" and the permeability of ostensibly unbreachable boundaries (173). Namjoshi and Seth model these transgressions not only in the interspecies relationships that root many of their stories but also in their reworkings of fable, fantasy, and literary form generally. Namjoshi's poems animate "emergent cultural systems" of posthuman lesbian feminist utopias that rebuff heteropatriarchal hegemonies, and Seth's melancholy tales often present the suffocation of interspecies queer possibility and desire by a dictatorial, human heteronormativity (187). Yet, while both authors challenge Western prejudices of mankind's supremacy over beasts, Jackson remains unconvinced that their imaginative worlds model an alternative to "the hierarchical structures of heteronormative patriarchy" as their representations engage in the same "anthropomorphism that they eschew" by ushering their beasts into mankind's dominant discourses (188). Jackson closes her chapter with an injunction against representations

or analyses that promote, rather than deconstruct, totalizing theories of animals and queers.

Finally, in a complex and challenging contribution, James Penney channels Jean Genet's revolutionary ethics into a critique of standard comparative practices themselves. Penney argues that the standard "terms of comparison"—those of nation, culture, class, and sexuality—fail to account for Genet's wholesale assault on "hegemonic Western identity formation's frontiers," an assault that, Penny argues, demolishes "the conditions of possibility of this identity" (196). Championing Genet's *Prisoner of Love,* a text that has proved too radical and, it seems, too queer for many contemporary critics, Penney contends that Genet's postmodern, oneiric memoir of his time spent in Jordan's Palestinian refugee camps celebrates an aesthetics and ethics of dismantling the Western self with a series of motifs that "evoke the scandal of disintegration that occurs when the fantasy propping up a structure of social meaning falls asunder" (206). Sexuality, "the terrain of the unthinkable, the unintelligible, the excluded," becomes one "privileged" technology of assault in the author's artillery (200). Genet's political and affective ties to the Palestinian resistance become, for Penney, "a radical negation of the values of Euro-American capitalist-colonialist modernity" that enable the traditional comparisons this volume interrogates (207).

Valerie Traub's trenchant closing reflections on the volume celebrate how these "contributors use the postcolonial critique of modernity's troubled relation to 'othered pasts' and 'othered' locales to develop new methods that extend beyond critique and which are adequate to the complexity of sexuality's history" (221–22). The reminder of this "complexity" attests the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches like those of *Comparatively Queer.* The singular strengths of this collective intervention are its responsible interrogation of the very terms on which any intellectual endeavor can claim to compare queerly and, as Traub suggests, the methodologies it advances to accomplish these queer comparisons.

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Norbert Bachleitner, Manfred Schmeling, Jürgen Wertheimer, et Karl Zieger. *Dialogische Beziehungen und Kulturen des Dialogs: Analysen und Reflexionen aus komparatistischer Sicht.* Ed. Beate Burtscher-Bechter et Martin Sexl, Innsbruck. Wien, Bozen: StudienVerlag, 2011. Pp. 271. ISBN: 9783706550727.

L'ouvrage se veut un hommage à l'activité, aux travaux et à la personne de Fridrun Rinner, comparatiste autrichienne connue entre autre pour ses activités au sein de l'AILC et pour ses recherches sur les littératures d'Europe centrale et sur les relations interculturelles – entre la France et l'Autriche notamment. Les deux éditeurs, eux-mêmes disciples de Fridrun Rinner, ont cependant choisi d'imposer aux auteurs le thème du dialogisme, conférant ainsi à l'ouvrage une certaine unité, de prime abord du moins.

Dans une introduction (9–22) bien structurée et riche de nuances, les éditeurs resituent le « dialogue » dans le contexte lexical et scientifique de la recherche comparatiste (9–10) avant d'évoquer sa relativité temporelle et culturelle (11). Puis ils attirent l'attention du lecteur sur les aspects négatifs du dialogue—réel ou fictionnel—et sur son potentiel dangereux (13–18). Loin d'un plaidoyer candide en faveur du dialogue, les éditeurs posent avec beaucoup de finesse la question du rôle de la recherche comparatiste dans la construction des entités dialogiques et dans la réévaluation du pouvoir et de la valeur du dialogue interculturel (18).

Dans la première des quatre contributions (23–86), Jürgen Wertheimer se demande à quel point le dialogue est effectivement dialogique. Dans une première partie (24–69), consacrée au dialogue en tant que phénomène littéraire et social à l'époque des Lumières, l'auteur déconstruit tout d'abord le « mythe de la conversation naturelle » (24–25) avant de se pencher sur le scepticisme croissant vis-à-vis de la forme dialogique (28–30). Il revient ensuite sur les positions de Wittgenstein et Buber, Deleuze et Parnet, Bakhtine et ses exégètes Watzlowick et Goffmann ou encore Kopperschmidt (30–41). L'auteur de l'article, victime de l'ambition de son projet, ne parvient malheureusement pas à se défaire d'une certaine nébulosité dans le résumé bien trop

concis de ces différentes théories. Un examen circonstancié des formes dialogiques dans différents extraits littéraires (*Minna von Barnheim* et *Emilia Galotti* de Lessing, *Empedokles* et *Hyperion* de Hölderlin, *Penthesilea* de Kleist, 43–68) lui permet de mettre en lumière la complexité du phénomène, les causes et les conséquences de ses échecs et la valeur du silence dans le dialogue sur un plan littéraire et phénoménologique. Pour qui n'est pas spécialiste du XVIIIe siècle, la lecture est quelque peu entravée par les remises en contexte insuffisantes voire inexistantes des œuvres abordées. Dans la seconde partie de l'article (69–84), liée à la précédente de façon relativement artificielle, l'auteur se demande si le dialogue entre les cultures ne serait pas un modèle dialogique occidental non transposable aux autres cultures. Après une « digression dans d'autres mondes dialogiques » qui cumule les citations (73–78), il propose de voir dans la quête des similitudes, et non des conformités exactes, le but du dialogue interculturel. Mais le plus grand mérite de cette contribution réside dans la conclusion, dans laquelle l'auteur appelle de ses vœux une « grammaire du malentendu » et donne un certain nombre de pistes de recherche et de réflexions à mener au sein de la littérature comparée afin de mieux cerner le phénomène dialogique en contexte interculturel (80–81).

La seconde contribution, de Karl Zieger (87–146), traite du « dialogue franco-autrichien au miroir des médiateurs culturels » en s'appuyant sur les exemples concrets de la réception des œuvres de Zola en Autriche et des œuvres de Schnitzler en France. Dans un premier temps, l'auteur se penche sur la correspondance de Zola puis de Schnitzler avec leurs traducteurs respectifs pour mieux déterminer le rôle et la position du médiateur culturel au sein des champs littéraires, artistiques et intellectuels concernés (91–114). Il aborde ensuite le domaine de la critique littéraire journalistique et de ses stéréotypes (114–22), la relativité culturelle de la définition des genres littéraires (122–29), « le dialogue dans l'impasse » que Schnitzler mena en vain avec les théâtres français (129–40) pour finir par un examen critique rapide de la réception des adaptations de ses œuvres au théâtre et au cinéma (141–42). Zieger dresse ainsi le portrait détaillé de deux réceptions littéraires et met en exergue le rôle et l'impact des médiateurs dans le dialogue culturel. Si le sujet de l'article n'est pas particulièrement novateur, ses nombreuses citations, dates, exemples de traductions et informations factuelles diverses renforcent une assise scientifique indéniable

qu'étayent encore une démarche systématique et une écriture élégante. L'ensemble rend bien compte de la complexité des structures et des réseaux en jeu lors d'une réception, dans une perspective interculturelle et comparatiste qui semble partiellement faire écho aux pistes de réflexions esquissées par Wertheimer dans sa conclusion.

Le transfert franco-autrichien est également à l'honneur dans la troisième contribution de l'ouvrage, dans laquelle Nobert Bachleitner s'intéresse au « dialogue des littératures et ses obstacles » (147–86). En s'appuyant sur le succès du transfert du *Juif Errant* d'Eugène Sue, il explique le fonctionnement des « Scheda », un moyen employé par la haute aristocratie pour contourner la censure (150–51). Puis il emprunte la forme d'un monologue intérieur fictionnel prêté au censeur autrichien Moshamer pour évoquer la traduction du *Comte de Monte-Cristo* et les obstacles de la réception de Dumas en Autriche (151–57). Après avoir examiné sous un angle critique l'activité de traduction d'Heinrich Börnstein et son rôle dans la diffusion des comédies parisiennes (158–64), Bachleitner montre qu'en dépit du cadre juridique mis en place après 1848, l'autocensure est de mise chez les traducteurs (164–70). L'auteur insiste en particulier sur la volonté du traducteur de *Mme. Bovary* d'adapter l'œuvre aux goûts et à la morale du public bourgeois en diffusant une image particulièrement « bien-pensante » du monde selon une conception de la littérature que Flaubert tentait justement de combattre par son roman (170). L'auteur de l'article fait ensuite le point sur les « facteurs et médias qui favorisent le dialogue entre la France et l'Autriche » (171–74), s'attarde sur les traductions viennoises de Zola sans pouvoir éviter quelques redites avec l'article précédent (174–80), avant d'évoquer la diffusion autrichienne des œuvres d'Octave Mirbeau (180–84). L'article décline ainsi dans un style teinté d'humour tout une palette de dialogues littéraires, plus ou moins aboutis selon les médiateurs et les circonstances (juridiques, artistiques, historiques, etc.).

Enfin, dans la quatrième et dernière contribution de l'ouvrage, Manfred Schmeling analyse la dimension métaphorique—au sens large du terme—des relations dialogiques interculturelles (187–271). Concrètement, l'auteur se propose de contribuer à l'élaboration d'une « poétique des relations interculturelles » en interrogeant le rôle de la métaphore dans ce contexte spécifique selon divers paradigmes : historique, politique,

littéraire, linguistique, esthétique, etc. Après avoir rappelé la complexité du phénomène métaphorique (189–92), il met en évidence à quel point la littérature mais aussi les discours théoriques (193–99) et les textes journalistiques (199–201) évoquant des relations interculturelles sont saturés de métaphores. L'exemple du mariage dans le contexte journalistique des relations franco-allemandes lui permet ainsi de différencier métaphore ponctuelle et métaphore symbolique, mais également d'analyser comment une telle métaphore peut contribuer à la construction fallacieuse d'identités stables sur le modèle anthropomorphique (202–05). Schmeling examine ensuite rapidement ce qu'il appelle le « complexe de Médée », c'est-à-dire l'échec ou le refus des relations interculturelles, au travers de la réécriture du mythe par Dea Loher notamment (205–09). Puis il décline les diverses fonctions et implications idéologiques que peut revêtir ou soustendre la métaphore dans l'écriture de Johann Wolfgang Goethe (209–27), André Gide (227–39), Romain Rolland (239–44) et Yvan Goll (245–55). Au cours d'une démarche brillante d'érudition, l'auteur s'interroge sur le rapport entre l'usage que font les auteurs cités de la métaphore et leur conception des relations interculturelles, leur environnement historique et leur destinée individuelle. Une digression rapide sur les implications méthodiques de ses observations pour la discipline comparatiste enrichit la démonstration d'une réflexion plus théorique (232–34). Dans un chapitre consacré aux « modèles de l'hybride au XXe siècle » (255–60), Schmeling pose la question de savoir si, « au-delà du contexte postcolonial et postmoderne, le phénomène de la culture hybride ne se laisse pas généraliser étant donné que l'hybridité est en soi une expression métaphorique qui ouvre d'emblée un terrain de jeu herméneutique bien plus grand et plus complexe » (255). Il se penche enfin sur la métaphore de la métamorphose dans le contexte interculturel à la lumière de *L'Homme qui parle* de Mario Vargas Llosa et des *Vers sataniques* de Salman Rushdie (260–65). Par la variété des œuvres, des écrivains et des paradigmes abordés, l'article met en lumière, avec beaucoup de finesse, la persistance littéraire et sociologique mais également l'éclatante richesse du phénomène métaphorique en contexte interculturel.

Les éditeurs de l'ouvrage, Beate Burtscher-Bechter et Martin Sexl, ont fait le choix de limiter le nombre de contributions et d'imposer un thème central, celui du dialogisme, afin de garder à cet hommage scientifique le caractère d'une monographie. Le projet était louable et

il aurait pu aboutir si tous les auteurs impliqués avaient joué le jeu, ce qui n'est pas le cas. Mais même si les contributions sont de qualité très variable, l'ouvrage a le mérite de contribuer à la discussion comparatiste sur le dialogisme.

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Douwe Fokkema. *Perfect Worlds: Utopian Fiction in China and the West.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011. Pp. 448. ISBN: 9789089643506.

Places that don't exist, not surprisingly, exist everywhere, and everywhere enthrall writers with the possibilities posed by their condition of impossibility. The history of utopian imaginings in the Western literary canon, from Plato to Thomas More and from Voltaire to Huxley and Le Guin, is well known: the lenses through which, since the eighteenth century, Western readers have customarily viewed their literary heritage tend to bring into sharpest focus those works that display a certain discomfort with their own moment in time and whose very restlessness generates those innovations that turn the wheels of history forward. We attend most assiduously, that is, to those works that openly strive, in one way or another, to make things new.

In the domain of form and genre, this critical fascination with paradigm busting leads to high regard for successful experiments with novel modes of writing. In the domain of social commentary, the same tendency brings to the foreground those works that, impatient with the limits of realist critique, set out to imagine new worlds altogether. The unfortunate corollary to this predisposition, among the heirs of the Enlightenment, to recognize and commemorate a long history of utopian writing in the West may well be a (generally unspoken) inclination to suppose this history to be *distinctively* Western, and to view with some skepticism—if indeed, it is considered at all—the possibility that commensurable traditions might be found in other, non-Western literary cultures.

The late Douwe Fokkema, a faculty member at Utrecht University and one-time president of the International Comparative Literature Association, undertakes in *Perfect Worlds* to complicate such an assumption. In the broadest terms, his book offers a comparative reading of the literary histories of utopian imaginings in China and Europe / America over a span of roughly 2500 years, with the term "utopian" taken to encompass both the aspirational abstractions of eutopian fantasy and the nightmarish prognostications of dystopian critique. The sheer ambition of the undertaking might seem foolhardy were it not for the remarkably expansive erudition the author has brought to the task. Incisive discussions of the achingly distant or painfully familiar worlds conjured by dozens of representative works present a rich panoply of often radical revisionings of human possibility and rapidly earn the reader's confidence in a tour guide equally conversant in the mores of New Atlantis, Icaria, Peach Blossom Spring, One State, and Gilead.

There is something of the tour book's largesse in Fokkema's capaciousness of vision. Each work sampled is given comparable treatment: plots are summarized, principal social and political concerns elaborated, and historical contexts and intertextual lineages duly noted. The ensuing commentaries are uniformly thoughtful, engaging, and well-informed, making the book a tremendous resource for anyone planning an academic course or, indeed, a research project touching on its themes. As in a tour book, however, the ligatures among individual sections are relatively weak. While the generally chronological structure distinguishes *Perfect Worlds* from a pure reference work and allows the attentive front-to-back reader to reconstruct trajectories of various kinds in the literary history of the genre, the segmented nature of the presentation also invites the more narrowly instrumental and casually serendipitous forms of reading one might associate with a literary or historical encyclopedia.

Fokkema presents, in the form of four hypotheses, a set of interpretive threads that help to weave together his presentations of individual works and to guide the reader through what would otherwise be an indigestible mass of material. Utopian fictions, according to his first hypothesis, tend to arise from moments of ideological crisis, such as the one much of Europe faced in the early sixteenth century, when there is an urgently felt need for creative rethinking of existing political or social arrangements.

They tend to flourish, second, in contexts of relative secularization—such as the Enlightenment or periods of Chinese history dominated by a Confucian outlook—when expectations of a blissful afterlife provide less reliable conduits for aspirational imaginings. Their dystopian varieties, third, emerge most forcefully in response to the actualization of statist efforts at social engineering, as the resulting restrictions on individual freedoms provoke a backlash of grimly parodic anti-authoritarian critique such as we find among many writers of twentieth-century Europe and China. And finally, the broad trajectories of utopian fiction in China and Europe have moved in opposite directions, with Confucian utopianism, rooted in a nostalgic longing for the past, having been increasingly displaced in China since the late nineteenth century with an avidly optimistic, even utopian embrace of the "modern," while twentieth-century Western utopianists—Hilton, Hesse, and Huxley among them—have turned to the Chinese philosophical tradition for correctives to the perceived excesses of that same modernity.

All of these hypotheses are potentially worthy of exploration and debate, and Fokkema's book provides a generous collection of case studies through which they might be considered. The elaboration of such arguments, however, rarely appears to be his primary concern in his presentation of his literary selections, with the result that readers are left largely to their own devices in assessing the validity of his assertions. The (entirely worthy) objective of presenting a comprehensive and balanced historical survey of the genre appears to have trumped, for the author, that of building a strong case for any of his four conjectures, leaving them available as—perhaps in equal measure—easy targets and potentially generative provocations for his readers.

For all of its accomplishment, *Perfect Worlds* falls rather short of its specifically comparative aspirations. While the gesture of juxtaposing roughly commensurable Chinese and European literary productions can itself—given the geographical insularity of much literary scholarship in both fields—be a productive one, the payoff in this case is disappointing in two respects. The promise implied by the volume's subtitle—and seemingly affirmed in the introduction—of rough parity in attention to the two traditions is dashed by the table of contents, which reveals that eleven of the fifteen chapters will be devoted entirely

to European or American authors. Unfortunately, even the individual discussions of these authors in these eleven chapters remain, for all their erudition, entirely sealed within a Eurocentric frame, seemingly oblivious to the possibilities of even passing comparative gestures. The three chapters devoted primarily to Chinese writings (one on classical and early modern philosophical and literary utopias, one on nineteenth-century Chinese Occidentalism, and one on Mao's revolutionary utopianism and its literary aftershocks) point to the possibility of comparative analysis, but ultimately venture only rarely beyond the benchmarking function of noting superficial parallels and contrasts.

Two well-wrought chapters concerned with inter-cultural inspirations and borrowings, focused on the sinophilia of the European Enlightenment in one case and on Chinese reform movements' adulation of Western learning on the other, offer a considerably more capacious space for comparative interpretation, as does an interlude chapter concerned with the importance of island geography as a utopian topos in both literary traditions. That most of the chapters do not substantially engage with the book's comparative premise, however, leaves largely unrealized many of the interpretive possibilities suggested not only by Fokkema's four provisional hypotheses but also by the very juxtaposition within a single volume of the remarkable array of literary materials he assembles here. Some would offer, in the author's defense, that the radical incommensurability of literary worlds makes thorough-going comparison a pointlessly sterile enterprise, producing, as it so often does, tables of forced resemblances or, more often, rigid and implacable dichotomies. Fokkema, however, would clearly reject such a view. He believes deeply in the intellectual generativity of explicitly comparative literary analysis. While he does not pursue it as far in this book as one might have hoped, he does lay down a valuable scholarly foundation for future work, which will no longer be excused for imagining that lastingly consequential utopian fiction is the exclusive preserve of the Western literary tradition.

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Jasbir Jain. *Indigenous Roots of Feminism: Culture, Subjectivity and Agency.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2011. Pp. 368. ISBN: 978-8132104391.

The long tradition of verbal expression in both oral and written form in the subcontinent naturally yields an equally long tradition of representation of women in literatures of all kinds, beginning from texts of social law (*Dharmashāstras*), philosophy (*Upanishads*) to various branches of *kāvya.* The field defined by and dependent on the interacting effects of these representations forms the 'Indian' culture within which this wide ranging study places the formation of female subjectivity and women's agency resulting from it. The central premise from which the book proceeds is that the conceptual frame within which gendered resistance can be theorized must be located in specific temporal and cultural space. The study begins with the construction of women characters in the *mahākāvya* and *nāṭaka* vis à vis their reactions, accommodation, negotiation, interrogation and resistance in the context of institutionalised social law and continues through the redrawing of these characters to address the realities of women's lives in the contemporary Indian context. In Jain's view, the women's movement is a "social happening which at a later stage ... honed by its self-consciousness and interlaced with ideology ... came to be supported by sophisticated theory" (2). This characterization of feminism in India opens up questions that are inevitable: the issue of identity linked to "the freedom to choose and be recognized as a 'countable' human being" which, Jain argues, implies discarding certain indigenous concepts like *purushārtha* (loosely translated as the meaning or goal for human life) which are not gendered (3) in the various systems of Indian philosophy and in the different religious movements.

But western feminism insists on the gendering of the individual and on the individual herself, rather than on locating the individual as the site of multiple identifications, which impact the perception and performance of gender roles and practices in Indian society. Marking this difference Jain does investigate the impact of class, caste, and ethnicity upon the construction of gender in the context of contemporary India, using the representations of women's subjectivity and agency in various kinds of literary, oral, and audio-visual genres as material.

These cultural representations, seen in a temporal frame, refigure gender roles and relations in the context of lived lives, contesting the dictates of patriarchy both indigenous and colonial, in a dialectic that we may well define as characteristic of postcolonial societies. This dialectic is especially evident in the debates regarding reform and modernity played out through the positioning of women's bodies and minds in public and private space. The assertion "feminism insists on recognition of agency, of a separate space but does not refute relationships" (3) allows the author to locate the process of construction of gendered identity in socio-temporal reality. In a society like India, this construction is the result of a dialectic between colonial and traditional discourses. On the one hand, there is sustained discussion using materials like memoirs, biographies, autobiographies and recorded voices of women speaking about their experience of socially gendered existence. The space thus carved by women as the ground for the articulation of their identities, extends through art, literature, pilgrimage, trance and womanly wiles. But the author also considers the legitimization and socialization of such experience by discussing legislation that framed the autonomy of women in body and being. Thus the space inhabited by men and women in contemporary Indian society is historically located through a discussion of the cultures of reception formed around widow remarriage, child marriage, age of consent, cohabitation as a legal right and the legalization of women's autonomy regarding the body in the Rukhmabai case in 1880 and gender organization in dalit societies in contemporary times. The author's scholarly curiosity and her intense effort to satisfy it provides an object lesson in research commitment for which she is respected in the area of Comparative Literature. The interdisciplinarity of her work requires far more meticulous and detailed editorial skills than the publisher has been able to provide. The consistency in the transliteration of words from Indian languages, despite the author's explanation in the Preface, leaves much to be desired. The essays are woven around a series of lectures representing gender as concept-in-operation in the subcontinent, so for the Indian reader, the interpretations are open to further subtleties. For example, the provenance of *purushārtha* as ungendered is undemonstrated: are we to find the discussion of *purusha* and *prakriti* and their respective conceptualizations in philosophy adequate as an explanation for linking *purushārtha* to gender? Does *purusha* mean male as equated

with human? The complexity of the philosophical concepts require more evidence to substantiate this claim. This factor has some bearing on the debates constantly occuring on the issue of tradition and modernity, the alleged western nature of feminism and its Indian manifestation, all of which are addressed directly and with much subtlety elsewhere in the book. Clarity on such aspects may impact upon the formation of feminist theory in India, and the mores by which women in this country live and work. This book attempts to weave these strands of thought together, and hence prompts the reader to demand further contextualization. In fact, the author's reservations about feminism as understood in the west may well be framed in her pointing out that patriarchy has it's own compulsions, which is why no one has been able to come up with an ideal role model for a man which fits the demands of wholeness of body mind and soul (5). As a feminist, Jain raises the question: "Is not this a question we ought to raise and proceed to re-examine the notion of masculinity? Feminism demands exactly this: that the construction of masculinity be based on the wholeness of man rather than on power and authority" (5). It is the author's sensitivity to these subtleties that prompt the reader to demand greater clarity.

Such issues prompt us to ponder over a statement like "the attempt for the time being is to free feminism from the underpinnings of ideology and relate it to the relationship between the biological body and its location in social environment, and to go ahead and examine the nature of this gendered reality" (3). My question is, how can feminism be freed of an ideology when it is itself one? This may mark the need for the theoretical framework of Comparative Literature in service to the best traditions of English Literature in India, of which the author is one of the most widely respected scholars working today. Comparative Literature students who have had the privilege of Jain's research and writing will agree that among her most valuable contributions to our discipline are her clarity and groundedness. As one of these students, I submit that the basis of research in Comparative Literature should be to provide exactly the theoretical framework for the practical research that Jain has done: a framework of reception for the cultural constructions that is required to study what she describes as "the manner in which (cultural constructs) are represented, that is their nature as signifiers in order to connect them with what they signified to examine

the manner in which they had changed through social pressures and political interventions" (268). The construction of a theoretical framework for such reception studies is available from Comparative Literature. Moreover, one would want such a framework for students of the discipline, since it escapes the limitation of what is practised in India (at least in the field of Culture Studies). One has high hopes that this author can in the future supply us with just such a framework, since she has done so on a number of occasions in her earlier work in other areas of scholarship.

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K. Alfons Knauth, ed. *Translation & Multilingual Literature. Traduction & Littérature Multilingue.* Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011. Pp. 353. ISBN: 9783643113887.

Ours seems to be a time when comparative literature is quickly moving toward expansion. From an all-encompassing perspective we cannot disregard the steady endeavor of professional comparatists to appropriate other areas of the contemporary intellectual discourse. The volume edited by K. Alfons Knauth maps out one of these new developments: the engagement of comparative literature with translation issues, in the context of a "worldwide intertraffic of the mind" (3).

As outlined by the contributors, translation emerges as an epistemological metaphor that fosters dialogue between the verbal and the visual, multilingualism and interculturalism, science and poetry, literature and the media. In his introductory essay in the volume, Knauth sums up the efforts of the contributors to bridge the gaps between these fields, while striving to legitimize a new field of research situated between translation studies and comparative literature, a Babelian area that has not been thoroughly investigated.

For all its diversity, the volume charts a common endeavor: all the contributors attempt to devise tools and to coin analytical categories in order to enhance the potential of comparative studies for dialogue with purportedly distinct areas of cultural research. In order to move toward new horizons in research, comparative literature must draw

methodologically on cultural anthropology, ethnology, and semiotics for suitable new models, devices, and concepts. Recent developments in the discipline provide a great opportunity for comparative studies to reassess its ability to reshuffle some of its key concepts.

The authors single out translation as a *transgressive* agency that moves beyond linguistic and national borders, styles, genres, and media. In "L'autotraduction dans l'oeuvre trilingue d'Yvan Goll," Manfred Schmeling examines the case of a plurilingual author who turns translation—and more specifically self-translation—into a device that can link distinct and occasionally belligerent languages, cultures and nations. As Schmeling emphasizes, self-translation engenders a series of syncretic strategies operating between styles, sociolects, and narrative recipes. It relies on a genuine aesthetic suited to the complex and ambiguous cultural background of a trilingual writer.

In an interesting contribution devoted to comics ("The Language of Music in Comics, Bandes dessinées and Fumetti"), Monika Schmitz-Emans examines how the recent move by literary studies toward the cross-breeding of high-brow culture with consumerist symbolic practices relates to translation processes and multingualism. Graphic storytelling is a type of cultural representation based on a transfer process from one context to another, and from one medium to another. Schmitz-Emans shows how comics based on different pictorial languages can be regarded as multilingual. By combining words and images, graphic storytelling offers a special option for multilingualism (195).

Marianne Simon-Oikawa ("From Translation to Supranational Poetry: The Polyglot Poems of Pierre Garnier and Niikuni Seiichi") analyzes the innovative cross-cultural communication and transfer found in the plurilingual poetry of the Franco-Japanese team. These writers aim to replace the idea of translation with concepts such as "transmission" and "supranational poetry," which they claim showcase a modern type of universalism, "a language transmissible on an area infinitely larger than that of small national groups" (126).

This volume is to be commended for opening up the traditional field of translation studies to encompass a much wider area of intercultural communication. This broader scope can be seen especially in John Milton's contribution "Adaptation Studies and Translation Studies." Milton examines the intersection between the traditionally

monolingual area of adaptation—which looks mainly at screen adaptations—and translation studies. Such an integrative move results in what Mario Marcus and Knauth identify as an interdisciplinary type of translation which attempts to overcome the segregation of science and poetry in "Translation between Science and Poetry: Chemical Poems." The poetry in question was composed by the scientist Marcus himself. Boasting a radical translation across cultural camps, this type of cultural "hybrid" creates a particular relationship between creator and audience and calls for an appropriate interdisciplinary approach.

This volume introduces the reader to a series of concepts and strategies of cultural polyphony that can be seen to provide rich new contexts for comparative research.

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Lucia Boldrini. *Autobiographies of Others: Historical Subjects and Literary Fiction.* New York: Routledge, 2012. Pp. 211. ISBN: 978041550737.

Published in the Routledge studies in twentieth-century literature series, this volume studies the particular genre of "autobiographies" written by other authors, or historical figures fictionalized in the first person. Lucia Boldrini, who teaches at the University of London, and who has published previously on this topic, proposes to concentrate on six such novels, although she briefly discusses several others. The six, all published between 1947 and 2000 but from different parts of the world, are: David Malouf, *An Imaginary Life* (1978), an "autobiography" of Ovid; Peter Carey, *The True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000); Michael Ondaatje, *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* (1970); Gilbert Adair, *The Death of the Author* (1992), based on Paul de Man; Anna Banti, *Artemisia* (1947); and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, *Autobiografía del general Franco* (1992).

Boldrini's theoretical framework, as well as her style and language (including some fondness for wordplay), are influenced by deconstruction and postmodernism. A sentence stating her project in the

introduction reads as follows: "This is what, I suggest, distinguishes these works from earlier or neighboring forms of first-person narratives centered on historical characters: the acknowledgment, even self-consciousness, in their structure, thematic texture, and intellectual premises, of the implications of the autobiographical in the construction of subjectivity, in the operation involved in assuming another's voice, of the gap—historical and philosophical—inherent in the "double I" they stage" (5). The literary device of the "double I," encompassing both the voice of the subject and of the narrator or author, leads Boldrini to coin the term "heterobiography" to describe these texts. The shifting between voices and genres, as well as the sometimes metafictional self-consciousness, qualifies these works at least to some extent as postmodernist.

The Australian writer David Malouf's "heterobiography" of the exile of the Roman poet Ovid is described by Boldrini in the first chapter as an "intensely lyrical book of just over 150 pages," written in epistolary form. Critics have seen its thematic concern with exile from the center of empirical power as a reflection on postcolonial Australia. Boldrini finds that it also "writes back" to D.H. Lawrence's *Kangaroo* (1923) in its study of the revelations of life among "savages" to a cultivated European. Ultimately, however, the blending of the "double I" as well as the polysemic language of the book involve the author in an investigation not only of historical patterns but also of the construction of the human itself. Boldrini also discusses an Australian writer in the second chapter, this time with subject matter from Australia's own historical-legendary material: the story of the nineteenth-century outlaw Ned Kelly. Something of a Robin Hood figure in Australia, Kelly represented the poor Irish settlers oppressed by the powerful English landowners. She cites Eric Hobsbawm's book on bandits in defining the Kelly gang's ethical system as portrayed by Carey: "legally in the wrong but morally in the right" (54). The heterobiographical genre allows Carey to give a voice to the barely literate, historically silenced Kelly. Ned's account of his life is presumably addressed to his daughter, but offers an alternative historical narrative to Australians in general. Boldrini effectively analyzes the literary procedures used by Carey to portray Kelly's voice, but also remarks that his doing so raises an ethical question: to what extent does he have the right to appropriate another's

voice? This question represents for Boldrini the ethical dilemma of the entire genre: "Heterobiography posits a choice between two ethical positions, each of which involves a symmetric unethical risk: either refuse the appropriation of another's voice but leave them without any voice; or give them the possibility of having their history represented, but at the cost of substituting one's voice for theirs, appropriating it, and with that, their identity" (66).

Michael Ondaatje, in *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid: Left Handed Poems*, also gives voice to a legendary outlaw figure. Ondaatje's work raises further generic questions: it has been called both a long poem and a short novel, and the author himself called it a "pre-novel book." He also makes extensive use of photography, which Boldrini, drawing on Roland Barthes and Susan Sontag, analyzes in some detail. Just as these photographs invite us to see visions that the naked eye would not perceive, so they complement the heterobiographical project in questioning both biography and photography as conventionally realistic, or "truthful" genres. In his "left-handed poems," Ondaatje transgresses the boundaries of the body, portraying not only violence but also externalized bodily functions and grotesque transformations. Boldrini argues that such aestheticization of violence exposes the myths of the American West. Billy, too, appears as sensitive, "thin-skinned," unlike the legendary Western gunslinger. She finally claims that Ondaatje's heterobiography investigates the nature of postmodern identity through "the delirious, the metamorphic, the bodily, the erotic, and what we might call the madness of the documentary (118)."

Gilbert Adair's parody of "the de Man affair" in *The Death of the Author* investigates postmodernism from quite a different angle. Applying Roland Barthes's concept literally, Adair has his narrator Leopold Sfax, clearly a stand-in for de Man, speak from beyond the grave. Boldrini cites de Man's own "Autobiography as De-Facement" to indicate his role in the questioning of the "autobiographical pact," or the reader's acceptance of autobiography as truth. Yet his words came back to "haunt him posthumously" (124) with Ortwin de Graef's discovery of the articles he had published in his youth in the collaborationist press during the Nazi occupation of Belgium. In the novel, professor Leopold Sfax is French rather than Belgian, and engineers the death of a PhD student who is about to track down the articles he published in the

Nazi-controlled journal *Je suis partout* in Paris. Sfax directly addresses the reader as if in an autobiography and then tells various versions of his life story. Further deconstructing the autobiographical pact, he confesses to lying.

> Reader, I tell a lie ... English, indeed, had always been for me *a language to lie in,* the language in which I have sought to dissolve or destroy the past—the past which not even God, as they say, can alter. (137)

The novel, Boldrini argues, ends in deconstructionist aporias, the first a "brick wall" encountered by the investigator of the murder case and the second the failed attempt of theory to absolve biography. Does Adair's book finally attack both deconstruction and de Man or is it satirizing the attacks on them? Like the other heterobiographies, *The Death of the Author* raises ethical dilemmas without solving them.

The final chapter, titled "The Polluted Swamp: Heterobiography, Dialogue, and History," focusing on Anna Banti's *Artemisia* and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán's *Autobiografía del general Franco,* is in my opinion the best, and the clearest, in the book. Boldrini is particularly insightful on Banti's "heterobiographical" novel on the life of the baroque female painter Artemisia Gentileschi. Unlike the previously discussed authors, Banti uses the "double I" to construct a dialogue between herself as present narrator and the historical character. Banti had already written a manuscript on Artemisia, an attempt to rescue and defend her against the opinion of her husband, the well-known art critic Roberto Longhi, that she was an inferior painter and a "terrible woman." The manuscript was lost during the war when the Germans bombed Banti's home in Florence. Writing in 1944, she struggles to create three parallel stories: Artemisia's life, re-writing the lost manuscript, and her own loss and trauma. Artemisia's struggle to defend herself against her rapist in court, and her lifelong struggle to assert herself as an artist in a male-dominated field, parallel Banti's recovery from the war and her own struggles. Artemisia and Anna actually speak to each other. Midway through the novel, when she is no longer writing amidst rubble but in a room of her own, the author speaks of her subject in the third person, also telling the story of her research on the painter in London. Boldrini compares Banti with Virginia Woolf, who wrote fictional biographies using the first person. Banti was well-acquainted with Woolf's work,

and translated *Jacob's Room* into Italian. She also cites Sartre's writings on committed literature and Marguérite Duras's wartime diaries as possible models for Banti although, curiously, not Simone de Beauvoir. Her discussion of the novel shows not only critical acumen but also an emotional tie with the writing.

After a brief discussion of a novel based on heterobiographical accounts of the lives of Virginia Woolf's two maidservants, Alicia Giménez-Bartlett's 1997 *Una habitación ajena* (which she translates as "A Room of Someone Else's"), Boldrini concludes the chapter with an unusual heterobiography in that its subject is not a silenced historical figure but an all-too vocal near contemporary one and its narrator is not equivalent to the author but another character. Marcial Pombo (who does bear some similarities with his creator), an anti-Franco militant, has been commissioned to write "a supposed autobiography" of the late dictator. Thus "Franco," in an arrogant monologue, gives an account and justification of his life and actions, but one that is constantly interrupted by Pombo's criticisms and challenges. Rather than dialogue, as between Artemsia and her narrator, we have a kind of cacophony of discordant voices. In the end, Pombo has told the story of the two Spains that faced each other, representing the "polluted swamp" of both language and history that continue to haunt without resolution.

With her six major examples, as well as with the ones discussed briefly, Lucia Boldrini has succeeded in establishing heterobiography as an important modern genre as well as surveying the range of its possibilities.

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Jacob Edmond. *A Common Strangeness: Contemporary Poetry, Cross-Cultural Encounter, Comparative Literature.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2012. Pp. 272. ISBN: 9780823242603.

Jacob Edmond's book delves into hybrid zones of cross-cultural encounter, linguistic interplay, poetic reciprocation and dialogue. Drawing on Svetlana Boym's conceptualization of estrangement as both a

lifestyle and an artistic strategy and Marjorie Perloff's "poetics of the ordinary,"[1] Edmond explores the intertwinings of aesthetics and politics, tracing how "the poetics of strangeness shapes the global"—how local traditions become displaced, superimposed or integrate into new forms of transnational writing. He defines strangeness as the "superimposition of singularities through which the poles of sameness and difference are constructed." Though resistant to the overarching narratives, the singularities appear as products of "overlaid encounters and exchanges" and, as such, overcome the simplifying binary oppositions and dichotomies, such as West-East, capitalism-socialism, them-us.

Each chapter offers exemplars of poetic and political estrangement. The texts selected triangulate between Russia, China, and the U.S. of the late or post-Cold-War period. Two chapters are devoted to Chinese authors, Yang Lian and Bei Dao, whose poetry, arguably, most adequately represents strangeness and alienation in the discourse of contemporary transnational literature. Both authors belonged to the group of "misty poets" that appeared in China in the 1970s after the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution: they attempted to revive poetry by using a highly allegorical ("misty" or *menglong*) style in order to avoid political censorship. Both poets experienced problems at home for work that the authorities considered controversial and were forced into exile after the notorious events of 4th June 1989. Today, however, Yang Lian and Bei Dao are the most well-known and most widely translated Chinese poets.

The first chapter of *A Common Strangeness* focuses on the superimpositions of Auckland and Beijing and the figure of the "walker"—a figure akin to Baudelaire's *flâneur*—in Yang Lian's poetry of exile. The third chapter examines Bei Dao's poetry, which "can be read, simultaneously, as an allegory of his own political situation and as an allegory of world literature" (101); it raises the question of how to be simultaneously both a Chinese and, at the same time, a world poet. In the poetry of Bei Dao, the issue of double estrangement, through translations and the use of western models felt to undermine the official canon, is particularly acute: "Officially selected and translated texts of world literature illicitly became Bei Dao's model for new, alternative national Literature" (102).

The second chapter examines Lynn Hejinian, an American poet associated with the avant-garde Language School poets, and her "Russian estrangement." Edmond tracks her engagement with Russia from

her first arrival, along with a group of San Francisco bohemian poets, musicians and filmmakers, to Moscow (1983), up until her deep involvement with Russian poetry and metaphysics, particularly through her exchange of letters and poetic collaboration with the Russian poet Arkadii Dragomoshchenko. Both Dragomoshchenko and Dmitrii Prigov feature prominently in Edmond's book. Both were famous for their bold experimentation with a poetic language that distanced itself from the Soviet idiom through metareflection and avant-garde intellectualism (Dragomoshchenko) or through the ironic interplay between pop-art, Soviet mythology and classic schoolbook poetry (Prigov). Prigov also used poetry, installation, and graphic art to deconstruct the "Soviet subconscious," i.e. the automatic patterns of thinking and behavior engendered by the Soviet ideology.

The concluding chapter of the volume examines Charles Bernstein's transnational poetics as a form that plays with commonness and strangeness, immediacy and distance, the particular and the universal. In this manner, it provokes a "fight over interpretation," pitting a "hermeneutics of suspicion" against a more traditional teleological mode of reading.

The study of estrangement as an act of intellectual freedom and utopic transcultural communion lies at the very heart of the comparatist enterprise. It resonates with new models of comparison that "resist commensurability while retaining a desire to think on a world or planetary scale" (18)—the models that foreground simultaneity and contiguity rather than sameness or difference. From this point of view, Edmond's book offers a rich and thought-provoking study and stimulates comparatist research. However, the very concept of "estrangement" originally refers to opposition. In Shklovsky's radical formulation, all poetic language is estranged and thereby opposed to the everyday vernacular idiom. Edmond's book, however, seeks to overcome this binary opposition and reveal the "third alternative" (Shklovsky). Apparently, it cannot fully keep its promise, while operating with the categories of sameness and difference. For instance, what seems to be a typological parallel between Baudelaire's *Correspondances* and Dragomoshchenko's *The Corresponding Sky* culminates in a series of close resemblances and samenesses: "recalling Benjamin," "like Baudelaire," "more closely resembles Levinas," "echoing Blanchot," "as in Levinas," etc. (48). The interpretations of "estrangement" as a uniquely "Russian artistic device"

or the positioning of the discrepancy between "everyday grind" (*byt*) and "existential being" (*bytie*) as a "uniquely Russian opposition" (93–94) are essentialist claims that rely on the presumably immutable and naturalized sameness of "Russianness." Polar oppositions refer either to irreconcilable difference or to the homogenizing sameness.

Likewise, links to Benjamin and Baudelaire in Yang Lian's texts seem to be overstated, even if the figure of the *flâneur in exile* is chosen as "a trope for cross-cultural comparison itself" (18). The image of the existential wanderer, indeed, sometimes appears in Yang Lian's poems of exile (early 1990s). Yet Yang himself seems not to accentuate the alienation resulting from his enforced banishment. Rather, he tries to avoid confrontation, reach beyond time and space and regain wholeness through poetry. He says: "The poetry cycle entitled 'Where the Sea Stands Still' marked the first time that I had used a larger poetic structure outside China; its completeness was based upon the completeness of my own philosophising on life [...] There is no 'turning-point' between going abroad and staying at home; it's all the same thing in life, a 'setting out to sea.'"[1] In his essay "In Search of Poetry as the Prototype of Exile," Yang Lian expresses his credo of the poetic life. The essay may cast light on his own view of being an exiled Chinese poet: "I want my writings in exile to become a journey in two directions: constantly distancing myself from my native land and at the same time returning to my own language." He continues: "I am awaiting the day when my *Return of the Exile* will appear as a numbered series of poetic works, with no need to date when they were written, only caring about their internal relationship, and thus constitute one definitive work." He adds, "My ever longer journey has never had any other destination than the depth of myself. My 'original land' includes all 'other lands.'"[2] Yang Lian highlights his connection with the Chinese poetic tradition: "Li Bai, Du Fu, Su Dongpo, Huang Tingjian who, drifting from place to place, lonely [*sic*] recited their poems, are waiting for us. Our voices echo each other from afar, never in the past, for ever at present" (ibid.).

This present volume would have benefitted from more care given to its structure and greater focus on the aims outlined in the introduction but not pursued consistently throughout the chapters. The search for the "third alternative"—gradual rather than polar differences, discrete "re-accentuations" (Bakhtin), aesthetic and political dislocations—is

not emphasized enough as a methodological and heuristic objective of the book. The "third alternative" definitely can be seen in Lynn Hejinian's "Russian estrangement" and in the double estrangement of Bei Dao's multidimensional poetry. Discovering the "third alternative," however, is not easy. While the introduction interestingly claims avant-garde poetry to be "an appositional, polyvocal, and transcultural response to an increasingly multipolar world" (7), the conclusion focuses instead on the "insistences," recurrences, reiterations, and continuities in the poetic tradition. As a consequence, the book offers an interesting juxtaposition of "estranged" poets of various backgrounds and calls the reader's attention to important politically and culturally controversial trends in societies such as China, Russia, and the U.S. It opens up new research vistas by drawing scholarly attention to issues that have become increasingly important in the contemporary world where old oppositions are no longer operative, yet its methodological and heuristic power is less compelling than it might have been.

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2. http://yanglian.net/yanglian_en/works.html, retrieved on 2nd February 2013.
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Martin Hägglund. *Dying for Time: Proust, Woolf, Nabokov.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012. Pp. 197. ISBN: 978-0674066328.

"Chronophilia," "chronophobia," "chronolibido": readers willing to tolerate the repetition of these unwieldy compounds will find in Swedish philosopher and literary critic Martin Hägglund's most recent book a surprisingly lucid exposition of "the radical temporality of life" (19)

made manifest in Western literary works. For Hägglund, an irreducible "investment in survival" (13) both gives rise to and simultaneously contradicts the fantasies of immortality so often brought to the study of literature. It is, accordingly, the job of "chronolibidinal reading" to dismantle the myths of timelessness obscuring our fundamental, primary bonds to living experience.

"Chronophilia" and "chronophobia" are relatively straightforward, but Janus-faced and interdependent constructs. The former is attachment to temporal being, the latter fear of losing it, yet for Hägglund, the one begets the other and cannot properly be considered apart from it. It is tempting at times to gloss "chronophilia" as *joie de vivre*—a term strangely absent from *Dying for Time*—but Hägglund is at pains to show that this bond to living experience is always haunted by the fear of death it dissimulates. "Chronolibido," a much more difficult and dynamic postulate, apparently designates the interplay of "chronophilia" and "chronophobia" constitutive of nothing less than desire itself. Put simply, desire arises from the simultaneity of fulfillment and loss intrinsic to the very nature of time.

Hägglund's abstractions are animated by gutsy close scrutiny of famous philosophical and novelistic texts. He begins by reading the discourse on immortality in Plato's *Symposium* "against itself" to contend that "to survive is to live on in a temporal process of alteration, where one is always becoming other than oneself" (8). Much more compelling are Hägglund's iconoclastic revisitations of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu,* Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse,* and Vladimir Nabokov's *Ada.* The Proustian narrator's multiple experiences of involuntary memory, including those surrounding his celebrated tasting of the madeleine, do "not yield an identity that is exempt from time," but, on the contrary, "highlight a constitutive temporal difference at the heart of the self" (23). The point, Hägglund insists, is "not to redeem the condition of temporality," but to "mobilize it as a source of pathos" (45). The same "logic of chronolibido" is discovered in the narrator's most widely-known statement on paradise: "the true paradises are the paradises that one has lost" (les vrais paradis sont les paradis qu'on a perdus), for, in Hägglund's reasoning, nothing at all can be desired without the sense that it is subject to immediate extinction.

Since Nabokov often professed great admiration for Proust, the pairing has long been a traditional one, but the interpolation here of Woolf between the two is striking. In noting the tendency of Woolf's main characters "to die in parentheses," Hägglund misses an obvious Nabokovian corollary that could only assist in the construction of his triadic writerly series: in *Lolita,* Humbert Humbert's mother is similarly executed in the parenthetical images of "(picnic, lightning)." Hägglund is most captivated in Woolf's writing by the themes of trauma and epiphany. He provocatively treats Woolf's "traumatism" as an illustration of Jacques Derrida's claim that "every event is traumatic" (qtd. 61). "Epiphanic time" in Woolf does not express any "timeless plenitude of the moment," but rather underscores "that the experience of plenitude is always already temporalized" (63). What Hägglund argues with regard to Woolf's epiphanies can be taken to apply to those of James Joyce's fictional characters as well, and invites a thorough, "chronolibidinal reading" of the Irish author's stories and novels.

In its affectionate and perspicacious treatment of *Ada, Dying for Time* highlights the protagonist Van Veen's disdain for all fantasies of an afterlife: "The transposition of all our remembered relationships into an Elysian life inevitably turns it into a second-rate continuation of our marvelous mortality" (qtd. 87). Hägglund reads this to express the "chronolibidinal insight" that "there is a constitutive attachment to temporal life, which undercuts the supposed desirability of eternity" (88). According to Hägglund, the love of writing that is displayed by Nabokov and his protagonists is "a passion for survival" and "writing is here not limited to the physical act of writing but is a figure for the chronolibidinal investment in living on that resists the negativity of time while being bound to it" (84). Content to introduce *Ada* as a "memoir"(80), Hägglund later calls it a "hypermemoir" (104) without clarification. In a scholarly book already saturated with suggestive neologisms, this is one too many.

The central term of *Dying for Time,* "chronolibido," invites immediate contextualization in psychoanalysis, so it is surprising that Hägglund withholds serious consideration of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan's writings until his fourth chapter. The charm of this sequencing, however, is to make of Proust, Woolf, Nabokov, and their characters worthy theorists of time in their own right who can engage the sages of psychoanalysis

in philosophical dialogue. Literature is not subjected here to theory, but rather, the novels are mined for an underlying psychoanalytic theory that can then be brought back to the theorists. Although Hägglund is careful to distinguish his own ideas of temporality from Henri Bergson's influential theory of duration (*la durée*), I would like to have seen mention of Bergson's *élan vital,* too, as a notion to be contrasted with "chronolibido." Granted, Hägglund insists that he is "not postulating a constitutive drive or desire for survival" (12), but precisely this sense is unavoidable in the legacy of "libido."

In the final analysis, Hägglund's heady methodology of "chronolibidinal reading" is certain to inspire compelling new research. Whether his views and vocabulary will gain traction primarily in philosophy or literature departments remains an open question. Since all of Hägglund's examples are drawn from Western literary and philosophical canons, it will be especially interesting to see if and how his lexicon of temporal analysis may be brought to the study of non-Western texts.

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Jasbir Jain. *Theorising Resistance: Narratives in History and Politics.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2012. Pp. 224. ISBN: 9788131605400.

Resistance has been a recognizable aspect of society, culture, history and politics in all times and ages and hence finds myriad representations in literary expression and other art forms. There has been a renewed interest in the conceptualisation of resistance in recent years. Resistance theory as an aspect of political thought formulates the basis on which constituted authority may be resisted by individuals and groups and provides a fascinating and suggestive account of resistance, but is nevertheless fraught with ambiguities and difficulties that need to be addressed. *Theorising Resistance: Narratives in History and Politics* by Jasbir Jain is a valuable contribution to this field of study, for it attempts to theorise acts and manifestations of resistance and the counter discourses they generate.

The essays in the volume had all been written in response to invitations to conferences, symposia, public lectures or inaugural sessions, some of which were subsequently published in journals and anthologies. A clear thrust of this collection is spelt out in the first essay which is an exploration of "the relationship between resistance and creativity on the one hand and the interaction between imagination and experience on the other." The role of the individual is looked at through the works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, M.F. Hussain, Girish Karnad, and Anand Patwardhan, each having evolved differently, resisted prevalent structures and ideologies in their own way. "There is a very thin dividing line between resistance and fundamentalism, between an oppositional stance and a hardened orthodoxy," argues the author in the essay, "A Phoenix Called Resistance." Jain looks at the interaction and impact of constructs of religion, nation and caste as concerns that are intricately rooted in the individual's relationship to the socio-political environment. The title of the essay "Unstable Meanings, Multidirectional Journeys and Disrupted Continuities," initiates an attempt to understand the several meanings of discourse. The relationship between text and discourse is marked with multiplicity and fluidity. Language may be lucid but it is at the same time "polysemic and ambiguous." The author claims that its strength and ability to transgress lie in these characteristics.

Theory is a way of perceiving reality. It is an attempt to understand the past and to perceive its impact on the present to produce knowledge. It often also seeks to resist other theories and to work out a method or process. To come into existence, theory needs to cross disciplinary boundaries and interrogate cultural texts. Two essays in the volume raise pertinent questions regarding the continued relevance of the "postcolonial syndrome" and emphasize the need for alternate oppositional theories and resistance discourses. The author discusses how "postcolonialism has shifted the ground of postcolonial resistance from aesthetics and an evolutionary strategy to an empire-directed one." Jain argues that one of the unstated objectives of postcolonial studies was to legitimatise a new aesthetics but how far this has been achieved is a point to be debated. In another essay she calls for an evaluation of the problems that beset historiography, the development of which coincided with the growth of imperialism as well as with the expansion of freedom. The contradictory impulses of attraction towards and simultaneous resistance to the West

made power a negotiable term. Literary historiography was, therefore, considered to be of Western origins. Jain emphasizes the need for historiography as a discipline to be freed from any single or fixed model since there is none.

Several articles in the book go back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and look at the representations and continuities of slave histories, colonial discourses, the fall out from the two World Wars, religious conflicts and also the subsequent struggles for democratic space. The essay "Interrupted Lives, Continued Histories" takes up the vibrant issue of terrorism that the author describes as a form of resistance born out of "sheer helpless rage" and the political power game in national as well as international politics. The act of reconstructing indigenous pasts requires a constant resistance to the dominant hegemonic structure, facilitated in its own way by the historian and the writer. The essay on "Explorations in the Historical Subconscious" goes on to probe the relation between the two. Both history and literature manifest this resistance, yet with a difference. Jain asserts that while history is lost in a certain neutral and objective study of "cause and effect," literature shifts its focus to the lived realities and "weaves in abstract questions related to justice and morality." She emphasizes the dialogic relationship between history and literature as each expands its boundaries and encroaches into the other's field.

The public sphere is an area without margins for it is invasive of privacy and simultaneously caters to the need for 'visibility' and participation. Media plays a crucial role in this sphere. The essay "Mediations Between Collective Voices and Future Time" discusses the dimensions of media intervention in the Indian subcontinent with a sizable majority of an illiterate and poor population. From Gandhi's Salt March in 1930 to the pro-Bhutto and anti-Zia demonstrations in Pakistan in the 70s and 80s and the various "Rath Yatras" of the 1990s and after, the media's representation of resistance has undergone a considerable change. Jain questions the neutrality of media and its commitment to present all perspectives. She also wonders whether it is well informed or caught up in its own rhetoric that, in turn, governs its use of "language and image." The responsibility of media positions, according to the author, is vested in the public for "if we are turned into passive consumers, it is obvious enough that unknown forces are going to take over our minds and our lives."

Form is an integral aspect of any writing. It not only grants it shape, however fluid, but also becomes part of its meaning. In "The Fictional Form," Jain demonstrates how the reversal of the happy ending is a significant marking of the new late nineteenth century form. It voices subversion which is legitimised in the interest of a larger vision rather than a violation of a moral vision. The discussion on purdah and patriarchy, similarly engages in deconstructing the myth that "purdah" came to India with the Muslims. The author then interprets this practice in relation to tradition, restrictions, religion, its impact on social life and the feminine resentment to it. "Incidentally" Jain observes, "it also offers anonymity and protection from eve-teasing or sexual harassment" and therefore continues to occupy an "ambivalent space, difficult to accept in its totality, equally difficult to reject completely."

The upsurge of writings in English across nation spaces has led to the compulsion to mold language to accommodate marginalised cultures, expanding the field of both aesthetics and socio-logical researchers. The author problematises location in multiple ways: the location of the author, the location of his imagined world and the location of the reader and its connection with languages. She also looks at location in relationship to experience and moves on to explore the definition of a classic. Intricately connected to this line of inquiry is the question of shifting paradigms in Comparative Literature that reflect multiple dislocations and incorporate several rebellions both in literary and political terms. The essay "Contrapuntal Narratives" brings into focus the recent tendency of the serious scholar to selectively break bounds in order to explore other worlds, an act which may often be motivated by a resistance to hegemonic centres. The author interprets Edward Said's theorisations of contrapuntalism as a method that extends to both the art of writing and the ways of interpreting. It exerts a kind of constant pressure pushing against the narrative level and in the "literary act the suppressed silences, conflicts, presences, absences, crosscurrents, undercurrents that disrupt become significant indicators." Jain claims that the existing dominant approaches in Comparative Literature are limiting since they have failed to address head-on its attitudinal hierarchy both in terms of aesthetics and of location. Comparative Literature is not about erasing differences but of understanding and investigating their worth. The author also looks at the Commonwealth of Nations as a phenomenon that symbolises the coming together of divergent cultures

across oppositional histories. The cultural and historical past, according to her, is in need of reflection and re-visioning. The geographical and historical locations of writers produce an interesting interplay of forces which is neither linear nor functions in relation to contemporary politics. Instead "they move close towards an interior landscape to come to grips with past events that cast long shadows."

Michel Foucault has suggested that neither the agent subject nor resistance per se are directly opposed to power in a relation of mutual exclusion and that resistance and the subject who resists are fundamentally implicated within the relations of power they oppose. Resistance is a part of the power dynamics of lived existence and is a vital aspect contributing to the flux of life and the world in which we live. It is essential for a society to achieve balance between opposing extremist forces and the necessity for history to evolve and for politics to become introspective. Resistance links the individual with the collective models of power and forces of globalisation. It is therefore also integral to good art and dwells in all creativity. In spite of instruments of suppression like censorship, exile, imprisonment and fatwas that threaten to silence the voices of the non-conformist, the artist continues to weave resistance within the fabric of his creation. Literary expression is no exception. Resistance, subtle or bold, silenced or voiced is a given in art and Jain's book offers incisive discussion and debate that explore the ways in which the art and the artist negotiate repressive forces in a "topsy-turvy" world where "spirituality and materialism claim an equal space."

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Katharina Mommsen. *"Orient und Okzident sind nicht mehr zu trennen": Goethe und die Weltkulturen.* Göttingen: Walstein Verlag, 2012. Pp. 476. ISBN: 9783835310001.

This collection consists of twenty-five pieces written between 1966 and 2010, primarily concerning the influence of foreign literary culture in the work of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) and secondarily his reception in other literary cultures. Readers unfamiliar with Kath-

arina Mommsen's scholarship may imagine at first glance that these dates frame a lifetime of Goethe research; in fact, her first related study goes back to her Berlin doctoral days in 1953, on a topic from the *West-östlicher Divan* (West-East Divan), and she continues as of 2013 to publish with astonishing regularity as well as to travel the world lecturing on Goethe and world literature. Those familiar with Mommsen's major publications will be pleased to find that this collection does not merely reprint chapters from that body of work, but includes a rich cache of previously unpublished or less accessible *opera minora,* such as lectures, reports, and speeches. Indeed, the majority of chapters included in this volume represent expansions or reworkings of speeches (keynotes, plenaries, awards) prepared over the years for venues ranging from Tokyo to Dubai to Cairo to Istanbul to Caracas to Weimar and elsewhere. This generous dose of occasionality lends a colorful sense of time and place to the volume. Mommsen's extraordinary popularity as a speaker is reflected at the back of the book by a sixteen-page index of lectures, talks, and interviews held between 1959 and 2012.

Goethe's contribution to *Weltliteratur* needs no elaboration here. While doubt exists that he actually coined the term (his secretary Eckermann reported on 31 January 1827 that Goethe was abandoning the concept of "National-Literatur" now that the epoch of "Welt-Literatur" had arrived), he was most certainly its first great theorist and practitioner. His vision of world literature involved both influence and reception, the polarity that informs this volume's selection of studies; inspired by Herder, Goethe further insisted on an attitude of intellectual humility when approaching any literature composed in a language foreign to the reader. While Mommsen's own interests are equally global, as apparent in her report on the 1982 Goethe festival in Venezuela or the 1983 Heidelberg conference on Goethe and China, and her multicultural instincts equally generous, her very particular specialization in Goethe and the Islamic Middle East occupies center-stage in the present enterprise. In this field Mommsen stands unchallenged—and most decidedly since the passing of the great German Islamist Annemarie Schimmel in 2003—as the world's preeminent literary scholar of Goethe and Islam.

The volume is organized in five parts: two introductory talks define the broad East/West parameters; six essays treat the reception of eastern poetry in Germany in the Age of Goethe, but also include an insightful appreciation of the Hafiz-Goethe monument in Weimar commissioned

jointly in 2001 by Iran and the German UNESCO; eight studies focus on narrower textual questions in the *West-östlicher Divan*, most notably with respect to the subtle influence of Calderon in those poems; four chapters describe the role of Turks and of Baghdad within Goethe's *oeuvre* and the critical presence of *The Thousand and One Nights* in *Faust II*; completing the volume are four reports and speeches on the reception of Goethe in China and South America, a *laudatio* to Daniel Barenboim for his renowned multicultural creation, the West-East Divan Orchestra (co-founded with Edward Said), and, in conclusion, a one hundred-page monographic study, published here for the first time, of Goethe's lifelong *Wettstreit* (competition), accompanied as it was by deep feelings of the anxiety of influence, with Alexander the Great.

Goethe and World Cultures—this subtitle is preceded by one of the elder Goethe's never-published but most prescient poetic lines originally intended for inclusion in the *West-East Divan*: "Orient and Occident stand separately no more"—may be thought to represent the fifth and final pillar of Mommsen's comprehensive study of Goethe's orientalist poetry and thought. The first pillar was *Goethe und 1001 Nacht* (1960, Goethe and *The Thousand and One Nights*; reprint 2006), the second *Goethe und Diez: Quellenuntersuchungen zu Gedichten der Divan-Epoche* (1961, Goethe and Diez: Source Studies in Poems of the *Divan* Epoch; expanded edition 1995), the third *Goethe und die arabische Welt* (1988, Goethe and the Arabian World; 3rd edition 2001), and the fourth *Goethe und der Islam* (2001, Goethe and Islam, edited by Peter Anton von Arnim). While putting the finishing touches on her primary interest in Goethe and Muslim culture, this fifth pillar places it, in a genuinely grand Goethean gesture, under the universal canopy of *Weltkultur*.

Katharina Mommsen would be the last person to suggest that this accomplishment closes the door on the subject. Indeed, it finally establishes a rock-solid *philological* foundation—a methodological responsibility wanting in much western postcolonialist scholarship today on Goethe's position vis-à-vis the East—for expanding the work she has begun, especially into the reception of Goethe in eastern cultures. Among them, one of the greatest desiderata must surely be South Asia, which has been remarkably receptive to Goethe ever since the late eighteenth century. One thinks, for example, of the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore, sometimes known as the "Indian Goethe" and a beloved

figure in Germany during the Weimar Republic, or the towering Muslim poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, the so-called "spiritual father of Pakistan," who acknowledged his profound indebtedness to Goethe and in 1923 composed the renowned Persian-language work, *Message from the East,* as a direct reply to the *West-East Divan*. A starting point for this study already exists: a large body of research (in English [!]) virtually unknown to western experts on Goethe, written by scholars on the subcontinent. A second step would be to consult the vast bibliography of Annemarie Schimmel, who not only wrote but also lived in the universal spirit of Goethe. As for literary interpretation, the individual chapters of Katharina Mommsen's book under review here offer models of skill and integrity.

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Brefs comptes rendus / Book Notes

Jean Bessière. *Questionner le roman.* Paris: PUF, 2012. Pp. 287. ISBN: 9782130591108.

At first glance, the latest work of Jean Bessière, emeritus professor of comparative literature at Paris III (Sorbonne nouvelle) and honorary president of the ICLA, surprises us with its ambitious title, *Questionner le roman* (Questioning the Novel). Further reading soon results in embarrassment, owing to Bessière's hermetic writing style. The *oeuvre* undeniably demands a fair amount of patience, but the effort is definitely rewarding.

Although France has traditionally nourished twentieth-century theories of literature, several French scholars over the past decades seem to have concentrated on rereading these theories with a critical eye. In *La critique littéraire au XXième siècle* (1987), Jean-Yves Tadié depicted a historical progression of literary theories in a panoramic table where every theorist was logically classified. In *Le démon de la théorie: littérature et sens commun* (1998), Antoine Compagnon pointed out, with erudition and affection, numerous paradoxes and limitations of some theoretical discourses on literature, especially those of his mentor, Roland Barthes. Additionally, most recently, one of the greatest francophone theorists, Tzvetan Todorov, also called attention to the danger of overdependence on theoretical methodology (e.g. narratology) in *La littérature en peril* (2006). Now, Jean Bessière has joined these veterans and his recent works—*Principe de la théorie littéraire* (2005), *Le roman contemporain ou la problématicité du monde* (2010), and *Questionner le roman* (2012)—belong to a series of works that attempts to answer the eternal question "what is literature?" through a rereading of literary theory. His style of investigation, of course, differs from the other authors cited above.

The author reveals his methodology in the opening section, where he insists that the book does not intend to offer "a systematic presentation of the theories of the novel" but rather suggests some "réécritures" of those theories and viewpoints. He is, thus, attempting to reinterpret literary theories by way of "incitations," examining especially their "paradoxes" and "implications."

To orient his diverse reflections, the author proposes three points for "rereading some dominant theses regarding theories of the novel":

> 1) The novel analyses the temporal, historical change, and articulations of identity ("fonction d'analyseur").
>
> 2) Characteristics of the novel that cannot be dissociated from the "fonction d'analyseur" are formulated according to the treatment of identities and their differences and "indifférenciations."
>
> 3) Owing to the "figuration" of temporal change and the difference and "indifférenciation" of identities, the novel emphasizes the figuration of the *ethos* over that of the *logos.* This figuration cannot be dissociated from anthropological figurations and the dualism present in the subject, relation to the self presented as a relation *hors de soi* (outside the self).

Bessière affirms that rereading various theories based on these propositions makes it possible to liberate them from a certain reification. It also allows any interrogation regarding the genre of the novel to shift to the "characterization of what the novel vouches for"—the temporal change and the duality of the play of identity.

Another characteristic of this book is the author's particular references to certain "grand theories of the novel" or "theories of the history of the novel." Bessière refers especially to Lukács and Bakhtin who are both classified by Jean-Yves Tadié in the chapter on "Sociology of Literature," and which might confirm Bessière's interest in contextualizing the novel in the original space-time on which its *ethos* is based. Actually, he assigns greater importance to "the rhetorical pole of *ethos* than that of *logos,*" annotating that this proposition does not suppose that "the novel says the human truth" but intends to "vary the human presentation following the anthropological paradigms that prevail in a culture."

Bessière does not really argue about the formal characteristics of the novel or "narrativity." He pays attention to temporality, identity, and *ethos.* He claims to "recognize in the representation of contingence the

principal determination of the novel's creation." Contingence is, along with *ethos*, the author's key concept; he describes it as "a deconstruction of the *logos*," "the means to give more importance to the anachronisms in narrative," and "what goes against any definition of narrative according to a strict narrative and actantial organization."

In presenting this compelling idea, Bessière mentions *Jacques the Fatalist* by Denis Diderot, the Greek "antique novel," and *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hong Lou Meng*) by Cao Xueqin. Why is this eighteenth-century Chinese "novel" mentioned? Bessière claims that it realized the equality between subject and individuality "in its development from seventeenth century." He seems to recognize the novel as a historically constructed genre, a concept defined as an essentially European trait in *L'Art du roman* (1986) by Milan Kundera, an author to whom Bessière often refers. Discussing Western novels and premodern Oriental literary works could cause some confusion. Moreover, even characterizing such works as "novels," though we now retrospectively refer to them as such, might limit us. In the case of *Hong Lou Meng*, it would impose upon this work an unjustified European theoretical frame, just as Japanese or Chinese intellectuals had done in the nineteenth century.

However, the author's comparison, expanding his reflection to the non-European world, should be applauded. He actually includes a sub-section entitled "Novel and Speculative Anthropology: an Oriental Point of View" (153–57), dealing with a modern Japanese I-novel (*shishōsetsu*) and a pre-modern Chinese story. His choice of Japanese and Chinese works may seem slightly arbitrary and his understanding of those literary traditions may seem uncertain, but such technical problems can be solved by other specialists. It is more important to be freed from the unconscious dogma that a general theory is produced only in the Occident, or that an "ethnic" theory is generalized only through a European optic. Questioning the novel might then question not only literary theories, but also the theoretical mind itself by examining the *ethos* of theorists.

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Posh Charak and Chandra Mohan, eds. *Women and Development: Self, Society and Empowerment.* New Delhi: Primus Books, 2012. Pp. 284. ISBN: 9789380607320.

The present volume is a collection of articles on various aspects of Women's Studies ranging from "writing woman" in literary texts to issues on the socio-economic front. The volume approaches women's empowerment in an eclectic manner by highlighting four major concerns which have been aptly divided as four sections viz., self and society, empowerment and representation, gender discrimination, and entrepreneurship. Though representation of the female and its concomitant political implications are the prime concern of most of the articles, one could also observe a strain in the text that firmly argues for "Indian feminism." As a concept, "Indian feminism" has been the central focus of theoretical research in recent times. This volume surely will play a contributory role in terms of scholarly discussion to the existing body of literature in the area. Keeping in mind the multidisciplinary nature of the subject, the editors in their introduction emphasize the "pluralistic connotation" of the term Indian feminism (xvi). As they write, "a multicultural, multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-religious space like the Indian community necessarily has to have an approach which is inclusive and dialogic" (xvi).

During the nationalist movement, apart from the hindrances imposed by social constructs such as caste, class, and religion, women across India had to negotiate their status by identifying themselves as a homogeneous section of society. After independence, a new form of negotiation with the patriarchal structure came to the fore where the Indian woman had to locate herself in a space that demanded divided attention between the realization of her personal aspirations and societal obligations. Therefore, the editors rightly point out that, unlike the Western feminisms that almost declared a "gender-war with the patriarchy," Indian feminism advocates gender equality and recognition of their identity. The essays in this volume attempt to unravel the complex layers of Indian feminism by way of interpretation, demonstration and representation. Malshri Lal in her perceptive essay titled "Gender and Translation: The 'Writing Women' and Male Mentors," takes up for discussion the issue of male mentorship and women writers during the colonial period and notes that "male mentorship was an important factor in changing the outlook of

the women" (10). In her estimation, male mentorship should be understood as a "catalyst" that accelerated women's writings, and hence should not be looked at as an obstacle that controlled and moderated women's sensibilities and imagination. A similar point is made by Garima Gupta and Meenakshi Thakur in their essay on female Indian English poets titled "I Too Call Myself I." They assert, "The tone of the Indian women is quite different from her Western counterpart as the freedom she desires is not a rupture from her relationships but recognition of her as a distinct self within these relationships" (45).

The second section explores the notion of "empowerment" from various theoretical standpoints. Jasbir Jain in her thought-provoking essay "The Ethics and Politics of Empowerment" critiques the notion of "empowerment" by hinting at the sanctimonious superiority implied in the notion. For her, "partial empowerment sounds like charity" because it implies "giving to someone who is placed disadvantageously" (59). Through a reading of three texts concerning empowerment (from the domains of law, literature, and film), Jain emphasizes the necessity of understanding female empowerment in terms of achieving self-respect in a male-dominated world. In a similar vein, Kavita Sharma argues that "[w]hile talking of empowerment of women, it has to be remembered that the most difficult task is to grapple with centuries old mindset not only of men but also of women" (71). Sharma advocates that empowerment needs to begin from the side of the women; this effort will ensure that women get the "autonomy" in necessary decision-making processes and will contribute to their economic independence and amelioration. Empowering the female subaltern becomes the central concern for Monika Sethi, who in her essay on Mahasweta Devi's female protagonists argues that writing for Devi is "an instrument in her hands against exploitation" (109). Sethi observes that just as empowerment in economic and political arenas, literature can also contribute to the emancipation of women when it portrays the pathetic conditions under which a tribal or subaltern women are forced to live and survive.

The third section throws light on the fictional examples that demonstrate gender discrimination. Out of the nine essays in the section, six focus on the literary representations of female characters in fictional texts as diverse as Canadian prairie, Asian-Canadian, African, Arab, American Southern, and aboriginal Canadian women. The essays decipher the manner in which the traditional stereotypical views about women have

been subverted by the new and talented group of writers who choose to carnivalize and dismantle power equations.

Arguably, the fourth part of the book provides a more pronounced multidisciplinary dimension as it seeks to understand women's role as entrepreneurs in the current global economy. With its statistical records, the section brings forth the hitherto neglected business acumen of women both in the rural as well as the urban scenario. Even the developmental schemes of UNESCO and their implications for women in India find a place in the volume. As Hemla Aggrawal et al., write, "Most of the women entrepreneurs in Jammu and Kashmir have started their business to overcome financial strains and pressure due to family circumstances and not for ambition" (240).

While the collections in the volume could have been given a little more focused systematic direction, there can be no doubt that it is a seminal contribution to the area of Women's Studies and will be a welcome addition to the list of postcolonial literary and interdisciplinary studies.

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Comptes rendus de congrès / Conference Reports

Traditions of Dissent in Sub-Continental Literatures and Cultures

Central University of Kerala (Kasaragod)
October 15–17, 2012

Organized in collaboration with the Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI), this event was an intensive and outcome-oriented plan set up by the Research Committee on the Literature of the Indian Subcontinent of the International Comparative Literature Association. The main theme of the workshop was the "Literary and Cultural Interrelationships between India and its Neighbouring Countries and the World."

The original proposal was to hold an intensive seminar in which long papers would be discussed by invited senior speakers. This was to be followed by a larger conference. The two programmes were merged, as it were, into a full-scale, three-day conference with invited speakers delivering plenaries on all three days.

Although representatives from Bangladesh and Pakistan could not attend due to illness and visa issues, the variety of topics and the number of papers demonstrated in no uncertain terms that Comparative Literature is developing fast in India.

It is usual at conferences held in universities for Vice-Chancellors to formally inaugurate the event, wish the participants well, and then not be seen again at the confab. Professor Jancy James, the Vice Chancellor of CUK, was a remarkable exception to this rule. Not only did she strike the keynote in her plenary paper "Revisits to Epics as Discourses of Dissent" but she was a regular attendee throughout the three days.

While all the plenaries had much to offer participants on the scope and thrust of dissent in relation to comparative studies, by common

consent, the most invigorating session was the intriguingly titled "How Comparative Literature." This enabled Dorothy Figueira, Jancy James, G.N. Devy, Jasbir Jain, Ipshita Chanda, Amit Kumar, and Joseph Koyippally to open up the debate in a variety of ways. While demonstrating the commonalties and divergences within the discourse, it also brought home to participants new to the field that Comparative Literature is more than comparing two texts but one that has to be effected across cultures, genres, languages and much more.

Given the significant number of papers presented at this conference, it would be impossible to mention all, and also unfair to highlight just a few. What is necessary to point out, however, is the sheer variety of subjects covered—from examining the efficacy of using social networking sites to promote dissent, through the potential of dyeing hair as a means of protest, to "traditional" subjects such as the extent to which the Performing Arts "enable" dissent; this conference had something for everyone. What was also brought home to me was how humanities papers at conferences are now significantly enhanced with the sensible use of multimedia, devices that were once the preserve of social scientists and others.

Despite intense heat, some power outages, and air conditioners that did not always function, the facilities at this conference were more than adequate. While congratulating the organizers, one should reiterate that this conference proved the vitality of Comparative Literature in India and ushered in the activities of a new and promising research committee within the ICLA dealing with the subcontinent. I look forward to reading the outcome of its efforts.

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GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEMS

2013 ACLA Conference
University of Toronto and Victoria College

The themes addressed by the 2013 ACLA conference, organized by Neil Ten Kortenaar and his colleagues at the Victoria College Center for Comparative literature, echoed in some ways the current debates that

have aroused much interest in comparative literature circles, such as globalization and world literature. The central metaphor of the conference lent itself to many interpretations: while rooted in new ways of developing cartographies in the digital age of GPS systems, this central motif inspired participants to explore the wide possibilities of its different ramifications.

The conference invited a massive participation of graduate students and junior professors engaged in the comparative project of remapping cultures and literatures in our increasingly digital twenty-first century. The notion of 'systems' was interpreted in a particularly broad fashion, including such topics as diaspora, transnationalism, travel narratives, reimagining the Orient, global memory, postcolonialism and globalization, trauma, literary theory, and global literary journalism, to cite but a few examples. This wealth of scholarship cannot be reproduced faithfully in a short conference report but I would like to highlight some of the ways in which it contributed to a repositioning of my own thinking and research as a postcolonial critic.

I participated in two extremely invigorating workshops which, in their widely different focus, testified to the stimulating impact of the conference. The first seminar, "Global Realism," organized by Geoff Baker (University of California, Chico) and Ayelet Ben-Yishai (University of Haifa), examined the myriad ways in which nineteenth century realism survived the modernist, postmodernist and postcolonial aesthetics and transformed into an extremely flexible literary technique in today's world. Participants discussed such wide-ranging topics as "Queer poetics of the French Realist Novel" (William James, Stanford University), "Art and Speculation in Gissing and Wharton" (Arielle Zibrak, Boston University), "Reappropriations of Realism in Israel Zangwill and *Children of the Ghetto*" (Jessica Valdez, Johns Hopkins University), "Realism in Shashi Deshpande's Middle-Class Conventionality" (Ayelet Ben-Yishai, University of Haifa), and the problem of postcolonial realism in relation to Sartre's "Black Orpheus" and Carpentier's "Marvelous Real." Most of the presentations emphasized how idiosyncratic and local reformulations of realism enabled writers to resist the homogenizing process of globalization.

The second seminar in which I was able to participate, 'Tropes of Democracy' explored a markedly different issue, interpreting the notion of systems in its political implications. The many participants

in this seminar examined the ways in which the dominant model of American democracy was contested in literatures from around the world. Of particular interest was Audrey Louck's (University of Brussels) provocative discussion of how the post 9/11 Patriot Act and its ethical implications could be documented effectively through non-fiction testimonials. Democracy, as it quickly became obvious, should be constantly reinvented.

The conference also featured a special exhibition, entitled 'Mapping Ararat: Globally Positioned Sites," devised by Melissa Shiff, Louis Kaplan, and John Craig Freeman. This exhibit enabled delegates to cast a different glance at Ararat, the first historical attempt to recreate a Jewish homeland, founded by Mordecai Noah in 1825 on Grand Island, New York. It consisted of a video that allowed participants to view the landmarks of this city through GPS technology. Thus, this exhibit reminded us that comparative literature was not simply about the written text but also involved installation art forms.

The plenary lectures presented at the conference proved to be of equally engaging scholarly quality. In a shared session entitled "Positioning Europe and the Problems of Globality," David Wallace (University of Pennsylvania) and David Palumbo-Liu (Stanford University) discussed ways in which established notions of situatedness could be challenged. In explaining the underlying concept of his edited literary history of Europe at the intersection of the 14th and 15th century, forthcoming from Oxford University Press, David Wallace demonstrated how it was possible to study literatures from similar linguistic families without adhering to the nationalistic and geographical models inherited from nineteenth century European thought. Adopting a more contemporary approach, David Palumbo-Liu examined reconfigurations of their respective continental affiliations in works by Joyce, Adrienne Rich and Amitav Ghosh, thus showing how specific senses of place could profitably be reconfigured.

For this participant, the most moving event of the conference was undoubtedly the Edward Said Memorial Plenary. Said's provocative and engaged vision, which reverberated through most of the talks delivered at the conference, was aptly evoked by Gauri Viswanathan (Columbia University) and Ella Shohat (New York University). In a video speech, Linda Hutcheon eloquently discussed Edward Said's unique ability to write about music. She pointed out how he compared music-making

with comparative literature, always urging us to think both contrapuntally and comparatively. To my ears, this statement sounded like an apt coda to an intellectually challenging conference.

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*Dis*closures: A Report on the World Literature Association and the Institute for World Literature

> Literature is the heart of the world; all the joys and sorrows, dreams and hopes, despairs and wraths of it, all the emotions of man as he faces the beauties of nature, all his terrors as he faces nature's secrets, lend it wings. (Gorki 90)

"Discipline sometimes requires *enclosure,* the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself.... It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony" (Foucault 141). Though Michel Foucault's use of the term discipline in this quotation is not primarily related to academic fields, it is undeniable that it incorporates many shared connotations. After all, discipline is the "art of correct training" that "'makes' individuals" (Foucault 170).

In English social and economic history, the term enclosure refers to the process in which traditional agricultural rights, such as the right to farm and graze livestock in an open field system, are restricted, so that land ceases to be common space. Marxist historians have focused on the so called "Inclosure Acts" during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a part of the class conflict that eventually eliminated English peasantry and saw the emergence of the bourgeoisie along with the consolidation of the nation state (see Marx 1: ch. 27).

Likewise, academic disciplines generally *make* and *enclose* distinctive fields of research to which individuals have access only after a rite of passage is completed, such as a journey from a PhD dissertation to a post in the specific field, passing through a ground-breaking publication. However, unlike disciplines, objects of study usually cross disciplinary boundaries.

Along with the greater emphasis placed on professionalism and specialization, calls for interdisciplinarity have become a sign of the times.

The situation is even more complex in the case of the Humanities, where interdisciplinarity has become the magic *motto* and general motivation within academic administrative reorganizations, ruled as they are by restrictive budgets that seek "short-term profit by the cultivation of the useful and highly applied skills suited to profit-making" (Nussbaum 2).

Paradoxically, comparative literature, one of the Humanistic disciplines with a higher degree of interdisciplinarity, has been the main victim of "profit-making" and "expenditure rationalization," two key words of the neoliberal lexicon applied to an institution—the university—which has finally surrendered to "intérêts commerciaux et industriels" (Derrida 19). Many departments of comparative literature have either disappeared or merged into schools/centres/programs of languages and literatures in American, British and Canadian universities. This amortization has not yet been the case in other countries—either Anglophone or not—such as those in peripheral Europe, South America, Japan, Taiwan, or mainland China, possibly because comparative literature may have later achieved disciplinary legitimacy in these other locations.

Interdisciplinarity within comparative literature was signalled back in 1958 as the principal symptom of an inability "to establish a distinct subject matter and a specific methodology" (Wellek 282; see also reports by Levin and Greene), a situation that changed in 1993, when Charles Bernheimer questioned the dominance of Anglo-American and European perspectives, and recommended a multicultural re-contextualization within the expanded fields of discourse, culture, ideology, race, and gender. Bernheimer acknowledged, however, that these changes might impact the discipline in such a way that "the term 'literature' may no longer adequately describe our object of study" (15). Like his predecessors, Bernheimer insisted that the knowledge of foreign languages remained the fundamental *raison d'être* of comparative literature. More than ten years later, with translation becoming fundamental in a globalized world, comparatists, particularly in Europe, remain proficient in several languages, and acquainted with distinct literary traditions, diverse forms of critical theory and interdisciplinary forms of knowledge.

The issue of focus remains. For some, the problem is that the discip-line is receptive to changing definitions of what literature is, so that "[t]he history of comparative literature as a university discipline is not one of steadily deepening understanding of a single object of study, but rather a history of attempts to locate that object of study" (Saussy 12).

Was Claudio Guillén right when he pointed out that the proximity of a wide range of fields of study had empowered comparative literature by expanding its agency but that this openness had simultaneously threatened the basis of the discipline's identity, the domain of the literary?

Cet obscur objet du désir has been at the centre of many American Comparative Literature Association reports. Attempts to re-focus comparative literature away from the nation-based approach, and also to reframe it within the growth of the translation industry, were behind studies such as those by Susan Bassnett in 1993, or Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak ten years later. Amid this panorama, with areas such as translation studies or world literature seeking a room of their own, the debate on the location of these fields in relation to comparative literature remains intense.

An important caveat is that we are not dealing here with world literature in English, although an understanding of world literature as monolingually Anglophone has contributed to the merge of comparative literature into departments of English studies and vice versa. For instance, Hendrik Birus has championed the co-emergence of the concept of world literature and the discipline of comparative literature, whereas Galin Tihanov has argued against such a co-emergence, for the concept of world literature preceded the discipline of comparative literature by some thirty years (150 n.43). Others, like Jonathan Culler, have stated that there is no relationship between them, and that "comparative literature should also be defined by those features that draw people to the field. And I will guess that this is not 'world literature'" (Culler 246). Finally, some scholars advocate the status of discipline for world literature. "The new discipline of World Literature," J. Hillis Miller argues in contrast to cultural studies, "might be seen as a last ditch effort to rescue the study of literature" (253–54).

What is world literature, then? Although the concept of world literature (*Weltliteratur*) emerged in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's writings, long before the status of discipline was acknowledged for comparative literature, the latter did not make world literature its object of study immediately. What is more, comparative literature was neither the unique nor the first name of the discipline (i.e. the nineteenth-century *chaires de littérature étrangère*; see Espagne), and likewise, other terms such as *Weltpoesie* (Herder, Goethe), *littérature universelle* (Charles Rémy), or *littérature générale* (Paul Van Tieghem), were used alongside, or sometimes in place of, world literature.

In disciplinary terms, world literature primarily was—and still is—a subject taught on several curricular levels, and one of the research topics within comparative literature. Not every subject taught is a discipline per se, and as argued above, interdisciplinary objects of study and research are shared across disciplines. It remains to be seen whether or not world literature is an exclusive object of comparative literature, if it is a method, or even a discipline in itself. One should take into consideration the case of the interliterary process theory, whose object of research from its inception has been world literature (Ďurišin).

The disciplinary status of world literature is not recognized by all the scientific community and greater consensus is required in order to assess if it can be considered a "new paradigm" (Fokkema), a method within comparative literature, or a "mode of reading" (Damrosch). Furthermore, world literature is also the corpus material for another literary discipline, namely, literary theory, which in principle should not base its generalizations upon a single literature. As posited by René Étiemble, what should one think of

> *une théorie littéraire qui néglige les rhétoriques arabes, indiennes, escamote les œuvres chinoises, japonaises? Qui n'essaie même pas d'intégrer dans ses aperçus tout ce que nous savons déjà sur les littératures sémitiques, finno-ougriennes, turco-mongoles, malaises; qui se soucie comme d'une guigne des littératures orales de l'Afrique et de ce qui subsiste des œuvres précolombiennes?* (12–13)

The history of world literature *qua* subject is much longer than its history as object of research within comparative literature. We do not aim at establishing the moment when the latter took place, though Paul Van Tieghem's distinction between *littérature comparée* and *littérature générale* is a milestone of the discipline's history. It is of particular interest that the twenty-first-century "re-emergence" of world literature occurs in relation to the crisis of comparative literature that was already diagnosed in 1958 by Wellek with regard to its methodological non-exclusivity.

The solution in the past, as posited by Henry H.H. Remak in 1961, focused on comparative literature's object, which expanded from the inter-literary (typically, the Western canon) to include the inter-artistic (comparison between literature and other arts) and inter-discursive (comparison between literature and other spheres of human expression). Interestingly, though Remak's definition is accepted as the standard for the discipline, recent discussions have not oriented themselves towards the two 'new' axes—inter-artistic and inter-discursive. Rather they have

moved along the nuclear one—the inter-literary, successively expanded beyond the limits of the Western canon by East-West studies, postcolonial studies and, more recently, world literature. The current revival of *Weltliteratur* should perhaps be placed within these expansive waves. "Since comparative literature in the current era is more and more characterized by going toward world literature, the latter is certainly the ultimate phase of comparative literature," writes Ning Wang (247), in the introduction to the special issue of *Neohelicon—Comparative Literature: Toward a (Re)Construction of World Literature.*

Comparative literature, possibly unlike any other field of research, stages a series of attempts to map the unmappable, that is, to capture processes of simultaneous multidimensional change, across space—by exploring recurring aspects in different cultures, and across time—by searching for historical parallels and differences, inquiring into themes, topics, semiotic processes, stylistics, and so on. To quote from the ending of chapter 2 in René Wellek and Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature*: "a literary work of art is not a simple object but rather a highly complex organization of a stratified character with multiple meanings and relationships.... A modern analysis of the work of art has to begin with more complex questions: its mode of existence, its system of strata" (27).

The first mention of the idea of *Weltliteratur* appears in January 1827, when in his journal *Kunst und Altertum* (Art and Antiquity), Goethe tells his readers that his attention to the reception of Alexandre Duval's play *Le Tasse,* adapted from his *Torquato Tasso* (1790), has higher goals than mere personal interest: "Everywhere one hears and reads about the progress of the human race, about the further prospects for world and human relationships. However, that may be on the whole, which is not my office to investigate and more closely determine. I nevertheless would personally like to make my friends aware that I am convinced a universal world literature is in the process of being constituted, in which an honourable role is reserved for us Germans" (225). The confirmation of this realization is the subject of a letter to his friend Adolph Friedrich Carl Streckfuss in the same month, where Goethe writes: "I am convinced that a world literature is in process of formation, that the nations are in favour of it, and for this reason make friendly overtures. The German can and should be most active in this respect; he has a fine part to play in this great mutual approach" (quoted in Strich 349).

In "Rebirth of a Discipline: The Global Origins of Comparative Studies," David Damrosch is correct when, citing the work of Transylvanian comparatist Hugo Meltzl, principal editor of the first journal of comparative literature in Europe, *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum* (1877–88), he claims that the idea of world literature emerges from a desire to make local Otherness (in Goethe's case 'German') inclusively close. Indeed, if one examines the progression of references within Goethe's discourse on *Weltliteratur*, his wish to include German among the well-established national canons of countries such as France, England, Italy and Spain becomes obvious. In the same month as his initial presentation of *Weltliteratur,* January 31, 1827, to be precise, Goethe is claimed to have said to his disciple Johann Peter Eckermann:

> I am more and more convinced that poetry is the universal possession of mankind.... National literature is now a rather unmeaning term, the epoch of world literature is at hand.... But while we thus value what is foreign, we must not bind ourselves to some particular thing, and regard it as a model. We must not give this value to the Chinese or the Serbian or Calderon or the Nibelungen. And if we really want a pattern we must always return to the ancient Greeks, in whose works the beauty of mankind is constantly represented. All the rest we must look at only historically; appropriating to ourselves what is good so far as it goes. (Eckermann, *Conversations with Goethe*; quoted in Damrosch, *What is World Literature?* 1, 12)

In other words, the concept of world literature functions within a process of relations and appropriations that include issues of place, both local (self, community, nation) and global (other, transnational) resulting from complex perspectives as well as "shifting motives and circumstances" (Braider 59) so that it can be contemplated in various ways "as an established body of classics, as an evolving canon of masterpieces, or as multiple windows on the world" (Damrosch 15, cited in Braider 59).

Formulations in the field, according to Damrosch, can be seen from a particular perspective and vantage point for a specific use. Obviously, such definition invites questions such as the one posed by Marshall Brown. "And how does the literature of the world appear to one who has spent almost his entire life exploring only one part of it?" (351). Brown's inquiry insists on the value of close encounters: "Perhaps the world arrives best in the form of the small encounter, the marginal discovery, the moment when we slip over the horizon," he adds (352). No doubt, when thought in terms of a body of texts across a wide number of cultures stretching in

time, encountering world literature results in overwhelming feelings of vertigo, and distant reading or *detached engagement* (Damrosch, *What is World Literature?* 277; cited in Brown 350) takes the form of the *Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog* (1818) in Caspar David Friedrich's painting.

"World literature is not an infinite, ungraspable canon of works but rather a mode of circulation and of reading, a mode that is as applicable to individual works as to bodies of material, available for reading established classics and new discoveries alike," writes Damrosch (*What is World Literature?* 5). The emphasis on "circulation" is of course related to Damrosch's second well-known claim that "[w]orld literature is writing that gains in translation" (*What Is World Literature?* 281), adding that "translation can be seen as an expansive transformation of the original, a concrete manifestation of cultural exchange and a new stage in a work's life as it moves from its first home out into the world" (*How to Read World Literature* 66). While "translated texts are unavoidable and indeed highly desirable, as they make available world encounters beyond any single reader's daily or immediate cultural ken," writes Brown, "the density of the represented or perceived encounters" is crucial. "Distant reading can tell a lot about the world *of* literature, but far less about the world *in* literature (Brown 363, emphasis added). Readings such as these, Brown suggests, using Damrosch's expression, have a way of "making themselves at home abroad" (349).

Anyone approaching content within the World Wide Web experiences a similar feeling as homepage after homepage opens up innumerable windows to the world: "the world cannot bring us meanings, because, by definition, something in it lies beyond whatever horizons surround any given individual, it can bring encounters whose value lies precisely in their inchoateness" (Brown 351). Is distant reading across texts, as presented by Franco Moretti, the solution to information overflow? Is it enough to focus on "how" to read, rather than on "what" to read? Damrosch uses the term "elliptical" to describe a movement of reader's choices that is both linear and circular. The image is frequently used to help visualize complexity paradigms. It is not a flat image, but a three dimensional one where temporal and spatial patterns may overlap (in simultaneity) as well as moving along in iterative (repetitive) or variable operations. It is indeed a way of reading not alien to readers of Jorge Luis Borges or James Joyce. But, is this the only paradigm shift? "I suggest that the difference lies not just in a pragmatic sense of how to read and to teach, but in radically different notions of the experience of

the foreign," claims Brown again (354). We are back to the problem presented at the beginning of this introduction, and concerning not only the type of *enclosure,* or "contact zone" (Brown 352), but also the *differance* that reading across literary texts from diverse cultures *makes.*

What, then, *is* world literature? A way of reading and distribution across the world (Damrosch), parasitical spectrality of hegemony and imperialism (Brown 350, 352), internationalism in distress (Robbins), misunderstandings and misinterpretations (Casanova), cannibalism (Andrade), writings with which we can never be at home (Lennon), a form of exposure to the Other, or a way of disclosing the Self? Let us conclude with Brown's definition and allow our readers to formulate their own definitions as they encounter the homeplace of the Institute for World Literature.

> I appreciate world literature for its shock value. And wherever I feel the shock, even apparently near at hand, there I encounter world. I propose, then, turning Damrosch's formula inside out. World literature, to me, is not writing that gains in translation, but writing that retains its alienness even in the original. (Brown 364)

An unequivocal sign of a paradigm shift within a discipline are academic markers such as publications, conferences, research institutes and professional associations. All these markers apply to the re-emergence of world literature since the turn of the twenty-first century. Whereas publications may be the most straightforward location to test the reach of contributions as they are assessed in peer-reviews and post-publication reviews, conferences and professional associations attract less attention, for they are traditionally considered means for the discipline to reproduce itself. In the introduction to this report, we have already provided a glimpse on the reception of the most recent publications on world literature. In terms of conferences, July 2011 represented a major landmark.

From June 30 to July 3, 2011, the first conference of the World Literature Association—*The Rise of World Literatures*—was held at Peking University hosted by Zhao BaiSheng, Professor of Comparative World Literature and Head of the Institute of World Literature at the same university. Created as the Centre for World Literature in 1986 by faculty affiliated to four foreign literature departments at Peking University, it was expanded and renamed as the Institute of World Literature in 2001.

The Institute offers MA and doctoral degrees in world literature and cross-cultural studies.

According to Zhao BaiSheng, "we are entering a new age of world literature: *The Era of World Literature.* From World Literature to World Literatures, all of us have our voices to contribute" (quoted from the conference program). This would be the reason for the plural in "world literature*s*." Though the inclusiveness of this plural form is a topic that deserves further discussion, the conference proved to be a global forum, with around 200 speakers from about thirty countries from all over the world.

The conference was divided into parallel sessions around six major topics: theories of world literature, themes of world literature, major writers and world literature, minor languages and world literature, national literature as world literature, and writing of world literary history. The keynote sessions deserve special mention. They included lectures by David Damrosch, Jean Bessière, Helena Carvalhão Buescu, Zhengkun Gu, Biodun Jeyifo, Robert Dixon, Bhekizizwe Peterson, Theo D'haen, Gayatri C. Spivak, Alfred Hornung, and Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover. And as for literary events, the opening poetry reading and the concluding writer's forum were particularly enjoyable.

It is not possible here to comment on individual contributions. What can be provided, however, is a list of some general patterns in world literature studies, of which three basic ones can be identified. The first relates to the use of the term "world literature." A general consensus on the definition of world literature was assumed. Discussions centred on circulation, translation, genetic contacts, cross-cultural dialogue, etc. A second pattern includes a striking similarity in the array of topics selected. And, in contrast to the former two patterns, a third pattern shows radical differences in academic styles, which may very well be one of the last signs of scholarly locality under the pressure of globalization. This latter pattern proved to be one of the most exciting aspects—"*our* voices" in Zhao BaiSheng's words—of the conference *qua* global community of scholars interested in the topic of world literature.

The conference culminated with the creation of a World Literature Association (WLA). Immediately after, the first summer school was held at Peking University on July 4–29, 2011, as a result of the joint collaboration between the Peking Institute of World Literature and the Institute for World Literature (IWL) with headquarters at Harvard University and partners around the world.

When one traces the history of world literature as study object of comparative literature, the contribution of East-Central European academia should not be overlooked. Interestingly, scholarship on world literature was—and still is—organized in East-Central Europe around research-oriented centres, such as the A.M. Gorki Institute of World Literature, founded in 1932, and the Institute of World Literature at Bratislava, founded in 1964. An interesting issue that merits further exploration concerns the relationships between centres originally created under communist regimes and new, emerging ones both in the West and the East in terms of what Aamir R. Mufti has called the "institution of world literatures." But this topic goes beyond the scope of this report.

Directed by Damrosch, the IWL "has been created to explore the study of literature in a globalizing world" and "beyond the classic canon of European masterpieces," pursuing "a far-reaching inquiry into the variety of the world's literary cultures and their distinctive reflections and refractions of the political, economic, and religious forces sweeping the globe," reads the presentation at the IWL Website. Meeting for four weeks each summer, the inaugural IWL was held in Beijing in 2011, as noted above, and then in Istanbul in 2012. IWL 2013 will meet at Harvard.

The IWL 2011 included a group of sixty participants from various countries and locations in the world, including (alphabetically) Australia, Belgium, China, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Korea, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, the UK, and the U.S., who took part with great excitement in the four seminars offered (two each fortnight). Partial funding was provided in certain cases in order to facilitate the participation of scholars from less privileged locations. The hosts, Zhao BaiSheng and Damrosch, along with the invited scholars Theo D'haen (Catholic University of Leuven) and Zhang Longxi (City University of Hong Kong), introduced participants to the hottest topics in world literature. Brief summaries of the four seminars held are included below.

D'haen, co-editor of collections such as *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* and *World Literature: A Reader* and author of *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature*, guided participants in his seminar through a revision of the concept and development of *Weltliteratur* and the importance of translation, circulation and reception through work by Susan Bassnett, Emily Apter, etc. Evaluating Damrosch's claims in *What is World Literature?*, participants engaged in the discovery of the socio-political and economic reasons behind the circulation of world

literature. The group explored work by Franco Moretti who in "Conjectures on World Literature" and in *Maps, Graphs, Trees* combines elements from Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems analysis to argue in favour of "distant reading." The presence in class of several of Moretti's students made the debate particularly exciting. D'haen also discussed a similar approach in the work of French critic Pascale Casanova's *La République mondiale des Lettres*. Casanova draws from sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in order to explore the ways in which works by peripheral writers circulate into metropolitan centres and achieve international recognition, thus becoming world literature. Other readings included Columbia University professor Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's *Death of a Discipline,* which recognized the salience of translation while advocating a return to the critical importance of deep language learning, as well as an ethical responsibility and commitment to the Other, in rethinking ourselves through the eyes of emergent, rather than dominant, cultural spaces. Emily Apter in *The Translation Zone* was also considered in relation to a mixed history of translation and comparative literature in the work developed by Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach, both exiled in Istanbul during World War II, as well as other émigrés such as Said, Derrida, and Spivak. Unlike Spivak, Apter underscores the need to keep the question of language at the forefront, highlighting the potential of translation to function as "third-space" that transforms restrictive cultural assumptions. Finally, in *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* and in *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference,* Lawrence Venuti (Temple University) insists, like Spivak, on the translator's agency and ethical responsibility. His effort locates other translation practices that envision cultural differences instead of assimilating them, and allow for the establishment of alternative traditions. Finally, D'haen's seminar also explored work by Wang Ning (Director and Chair at the Centre for Comparative Literature, Tsinghua University).

Author of books such as *Unexpected Affinities: Reading Across Cultures*, *Mighty Opposites: From Dichotomies to Differences in the Comparative Study of China* and *An Introduction to Comparative Literature,* Zhang Longxi (Chair Professor of Comparative Literature and Translation at City University of Hong Kong, and member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters) traced in his seminar the state of the discipline in China, endeavouring to set up a practice of cosmopolitan comparatism, between Western and non-Western sources, and putting in practice the ideas he

had formulated in *Teaching World Literature*. Cross-cultural themes such as the life-as-journey metaphor were explored via readings from Dante, Khayyam, and Li Bai. The seminar also introduced Zhu Guangqian's investigations into psychology and aesthetics, Yang Zhouhan's pursuit of Milton's references to China, and the history of his "Sonnet on his Blindness" (the first Western poem to be translated into Chinese), and Qian Zhongshu's wide-ranging, discursive, scrapbook-like essays exploring the coincidences among the topoi of Chinese classical literature and the literatures of Western Europe. Zhang's seminar offered Western scholars the opportunity to think beyond Eurocentric frames of reference, with the benefit of Chinese literature and knowledge presented as genuine acts of cross-cultural transmission and not in closed heritage cultures.

Zhao BaiSheng specializes in biographical and autobiographical studies, and his publications include: *Head of States: A Biography*, *Portraits: On Chinese Intellectuals, A Theory of Auto/Biography, Essays on European and American Literature, The Nobel Prize in Literature,* and articles on ecology and African Literature. His seminar discussed the complex mechanism of the East-West border crossing and its cultural consequences. Such processes and movements as immigration, colonization, Westernization, the expansion of Marxism, and globalization were examined, as well as ways of promoting cross-fertilization between minor languages, and the roles of other global languages such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish in the era of world literatures. Among the readings: Tawfiq Al-Hakim, "Introduction to *King Oedipus*;" *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*; Stephen Owen, "What Is World Poetry?," Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands*; Michael Bérubé, "Introduction: Worldly English;" Ha Jin, *The Writer as Migrant*; Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *Homecoming: Essays on African and Caribbean Literature, Culture and Politics*; Hu Shih, *The Chinese Renaissance*; Qian Zhongshu, *A Collection of Qian Zhongshu's English Essays*, T'an Ssu-t'ung, "T'an Ssu-t'ung on the Need for Complete Westernization," Ssu-yü Teng and John K. Fairbank, *China's Response to the West.*

Finally, in his seminar, Damrosch tested out the tensions between close and distant reading. Although the works were examined in English translation, the contexts of production and distribution allowed the exploration of the inherent complexity of translation, already pointed out by Spivak, and the question of "untranslatables," signalled by Apter or Venuti. In a letter to Thomas Carlyle (1 January 1828), Goethe inquires

about the English translation of his *Torquato Tasso*, "I should like to have your opinion on how far this Tasso can be considered English. You will greatly oblige me by informing me on this point, for it just this connection between original and the translation that expresses most clearly the relationship of nation to nation and that one must above all know [understand] if one wishes to encourage a common world literature transcending national boundaries" (quoted in Strich 349–50). Wide international dissemination alone is not a sufficient condition for attributing works to world literature. The examples studied in Damrosch's seminar allowed a re-description of literary exchanges and a complex polycentric remapping of global knowledge circulation, as well as an inquiry into factors such as artistic value, or the influence of certain works upon human development at a global scale. This inquiry into the economic and political aspects of world literature distribution was at the centre of IWL 2012. The diversity of Damrosch's seminar members, with people from a wide spectrum of Western and non-Western cultures provided further interesting dimensions for discussion. Damrosch's selection of essays for his seminar addressed the challenge of introducing minority perspectives into world literature, among them gender perspectives, postcolonial indigenous cultures, and online electronic literature, still not part of the academic curriculum despite the widespread use of the Internet.

Several special lectures were programmed for IWL 2011 including the participation of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Alfred Hornung (Mainz University) along with D'haen, Zhang Longxi, Zhao BaiSheng, and Damrosch.

With 110 participants from all over the world, almost doubling the previous year, IWL 2012 took place at Bilgi University, Istanbul, hosted by Murat Belge and Jale Parla. The eight seminars (four each fortnight) continued to maintain the high standard offered in Beijing, and included the participation of figures of the greatest relevance such as Djelal Kadir (Pennsylvania State University), Bruce Robbins (Columbia University), Aamir R. Mufti (UCLA), Martin Puchner (Harvard University), Paulo Horta (New York University Abu Dhabi), Ileana Orlich (Arizona State University), as well as the hosts Parla and Belge, and the guest speakers Orhan Pamuk (Columbia University) and Kader Konuk (University of Michigan).

Kadir, Founding President of the International American Studies Association, former editor of *World Literature Today,* and author of *Columbus and the Ends of the Earth: Europe's Prophetic Rhetoric as Conquering*

Ideology, *The Other Writing: Postcolonial Essays in Latin America's Writing Culture* and *Memos from the Besieged City: Lifelines for Cultural Sustainability,* led a seminar entitled "When Literature Meets the World." It covered eight sessions over two-weeks, which included a superb selection of texts oriented toward an inquiry into the condition that makes world literature. The list of readings included in Session 4 "Counterfactual Facts—The Textual Corpus," were Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress" (*ca.* 1650); Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844); Yasunari Kawabata, "One Arm" (1969); and Ellen Peel, "Imagining the Constructed Body: From Statues to Cyborgs" (2009).

In *Poetry of the Revolution: Marx, Manifestos and the Avant-Gardes*, Martin Puchner presented his argument that Goethe's sense of world literature was driven by a market-based approach that Marx and Engels would capture in their *Communist Manifesto* (1848), where they used the term to describe the cosmopolitan character of bourgeois literary production. In "Rebirth of a Discipline: The Global Origins of Comparative Studies," Damrosch had pointed out that the Irish scholar Hutcheson Macaulay Posnett, contributed to establishing the name for the discipline in his book *Comparative Literature,* contemplated world literature as arising in imperial settings in late antiquity, long before the rise of national literatures: "It is incumbent, therefore, on the champions of universal literary ideas to discover the existence of some universal human nature which, unaffected by the differences of language, social organisation, sex, climate, and similar causes, has been at all times and in all places the keystone of literary architecture" (quoted in Damrosch, "Rebirth" 106). Along these lines, Puchner's IWL 2012 seminar explored "The Literature of Capitalism" covering the following topics: Franco Moretti, "Ibsen and the Spirit of Capitalism"; Milan Kundera, "Weltliteratur"; Adam Smith, from *The Wealth of Nations*; Max Weber, from *The Protestant Ethic*; Marshall Berman, from *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*; Karl Marx, from *Capital*; Puchner, from *Poetry of the Revolution*; Bertolt Brecht, *In the Jungle of Cities* and "Notes on the Opera *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*"; and Mamet, *Glengary Glen Ross.*

On a similar key, outspoken left-liberal intellectual and academic, literary critic and translator, columnist and civil rights activist, and occasional tourist guide, Murat Belge's conducted IWL 2012 participants through the secrets of Istanbul as well as introducing them to the processes of liberalism involved in the "Westernization in Turkish and

Russian Fiction during the Ottoman Empires." His seminar offered an introduction to Russian history and literature and its influence upon the genesis of young Ottoman thought. Among the texts covered were works by Gorki, Lermontov, Pushkin, Gogol, Oblomov, and their Turkish counterparts such as Fahim Bey or Suat in *Huzur*.

In a letter to Count Stolberg (11 June 1827) Goethe writes that "[p] oetry is cosmopolitan, and the more interesting the more it shows its nationality" (227). "Mixed Feelings" is the title of James Clifford's commentary on a landmark collection of essays about cosmopolitanism. "We are always dealing with a double-edged sword," writes Clifford (364). Bruce Robbins (Columbia University), the author of *Upward Mobility and the Common Good: Toward a Literary History of the Welfare State, Feeling Global: Internationalism in Distress*, coeditor of *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling beyond the Nation, Immanuel Wallerstein and the Problem of the World: System, Scale, Culture,* and the more recent *Perpetual War: Cosmopolitanism from the Viewpoint of Violence,* discussed cosmopolitanism as a positive step in Western universalism, and opened the floor to a discussion on plural cosmopolitanisms and the appreciation of the varieties of multiple belonging that emerge as peoples and cultures interact. With a particular emphasis on global economic inequality and violence, Robbins reflected on the responsibilities of American intellectuals and on the declining economic and political hegemony of the United States. Robbins's seminar moved the discussion towards the ideal of cosmopolitanism that includes local attachments such as nationalism while aspiring to become a critical internationalism. Among the topics and texts examined: Faisal Devji, *The Terrorist in Search of Humanity*; Benedict Anderson, "Long-Distance Nationalism"; Amitav Ghosh, *Sea of Poppies*; Thomas Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism: A Defense"; Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy"; Mark Goodale, "Reclaiming Modernity: Indigenous Cosmopolitanism in Bolivia"; Alexander Beecroft, "World Literature Without a Hyphen"; Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*; and many others.

Aamir Mufti (UCLA) is possibly one of the most interesting voices in colonial and postcolonial studies. With a Ph.D. from Columbia University, directed by Edward Said, Mufti is, like Puchner, interested in Marxism and aesthetics, as well as global minority cultures. His work reconsiders the secularization thesis in a comparative perspective, with

a special interest in Islam and modernity in India and the cultural politics of Jewish identity in Western Europe. He edited "Critical Secularism," a special issue of the journal *boundary 2,* and co-edited *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*. His most recent book is *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and Dilemmas in Postcolonial Culture,* a research project positing that the legacy of the Jewish question in Europe informs and shapes the contemporary crisis of secularism in postcolonial societies. Mufti's seminar, "Orientalism and World Literature," examined the emergence of world literature as a product of imperialism, where peripheral knowledge practices, extending back into antiquity, produced transformations across the field of culture in the West and subsequently in the colonized societies themselves, which saw the emergence of bourgeois intelligentsias schooled in Orientalist knowledge of "their" own traditions. The seminar introduced participants to these asymmetries both embodied and concealed within world literature. Among the readings: Edward W. Said, "Secular Criticism and the Methodology of Imperialism" and *Orientalism*; Emily Apter, "Global *Translatio*"; Raymond Schwab, from *The Oriental Renaissance*; as well as poems and prose from Tagore, Borges, Orhan Pamuk, and many others.

Paulo Horta hosted the 2011 Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association ACLA at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, and has written on the cross-cultural collaborations that influenced *The Thousand and One Nights* and the reception of the works of sixteenth-century Portuguese author Luis de Camões. In his seminar with Damrosch entitled "Grounds for Comparison," the theories of Detienne, Moretti, Casanova, Apter, Young, and others were tested against a variety of literary cases, including comparisons of Sappho and Catullus; Du Fu and Wordsworth; Anandavardhana and Alejandra Pizarnik; as well as translations and adaptations of *The Thousand and One Nights,* "The Tale of the Porter and the Three Young Girls," with comparison passages from Burton and Haddawy; Borges, "The Translators of *The One Thousand and One Nights*"; and Lawrence Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility.*

Ileana Orlich is author of volumes such as *Myth and Modernity in the Twentieth-Century Romanian Novel* and *Articulating Gender, Narrating the Nation: Allegorical Femininity in Romanian Fiction*. Her seminar "Cultural Translations and Dramatic Transcreations: Politics and Society in the Modern and Contemporary Theater" approached world literature from the context of theatrical performances as one the most enduring

and enriching cultural legacies. Her seminar explored how theater offers a unique mode of cultural engagement with politics within a society. By comparing and discussing various plays, participants were able to consider how far modern and contemporary theater has evolved in relation to classical models and what it has accomplished in form and content as a result of its engagement with politics. In particular, she considered events such as the Bolshevik Revolution, enforced Stalinism in the countries of the former Soviet bloc, and the dissolution of colonial empires. The seminar also explored acclaimed dramatists, such as Tom Stoppard, and their representation of totalitarian politics in contemporary stage. Readings for this seminar included: Caryl Churchill, *The Mad Forest*; Matei Visniec, *The Body of Woman as Battlefield in the Bosnian War*; Wole Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman* and "The Butchers of Nigeria"; as well as Stalinist aesthetics (Gogol, Mayakovsky, Zamyatin) and Communism as Political No-Exit (Mrozek, Ionesco), and many other interesting readings.

In a letter to Karl Zelter (21 May 1828), Goethe writes that "the world literature I have called for is deluging and threatening to drown me like the sorcerer's apprentice: Scotland and France pour forth almost daily, and in Milan they are publishing an important daily paper called *l'Eco*" (quoted in Strich 350). This quotation from Goethe helps us set the ground for Jale Parla's presentation, "Metamorphosis and World Literature." With degrees in comparative literature from Robert College and Harvard University, Parla worked first at the department of Western Languages and Literatures at Bogazici University, and after 2000 at Bilgi University. Her books include: *Fathers and Sons: The Epistemological Roots of the Turkish Novel, Novels from Don Quixote to Today,* or *Mastery, Orientalism and Slavery.* Her seminar explored metamorphosis in a wide range of authors including Ovid, Rousseau, Hoffmann, Shelley, Gogol, Borges, Nabokov, Kafka, Coetzee, and Pamuk, in relation to adjacent areas such as psychology (Freud, Jung, Lacan), philosophy, the grotesque, and magical realism. Other critical readings included Spivak's "Echo" and Peter Brook's "Godlike Science."

Finally, Damrosch enriched his syllabus from IWL 2011 to include "The Making of World Literature" both through close intertextual and distant reading, testing Franco Moretti against sonnets by Petrarch, Wyatt, Labé, Shakespeare, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz; Aztec poems; Higuchi Ichiyo, "Separate Ways"; James Joyce, "The Sisters," or "Eveline"; and Clarice Lispector, "Happy Birthday." Seminar participants read across

cultures, centres and peripheries, comparing Gogol, "Diary of a Madman"; Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper"; and Lu Xun, "A Madman's Diary." Participants also discussed globalization and the politics of language, through readings from Salman Rushdie, "Imaginary Homelands" and "Chekov and Zulu"; Robert J.C. Young, "World Literature and Postcolonialism"; Stephen Owen, "Stepping Forward and Back: Issues and Possibilities for 'World' Poetry"; and introducing media aspects such as Denilson Lopes, "Global Cinema, World Cinema" or Jessica Pressman, "The Strategy of Digital Modernism" with examples from a wide range of sources, including film and electronic literature.

The authors of the present report took part in some of the activities organized by the Institute of/for World Literature. César Domínguez organized for the Beijing 2011 conference the panel "World Literature in Spanish," and Asunción López-Varela was a participant in both IWL 2011 and 2012. Overall, their experience was extremely positive. The IWL provides a unique academic environment where scholars from varied backgrounds, ages, interests and locations meet to talk about literature. It fills a gap, not just for young participants, eager to learn about world literature for their career advancement, but also for older scholars, who benefit from meeting the best colleagues in the field and from working closely with them in a way that no other conference or congress can envision. Unlike a tourist attracted only by the occasional landmark, the IWL experience offers an immersive opportunity in the host country, training the cosmopolitan scholar to learn in close contact with the other. It also enables participants to build strong friendships and academic bonds. In this regard, the assistance of Emily Hayman (Columbia University), Guangchen Chen (Harvard University), Adile Aslam (Sabanci University), and Yanping Zhang (Harvard University), contributed to help participants in various ways, making their stay even more memorable.

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

Research Committee on Literary Theory

1. Annual Workshop (2012)

In May 2012, the committee met in Richmond, Virginia, USA, hosted by the University of Richmond's Department of Modern Languages and Cultures as part of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)-funded "Larger than Languages" series. Entitled *Animals and Literary Theory,* this workshop gathered nine presentations. The workshop addressed a wide range of issues concerning the relation of the "animal" to theories of literature, including 1) how recent philosophical insights force us to re-read the mostly anthropomorphic understanding of the animal throughout literature; 2) how new scholarship on animal rights and ecologocentrism affects literary studies; and 3) how we can locate the differences between representations and conceptions of animals in various cultures and their literatures. The papers inspired extremely vivid and reflective discussions, furthering insights into how the animal, broadly considered, affects cultural production.

2. Workshop at ICLA meeting in Paris (July 2013)

Fifteen colleagues presented in five linked sessions at our workshop at the ICLA in Paris in 2013. This workshop, entitled "The Art of Not Thinking," revisited the ancient antagonism between thinking and not-thinking, and attempted to uncover this conflict's role in theoretical interventions in literature today.

3. Future Workshops: Osaka, Japan (2014)

Following decisions reached at the business meeting in Richmond, the 2014 workshop will be located at the University of Osaka (Japan). The topic will be finalized in Paris in 2013.

4. Publications

Papers from the 2011 Munich workshop, "Literary Theory and the Sciences," have been accepted for publication by the journal *Neohelicon.* Publication is expected in 2014.

Regarding the papers from the 2012 Richmond workshop, as well as those from Paris and other future workshops, we are in discussions with Manuela Gerlof at DeGruyter Press about the serial publication of our annual workshop proceedings. As we imagine it, this series would explore the theoretical and conceptual implications of twenty-first-century paradigms for the study and analysis of literature. Moreover, it would reflect our committee's global range of expertise, thereby producing cutting-edge theoretical investigations from a transnational perspective. We hope to have final word from DeGruyter on this by fall 2013.

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Research Committee on Comparative Literature in the Digital Age

The Research Committee on Literature in the Digital Age inquires into both the poetics of "New Media" and the impact of digital production, distribution, and archival systems on literature. At the Paris Congress, the Research Committee organized a workshop entitled "Comparative Approaches to Digital Literature."

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Research Committee on Gender Study

The Research Committee on Gender Study, which came into existence in 2004 under Margaret R. Higonnet, aims to further the comparative study of gender and sexuality through organizing innovative seminar programs at the ICLA and at the ACLA, and through supporting research and publication in the relatively new fields of comparative gender and

comparative queer studies. We define "comparative" in its broadest sense as an approach to the study of literature and culture that includes a) traditional comparisons across national and linguistic borders as these relate specifically to gender and/or sexuality; b) comparative work across historical, postcolonial, and transnational contexts focusing on gender and/or sexuality; and c) scholarship using gender and/or sexuality as sites of comparison themselves, or in relation to race, class, ethnicity, national and religious affiliation, and other sites of difference. We also support work in the gender and sexual politics of textual and/or cultural translation in all historical periods. At the Paris Congress, the Committee organized a series of five seminars around the topic "Comparing Queerly/Queering Comparison: Transformative Approaches to Comparative Studies," which added an important dimension to the conference theme "Comparative Literature as a Critical Approach" by asking how comparing queerly, or queering comparison, challenges the normativities of the discipline and creates new sites of knowledge production in comparative literary and cultural study. The Committee's forthcoming publications include a special issue on queering translation forthcoming in *Comparative Literature Studies* in 2014, and a special issue "Critical Healing: Queer and Disability Studies Interventions in Biomedicine and Public Health" forthcoming in the *Journal of Medical Humanities* in 2015. The Committee has membership on six continents and new members are most welcome.

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Research Committee on Mapping Multilingualism in World Literature

Current preparation of the volume *Imaginaire et idéologie du plurilinguisme littéraire. Immaginario e ideologia del plurilinguismo letterario.* (Eds. Hans-Georg Grüning and Alfons Knauth, Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013, ca. 300 pages). This volume contains the papers of the Symposium held by the Committee at the Università degli Studi di Macerata, Italy (2011). Additionally, the volume *Migrancy and Literary Multilingualism* (LIT Verlag Berlin), which is based on the Symposium organized by the Committee at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) in 2012, is also under preparation.

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

Additionally, some Committee members participated in the workshop "Plurilinguisme littéraire 1900" held at the Paris Congress. This workshop was organized by Britta Benert, a participant of the Korean workshop "Translation & Multilingual Literature" and contributor to the homonymous book produced by the Research Committee.

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Research Committee on Literary and Cultural Inter-Relationships Between India, Its Neighboring Countries, and the World

A specially convened panel workshop on *Literary and Cultural Interrelationships between India, its Neighboring Countries and the World* was held at the Congress in Paris. The event attracted fifteen distinguished scholars, including first time participants from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Professor Chandra Mohan, General Secretary of the Comparative Literature Association of India (CLAI) served as the coordinator of the project and the workshop.

The three international events held earlier featured incisive debates and discussions on various aspects related to the ICLA Research Project theme. They also saw extensive contributions from the audience at large. Younger Researchers from neighboring countries such as Bangladesh took active part in the International Conference held at the Central University of Rajasthan, Kishengarh, March 2011. Secondly, an international conference was held during October 2012 on the theme "Traditions of Dissent in Sub-continental Literatures and Cultures," at the Department of Comparative Literature at the Central University of Kasaragod, coordinated by Prof. Joseph Koyippally. Thirdly, special sessions on the theme of the project were organized at the International

Conference on Comparative Literature, at Jadavpur University, Kolkata, January 2013, by the coordinators: Prof. Kunal Chattopadhyay and Prof. Suchorita Chattopadhyay.

The main publications related to the project that appeared during last year are: *Travelling with the Namah,* by Ipshita Chanda (Centre of Advanced Study, Jadavpur University, 2012); *Cultural Narratives : Hybridity and Other Essays,* edited by Jasbir Jain (Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 2012) and *Medieval Indian Legacy : Linguistic and Literary,* by Indra Nath Choudhuri (Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi, 2012).

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Research Committee on Scriptural Reasoning and Comparative Studies

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

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Research Committee on Literature and Neuroscience

As Chair of the Research Committee on Literature and Neuroscience, Professor Suzanne Nalbantian has been organizing a series of three interdisciplinary symposia over the period of 2012–2014, treating, successively, memory, consciousness, and creativity. Participants are comparatists and neuroscientists. She directed the first of these meetings in 2012. She then planned a Group Section (Topic 43) called "Consciousness and the Brain" of four sessions for the 2013 Congress in Paris. These sessions treated the mapping of consciousness, the construction of consciousness, pathologies of consciousness, and culture and consciousness. Planning

of the third symposium on "Creativity and the Brain" for 2014 is also under way and open to an even wider participation and audience.

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Rapports des Comités / Committee Reports

Balakian Prize Committee

See announcement on page 113.
Chair: tbd

Coordinating Committee

Composition of the Coordination Committee of the ICLA

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Main Project Series: The Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages (CHLEL)

Websites

CHLEL : http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.CHLEL

ICLA : http://www.ailc-icla.org/site/?page_id=8

Benjamins Publishers : http://benjamins.com/#catalog/books/chlel/main

History

The Coordinating Committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages Series (CHLEL) was constituted by the International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) in 1967. Its purpose was from the beginning to develop innovative methods of comparative literary history and to apply them in a series of comparative historical studies, each edited by an international team of scholars. This ongoing task is based on two fundamental premises. First, the writing of literary histories confined to specific nations, peoples, or languages must be complemented by the writing of literary history that coordinates related or comparable phenomena from an international point of view. Its work is multilinguistic and intercultural. Secondly, it is almost impossible for individual scholars to write such comprehensive histories, which implies that we must now rely on structured teamwork drawing collaborators from different nations. Since the principle of the Committee's work concerns European languages, these projects may include non-European geocultural areas and countries, such as Africa, Latin America, and Anglophone countries around the world.

At its inception, the aim of this editorial committee was to develop a model of innovative historiography written by coordinated teams of international scholars. As one of the founding members of the committee, Henry Remak, explained in his "Bellagio report" (1981), the committee considered not only period concepts but regional studies (Africa, the Caribbean) and a range of critical approaches applicable to movements (Expressionism), genres (Romantic drama, poetry, fiction), and modes (e.g., Irony). At its second conceptual Bellagio meeting in 1993, the committee planned a cluster of regional projects, including a study of the *Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (Benjamins, 4 vols, 2004–2010), which applied an experimental set of historiographic tools to uncover shared features of literary production and reception in the region juxtaposing Slavic and other linguistic groups. Another major project, on the *Literary Cultures of Latin America: A Comparative History* (Oxford UP, three vols.), planned at the Bellagio meeting and coordinated by Mario J. Valdez and Djelal Kadir (2004), wove together the institutional, political, and linguistic evolution of the variegated Hispanic and other literatures

of the region, not excluding indigenous authors or publications in languages such as Hebrew and Dutch. Other projects such as *Modernism* (2 vols., 2007), the *Romanticism* 5-volume sub-series, and *Symbolism* have won acclaim for their interdisciplinary contributions on interart matters (such as literature and music) and cross-cultural reach.

Just as the East-Central European volumes addressed minorities in Russia, the Baltic countries, the Ukraine, and the Balkans, the current projects on *Iberia, Nordic Literary Cultures* and *Oral Narrative Traditions* aim to recover neglected linguistic groups and ethnic minorities, by employing analytic methods that broaden the perspective of the literary historian. Over a period of shifting aesthetic and conceptual values, the committee has encouraged sophisticated reexaminations of the relationship between canonical literary traditions and a broadening conception of "texts" that includes film, non-fiction, and digital media. The scope of study was opened up, not only through more recent approaches from New Historicism to feminism and postcolonial theory, but also through a focus on cross-media work.

While the CHLEL volumes involve teams of 50 or more comparatists, their goal is not coverage but the exploration of exemplary relationships that afford wide-ranging insights. Among the projects currently underway, several study problematic terminology ("Europe," "oral"), shifting linguistic cultures (*Trans-Culture: Migration and Literature in Contemporary Europe*), and our expanding interartistic focus in an era of new media. The committee has been in the forefront of comparative literary and cultural history, designing new approaches that have become a model for other historical projects. A landmark recent success has been the experimental four-volume *Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe* (eds. Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer) which has received dozens of reviews.

The committee for the Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages has sought funding from diverse sources over the decades. Most of our projects, supported by universities, national foundations, and academies, have been largely self-sufficient. Our current primary sources of support have been the ICLA and the Union Académique International/ International Union of Academies.

Recent CHLEL Publications

For the complete list of 26 volumes to date, see:

http://benjamins.com/#catalog/books/chlel/main

Recent publications in the CHLEL series include:

XXVI. *L'Époque de la Renaissance (1400–1600): Tome III: maturations et mutations (1520–1560).* Eva Kushner, ed. Benjamins 2011. ix, 623 pp. ISBN: 9027234590.

XXV. H*istory of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th Centuries.* Volume 4: *Types and Stereotypes.* Marcel Cornis-Pope and John Neubauer, eds. Amsterdam: Benjamins 2010. xii, 714 pp. ISBN: 9027234582. The 4 East-Central Europe volumes are available as a set.

XXIV. *A Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula: Volume 1.* Fernando Cabo Aseguinolaza, Anxo Abuín González and César Domínguez, eds. Amsterdam: Benjamins 2010. xiv, 750 pp. ISBN: 9027234574.

XXIII. *Romantic Prose Fiction.* Ed. Gerald Gillespie, Manfred Engel and Bernard Dieterle. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2008. ISBN 9027234568. The 5 Romanticism volumes are available as a set.

XXII. *History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th centuries, Vol. 3. The Making and Remaking of Literary Institutions.* Eds. Marcel Cornis-Pope, John Neubauer. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2007. xiv, 522 pp. ISBN 9027234551.

XXI. *Modernism.* Eds. Astradur Eysteinsson and Vivian Liska. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2007. 2 vols. xii, 1043 pp. ISBN 902 7234544.

Volumes in Progress

A number of volumes are approaching completion. Edited by scholars based in Spain, Canada, Belgium, France, and the United States, they involve a significant roster of international scholars. One new project on the *History of Transatlantic Literatures in European Languages in the 20th*

Century (ed. Jean-Marc Moura) has been added. One other project on Realism has been relaunched in a thoroughly reconceptualized form.

In Progress: Manuscript Submission Projected in 2013–2014

A Comparative History of Literatures in the Iberian Peninsula. Vol. 2. Eds. César Domínguez, Anxo Abuín Gonzalez, and Ellen Sapega.

Oral Narrative Traditions. Eds. Daniel Chamberlain and Ted Chamberlin.

A Comparative History of Nordic Literary Cultures. Volume 1. Eds. Steven Sondrup, Mark Sandberg.

Literature and Multimedia in Late 20th and 21st Century Europe. Ed. Marcel Cornis-Pope.

Other Volumes in Preparation

Conceptualizing "European" Literature. Eds. Vivian Liska and Thomas Nolden.

Comparative History of Nordic Literary Culture. Volumes 2–4. General eds. Steven Sondrup and Mark Sandberg.

Crossing Medieval Boundaries: A Comparative History of Literary Contacts and Cultural Routes. Eds. César Domínguez and Caroline D. Eckhardt (Penn State University).

History of Transatlantic Literatures in European Languages in the 20th Century. Ed. Jean-Marc Moura.

Medieval Comparatism. Eds. César Domínguez and Benjamin Liu.

Renaissance: La nouvelle culture (1480–1520). Volume 2. Eds. Eva Kushner and Konrad Eisenbichler

Realism Reconsidered. Provisional editor, Margaret Higonnet

Trans-Culture: Migration and Literature in Contemporary Europe. Eds. Fridrun Rinner and Franca Sinopoli.

Marcel Cornis-Pope
Virginia Commonwealth University (USA)

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Prix Balakian / Balakian Prize

The ICLA and the ICLA Balakian Prize Committee are pleased to announce Aurélia Hetzel as the winner of the 2013 Anna Balakian Prize for her book *La Reine de Saba: Des traditions au mythe littéraire.* An honorable mention was also presented to Shun-Liang Chao for his book *Rethinking the Concept of the Grotesque: Crashaw, Baudelaire, Magritte.*

La Reine de Saba: Des traditions au mythe littéraire
"Of all the books we saw, *La Reine de Saba* by Aurélia Hetzel impressed us the most because of its range: European, African, Jewish, Islamic, Christian cultures and more are covered. We like the way the author moves with ease among the various traditions, which still must remain of great importance in comparative studies. Her knowledge of criticism is impressive, ranging from well-known American-based biblical critics such as Robert Alter to Europeans such as Pierre Brunel and others. It is an ambitious study, a big book, one of the largest we saw. Myth criticism may have fallen by the wayside in recent years, but it remains as an important way to compare and contrast. The writing is fluent and unpretentious. It is a study that is original and innovative and at the same time solidly rooted in a complex scholarly tradition. It is a convincing testimony of scholarly erudition, it deals with subjects from different cultures and traditions in a way that may be regarded as a model for comparative literature studies, and it is based on a broad knowledge from different discursive and aesthetic sources."

Rethinking the Concept of the Grotesque: Crashaw, Baudelaire, Magritte
"Shun-Liang Chao's book has an astonishing sweep, going from the baroque and metaphysical Crashaw to the pre-modern romantic Baudelaire and finally settling on the surrealist Magritte. It is a daring work and the inter-artistic connections (Bosch, Arcimboldo, Goya, and many more) are impressive. This selection of the figures for comparison was brilliant, extending over a range of three centuries, two cultures, and two artistic media: a metaphysical poet, a symbolist, and a surrealist. The survey of the history of the grotesque was thorough and generally well conceived, and the analysis of each of the three figures considered was truly a 'mutual illumination,' yielding insights into the work of each of the three that would not have been possible without the comparison."

Appel à soumissions / Call for Submissions

The Anna Balakian Prize, consisting of US$1000, is awarded to promote scholarly research by younger comparatists and to honor the memory of Professor Anna Balakian. It will be awarded at the 2016 AILC / ICLA Congress in Vienna for an outstanding first book in comparative literature studies by a single author under forty years of age. Books published from January 2013 through December 2015 will be eligible.

RULES FOR SUBMITTING BOOKS:

1. Books can be submitted if they are a first book in comparative literature studies by an author under forty years of age at the time of the book's publication.

2. The book must have a literary-critical approach that deals with areas such as the following through a comparative optic: literary aesthetics or poetics, literature and the arts, literary movements, historical or biographical influences on literature, cross-fertilization of regional or national literatures, or literary criticism on an international plane. Studies that are primarily ethnic or gender-related or that are restricted to single literature are not eligible for the Prize. Electronic publications are excluded.

3. The winner will be invited to attend the AILC / ICLA Congress in order to receive the award. Travel costs will be reimbursed by the AILC / ICLA Treasurer up to a maximum of US$1000.

4. All material must reach the office of the ICLA President by January 15, 2016. The author should also provide a permanent mailing address as well as their current e-mail address.

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International Comparative Literature Association

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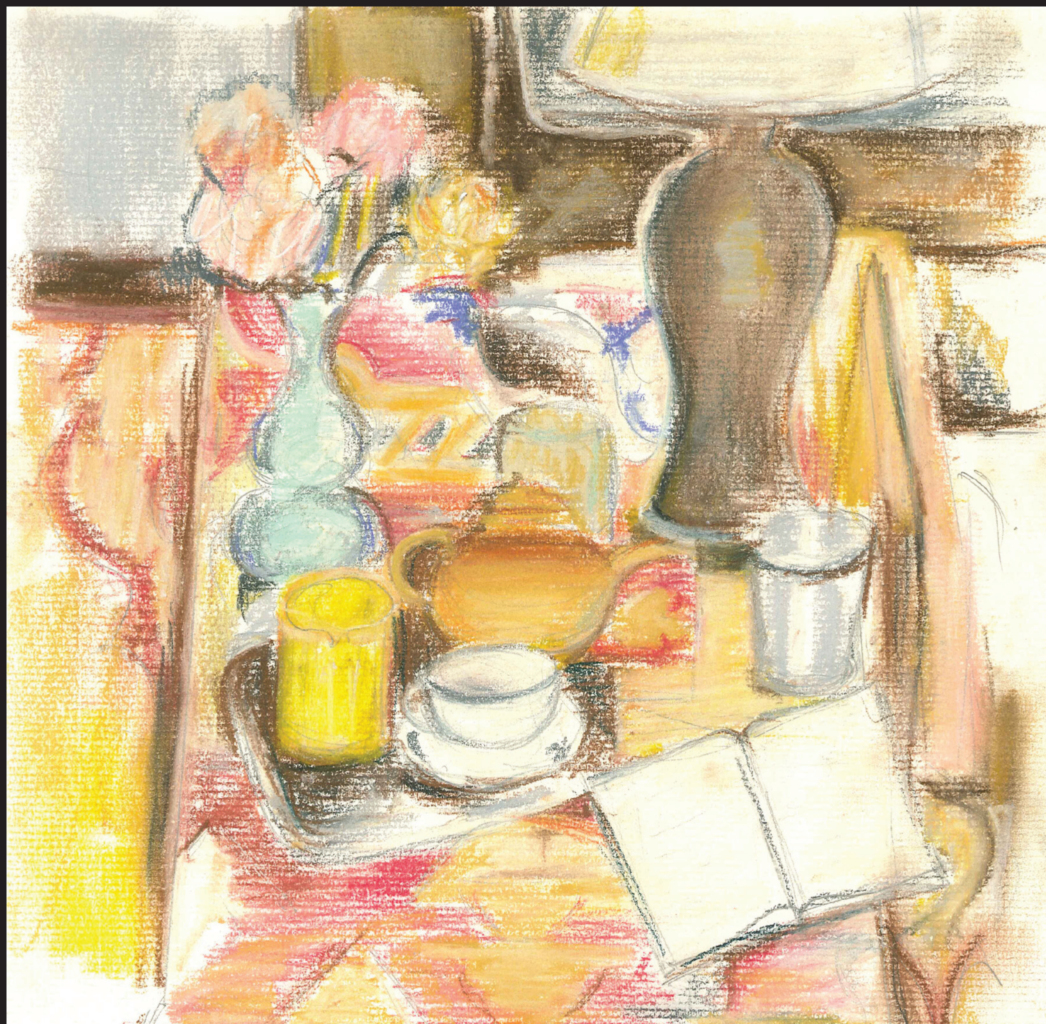

IN THIS ISSUE

Benjamin Hudson reviews *Comparatively Queer: Interrogating Identities Across Time and Cultures* edited by Jarrod Hayes, Margaret Higonnet, and William J. Spurlin

Ipshita Chanda reviews *Indigenous Roots of Feminism: Culture, Subjectivity and Agency* by Jasbir Jain

David Porter reviews *Perfect Worlds: Utopian Fiction in China and the West* by Douwe Fokkema

Monica Spiridon reviews *Translation & Multilingual Literature* edited by K. Alfons Knauth

Max Reinhart reviews *"Orient und Okzident sind nicht mehr zu trennen": Goethe und die Weltkulturen* by Katharina Mommsen