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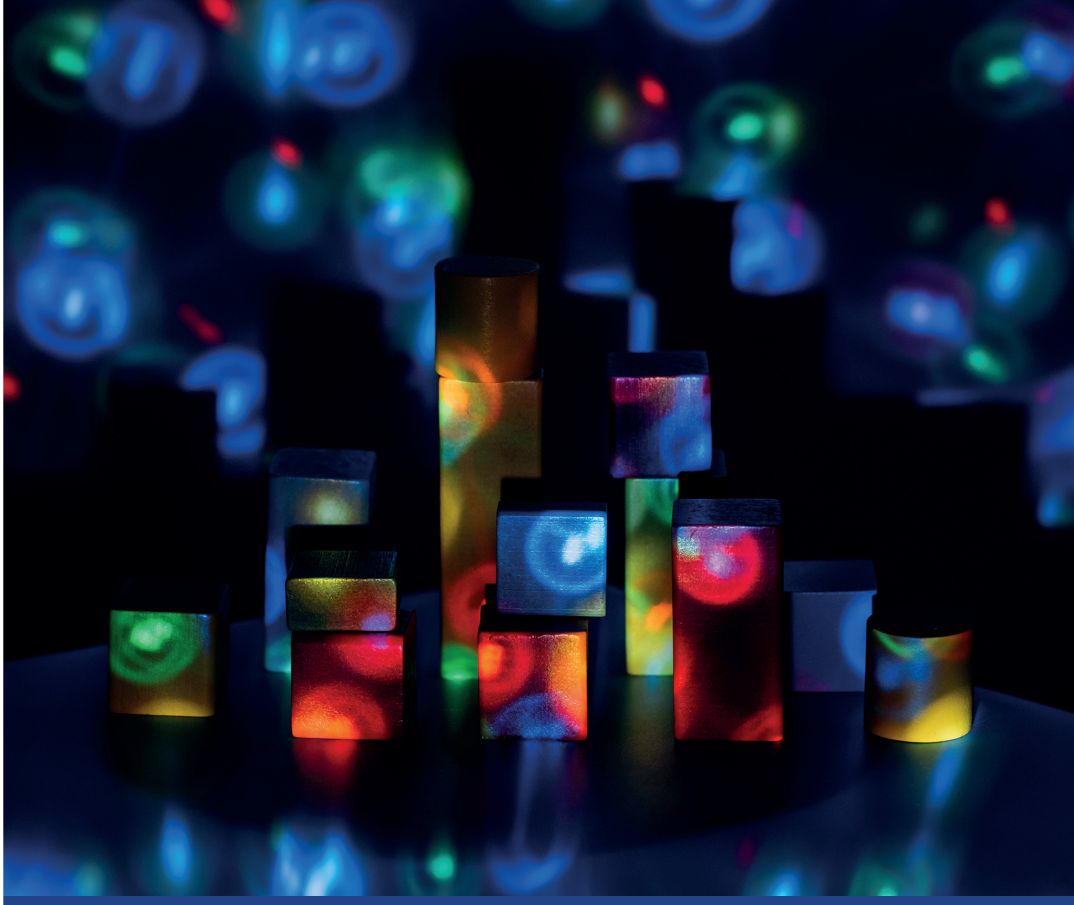

Dustin Breitenwischer / Frank Kelleter / Miltos Pechlivanos /
Samira Spatzek / Chunjie Zhang (eds.)

Literatures, Communities, Worlds

Competing Notions of the Global

Herweg • Keppler-Tasaki • Lemke • Wiener (Hg.)
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edited by

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Dustin Breitenwischer, Frank Kelleter, Miltos Pechlivanos, Samira Spatzek, and Chunjie Zhang

Introduction

These essays have emerged from the conference "Worlds of Literature: Competing Notions of the Global", the first annual conference of the Cluster of Excellence "Temporal Communities: Doing Literature in a Global Perspective", located at Freie Universität Berlin. As organisers of the conference and editors of this volume, we realise that such an intellectual endeavour is both theoretically challenging – in terms of cultural identities and disciplinary boundaries – and thematically diverse. We hope to do justice to the openminded attitudes and creative minds of the writers and artists discussed in this book: they did not restrict the study of ideas to a search for cultural origins. Rather, they incessantly pursued a better and freer life with the help of literatures from all over the world. It would be an injustice to confine them to national categories. While transnational and transcultural studies beyond the European context have become increasingly common in the humanities and social sciences, transcultural studies comparing Western/European and non-Western worlds, such as East Asia or Latin America, are still very scarce.

In the foreword to the economist Lewis A. Maverick's study *China: A Model for Europe* (1946), the Chinese-American scholar Chen Shou-Yi (陈受颐, 1899–1978) observes that "one of the striking features of the intellectual history of the last hundred years has been the rapidity with which the natural and physical sciences have outgrown national, continental and racial frontiers". Yet "in the historical and humanistic fields", Chen laments, "there has not been commensurate progress. […] Despite occasional exceptions, historians and humanists of both East and West have been unnecessarily homekeeping in their intellectual interests, inquiries, and pursuits. […] [T]he mental distance between East and West has not been reduced in proportion to the recent progress in transportation and communication" (Maverick

1946, v–vi). In the mid-twentieth century, it was indeed an urgent and challenging task to creatively improve intellectual traffic between East Asian studies and European studies, especially in historical research, because many nineteenth-century concepts still dominated the theoretical bases of humanistic scholarship: for example, the idea that Chinese culture had developed in isolation from the West. Maverick's book represented an exception in its time because it reversed standard narratives of cultural influence, tracing the impact of Chinese thought on European economic and political theories of the eighteenth century.

In our time, post- and decolonial studies have aimed to decentre European perspectives by emphasising the shaping power of non-European cultures, especially those from the former colonies, on the process of global modernity. Yet Chen's point about China and the West still sounds familiar in a Western academic landscape that relies almost exclusively on the Greco-Roman tradition as its privileged source for defining and deriving ethical values such as responsibility, justice, and tolerance. Likewise, current interpretations and genealogies of key humanistic concepts such as cosmopolitanism, world, community, and competition have remained relentlessly Eurocentric.[1] With this volume, we aim not only to bridge the critical divide between various cultural spheres but also to contribute to their comparative transcultural study at a conceptual level.

Immanuel Kant's philosophical pursuit of an *a priori* pure reason is inextricably entangled with his eighteenth-century belief in the co-dependence of European nations, which in turn animates his vision of a perpetual peace facilitated by trade and commerce. Economic interests, Kant proposes, can inhibit armed conflicts and encourage the spread of Enlightenment ideas about politics, society, arts and sciences in Europe and around the world. According to this model, one nation's existence

1 Susan Buck-Morss's (2000) argument about the impact of the Haitian Revolution on the German philosopher Hegel's conception of the dialectic between master and slave ("Herr und Knecht") is exemplary in showing how non-European thought has influenced central concepts of European philosophy. In a similar vein, Lisa Lowe (2015) discusses how the global migration of Chinese workers after 1840 massively shaped British and US imperial imaginations as well as Black anticolonial and antislavery positions. Yet Lowe does not consider original Chinese labour sources, borrowing instead memories from the British-Trinidadian historian C.L.R. James.

depends on the international order and thus, ultimately, on an overarching arrangement of global justice. Kant also holds that wars are always waged to bring about new relations between states, but he remains hopeful as he thinks that the ills of armed conflict can still contain a positive side: wars force nations to negotiate a new power balance that keeps further competitions in check. Acknowledging the destructions caused by warfare in a limited historical period, Kant invites his readers to consider the greater *a priori* law of nature and to act according to this universal principle. Ultimately, commercial exchanges between different communities favour perpetual peace, Kant believes, because where national borders and political boundaries exist in a state of interdependence, the risk of war is supposedly minimised. Awaiting the arrival of a cosmopolitan equilibrium, Kant thus projects universal Enlightenment as nothing less than humanity's eventual achievement of ethical and political maturity.

Following Kant's optimism about commerce and trade around 1800, the modern philosopher and jurist Jeremy Waldron (1999, 1992) has endorsed a global market economy marked by the spread of Coca Cola, ethnic food, ethnic costumes, and ethnic accessories. Waldron argues that it is possible to be a member of one single country while holding multiple identifications with different cultural heritages. A person's cultural identity does not have to be coherent, organic, and singular within one homogeneous community. Instead, cosmopolitan laws are afforded by the – largely economic – connections between distant communities. Waldron, to be fair, does not deny the importance of culture in making choices and forming identities. Yet his examples of multiculturalism in Manhattan or Catholicism in Guatemala celebrate cultural hybridity primarily in a triumphalist capitalist mode, without sufficiently recognising the history of colonialism and the continuing consequences of slavery, war, and migration. Waldron's version of cosmopolitan justice thus reflects the interests and outlooks of a global elite: it describes a counterfactually flat world with little historical depth.

Martha Nussbaum (2010) also draws on Kant when she advocates a cosmopolitan education, which includes a vision of morality without teleology. Nussbaum argues that innate reason leads to mutual respect and greater social justice. She contends that a harmonious international order requires a shared sense of civic responsibility, which can be

achieved by broadening individual horizons of knowledge. Cosmopolitan education, in this understanding, enhances collective awareness about cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and national-political differences: it fosters diplomatic negotiations that transcend interests of mere profit. Nations remain an inherent and irrevocable constant in Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism. According to this model, the most pertinent issue in a world plagued by armed conflicts and climate crisis is the question of how to arrive at an education that re-emphasises Kant's famous dictum "der bestirnte Himmel über mir und das moralische Gesetz in mir" [the starry sky above me and the moral law within me]. But Kant's star-studded sky in Königsberg appears abstract and aloft when one thinks of the concrete historical and linguistic differences between, for example, Europe and East Asia, which pose more than merely translational challenges to such a pedagogy of cosmopolitan subsumption.

Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006) comes to our rescue, insisting on the permanence of difference, the unavoidability of relativism, and the partiality of truth. Tolerance and communication are indispensable to enable mutual understanding. Appiah, however, is not primarily interested in a community beyond national borders, stressing instead the legitimacy, perhaps even necessity, of the nation-state. Does such a stance inadvertently support a neoliberal economic logic of global power politics? Bruce Robbins (2012, 2007) has argued that Appiah avoids the issues of inequality, exploitation, and violence and he contends that cosmopolitanism today no longer means detachment from national belonging in favour of universal principles and virtues in the Kantian fashion. Or, as Ross Posnock notes, "[t]he cosmopolitan remains compelling and controversial because of the visceral issues it raises, including the limits of identity, belonging, and responsibility and the perplexity of how to balance conflicting loyalties" (804–805). Accordingly, there is a shift from the normative assumptions of a singular cosmopolitanism to the challenges of plural cosmopolitanisms, which need to be explored further in their historical, cultural, and social diversity.[2]

2 We would like to add Achille Mbembe's statement here: "European liberalism was forged in parallel with imperial expansion. It was in relation to expansion that liberal political thought in Europe confronted such questions as universalism, individual rights, the freedom of exchange, the relationship between ends and means, the national community and political capacity, international justice, the

This is no easy task – it cannot be achieved by simply moving established modes of inquiry to different national, cultural, or civilizational contexts. European colonialism has permeated the world with ideas, values, and practices since the sixteenth century. For example, some visions of the world from China ("a civilization pretending to be a state") in its modernist era resemble positions in the contemporary debate on cosmopolitanism (Wang 2022, 1). Based in Shanghai's foreign settlement and flourishing in the 1930s and 1940s, Chinese liberal cosmopolitanism proposed a "cross-fertilisation and fusion of diverse traditions from East and West and upheld a humanism that transcended national cultural particularities" (Wang 2022, 10). Zhou Zuoren (周作人) and Lin Yutang (林语堂) were prominent representatives of this trend. "Instead of imitating Western cosmopolitanism, they valued national heritages and saw the nation as a step toward cosmopolitanism" (Wang 2022, 11–12). Lin also promoted and practised English as a cosmopolitan language, publishing magazines such as *The China Critic* (1928–1945) and *T'ien Hsia* (1935–1941) to create a public forum for mutual learning and understanding between China and the West. Ban Wang, one of the contributors to our volume, remarks that such cultivated notions of cultural diplomacy ignore an important question:

> Who is the ruler, and what kind of power structure dominates the garden variety of world culture? […] As a semicolonized country, China was far from being an equal party and had no access to this freewheeling conversation. For all their rich heritage and long tradition, Chinese writers were unable to gain a hearing. The truism that diplomacy is not an option for a weak country applies just as well to writers of a colony intent on promoting the visions of cosmopolitanism. (Wang 2022, 13)

Wang thus draws our attention to Chinese thinkers such as Kang Youwei (康有为), Liang Qichao (梁启超), Sun Zhongshan (孙中山), and Mao Zedong (毛泽东), who invoked the Confucian notions of *datong* (great community, 大同) or *tianxia* (all under heaven, 天下) and used them either for reformulating Confucian universalism, or for recon-

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nature of the relationship between Europe and extra-European worlds, and the relationship between despotic governance beyond national borders and responsible representative governance within them. In many ways our world remains a 'world of races,' whether we admit it or not" (2017, 55).

ceiving China as a nation state rather than an empire, or for theorising and realising the Chinese Revolution.[3] Kang's and Liang's wish to revive ancient Confucian universalism and imagine a universally applicable moral order shares certain similarities with the cosmopolitanism of the European Enlightenment, and especially with Kantian morality. The mutual mirroring between the starry sky representing the cosmic order and the moral law guiding individual and societal behaviours grounds humanity's responsibility to the Earth in an overarching understanding of concrete but universal worldliness. Similarly, both Kang and Liang emphasise that the ethical principles in a state of *datong* or *tianxia*

> carry the name of the Mandate of Heaven or democracy; they may be about benevolence, equality, compassion, or aesthetic imagination, but they are not tied down to their original institutions, historical locus, and reified conditions. Rather, they are deployed to hold government accountable and to measure the distance between the articulate moral goal and institutional practice, between moral imperatives and political performance. (Wang 2022, 39)

Such a moral order of the great community is not necessarily Chinese in origin nor is it Kantian in nature: when Chinese thinkers presented it to the world, they addressed concrete historical problems posed by a modern history of colonial exploitation and slavery, imperialist warfare and power politics, nationalist rivalry and military aggression. It becomes clear that the three guiding concepts of our volume – the concepts of *world*, *community*, and *competition* – require further discussion before we can summarise the efforts of the chapters that follow. In modern Chinese, the most common translation of the English word "world" is *shi jie* (世界). *Shi* means time and *jie* space. Together they denote everything, everywhere, all the time. But *shi jie* is originally translated from Sanskrit *lokadhātu*: a Buddhist concept that describes the secular and material world, or the realm of society, in contrast to the religious world of the monastery. Another historically contingent meaning of "world" can be found in the writings of Christopher Columbus. When Columbus sailed westwards to reach India in 1492, he was inspired by a map of the world made by the Greek geographer Claudius Ptolemy in the second century, at a time when the Roman

3 On *tianxia*, see also Tingyang Zhao (2021).

Empire traded with the Indian subcontinent. Ptolemy's map encompassed Europe and Asia as two major landmasses, prompting Columbus to venture to reach Asia from a different direction. Clearly, the scope of the world in the Roman Empire was a different one from that in Renaissance Europe. For much of the second century onward, the globe did not expand for Europeans; in fact, it even shrank until Columbus sailed west. These examples invite explorations in the historical, cultural, and theoretical diversities of the notion of the world or the lack of it. Before the time of Western modernity and globalisation, many cultures did not necessarily have a clear concept of the world as we understand it today. With this volume, we therefore hope to enrich the current debates on cosmopolitanism, global history, and world literature in multiple disciplinary areas.

Something similar can be said about our use of the term "community". When our Research Cluster decided to call itself "Temporal Communities", we were aware that community is a risky concept, because it opens the door to all kinds of ideas of organic cohesion. "Community" is a word that complex social entities reach for when they want to reduce their complexity – a word that allows overdetermined structures to think of themselves as irreducible. Put differently, the concept of community often communicates a sense of intrinsic belonging. Literary ensembles, in particular, have always liked to describe themselves as communities, held together by shared origins, ideas, ideals, or values – held together, that is, by consensus. On closer inspection, such claims of communality regularly depend on elaborate communicative arrangements. They are produced by technologies and institutions that do not require consensus in order to survive but that can thrive on dissent, as long as these conflicts are channelled through a shared technological infrastructure. This, at least, is the point made by Benedict Anderson with his often-misunderstood concept of "imagined" communities (2006).

If talk about communities has somewhat fallen out of fashion in literary studies, this is because it does not always hold up to sociological, media-historical, or otherwise constructivist accounts of literature, which find conflictive "fields" or reproductive "systems" or lively "networks" where the actors themselves typically see common "val-

ues" or "identities" or "ontologies".[4] While we believe that it is indeed important to distinguish between such self-descriptions of communities and their scholarly re-descriptions, we also feel that the term "community" has something crucial to offer to the study of literature. As a conceptual tool, it allows us to shift attention to a number of aspects of literary practice that deserve closer attention. No doubt, literary scholarship is well advised to study empirical networks, which are made up of people, but also institutions such as libraries and academies, and "nonhuman" actors such as media, technologies, and all kinds of objects. But we propose that it is helpful to address such groupings as *communities*, because whenever scholars start investigating a given literary network – for example, the Petrarchan "world", as analysed in the chapter by Bernhard Huss and Nicolas Longinotti in this volume; or the Soviet "cosmopolis", as described by Susanne Frank in this volume; or the international writers' scene in 1950s and 1960s Berlin, the topic of Jutta Müller-Tamm's contribution – they are bound to notice that its constitutive interactions are usually motivated by more than a mere desire for further connectivity. These literary groupings are certainly networked structures (in the sense that all sorts of connections are being established all the time) but more remarkably, they have an interest in their own existence and persistence. It is this self-concern, this consciousness *of* literary practice *about* literary practice, that is captured quite well in the idea and the vocabulary of a community – despite the organic baggage that comes with the term. By contrast, this aspect of literary self-interest is not immediately visible in the concept of the network, with its often ethnographic implications, or in the sociological notion of the field.

Looking, then, at transcultural literary ensembles as "communities", we can ask to what extent a given literary grouping knows itself *as* a community, or which actions it takes to constitute itself as such. Communities produce performative habits. For example, they generate more or less formalised commitments to certain aesthetic practices. They also tend to produce infrastructural obligations, such as media protocols or specific modes of self-study, sometimes entire academic disciplines with their professional instruments of custodianship and

4 For field theory, see Pierre Bourdieu (2015, 1996, 1993). For system theory, see Niklas Luhmann (2000). For actor-network-theory, see Bruno Latour (2005).

reproduction. Needless to say, such acts of self-constitution should not be misunderstood as expressing holistic cohesion or "true" communality. It will remain important not to confuse a community with its self-description, which arguably happens in some of the more totalising theories of "world literature". This is why our third guiding concept points to the competitive nature of literary community-building.

Thus, the term "competition" addresses shifting relations of interests within and between self-aware literary communities, which make explicit or implicit claims to their own globality in time, generating exclusion with every act of inclusion. Put differently, any literary community exists both as an effect of literary communication and as a site of multiple forms of competition (e.g., between different notions of the literary; between divergent discursive, material, and artistic practices; between differently gendered concepts of literature; between competing linguistic and cultural traditions, and so on). No doubt, such contests for validity, attention, or resources can be disguised even while they are being enacted; strategies to do so range from conceptual substitutions ("deliberation" instead of "disputation") to the assertion of intrinsic "Interesselosigkeit" [disinterestedness]. But this is precisely why literary self-performances need to be conceptualised in all their historical and geographical variety as multitudes of potentially conflicting interrelations: agonality and *aemulatio*, *querelle* and *paragone*, "canon wars" and methodological debates, arrangements or assemblages that include both hegemonic claims and resistant stances, based in strong notions of solidarity, or dedicated to interested expressions of identity, and often also harnessed to wide-ranging political projects (ecumenical, apocalyptic, cosmopolitan, internationalist, or imperialist).

In sum, then, our opposition to totalising conceptions of globality is grounded in our understanding that global literary interdependence is likely to express itself in conflictive actions, such as acts of strategic self-universalisation and strategic counter-particularisation. We contend that globality as such is always a fiction. For this reason, the agonistic structure of "doing literature" needs stressing in any notion of "world" literature. Temporal communities, through which literatures become global, are by definition virtualised and competitive communities. That is the reason why this volume asks how competing notions of the global have affected and continue to affect debates about world

literature, including their practices of transnational literary canonisation. The chapters in this volume, which we briefly summarise below, follow a chronological order.

Chapter Overview

Bernhard Huss and Nicolas Longinotti's essay, "Petrarchan Temporalities under Construction", presents Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374) as the founder of a transtemporal and transnational intellectual community, often called "humanism", based on Petrarch's principles of imitation and philological restoration of ancient texts. Rather than building a structured network, Petrarch addressed a virtual community of the living, the dead, and posterity. The essay explores this community-building, as Petrarch created an early modern communication platform based on the ancient epistolographic model, placing himself alongside one of the canonical authors of antiquity, Cicero. Stylised as corpora of transtemporal affection, the Petrarchan collections of letters, marked by *familiaritas* and *amicitia*, perform temporalities under construction: the contemporaries of the present provided a resonant space for discussing specific problems arising from both ancient tradition and present life, thus linking past and future, even if a community capable of fully appreciating the Petrarchan "world" was still to come. Indeed, this anticipated future was arguably realised in the reception of Petrarch's *figura auctoris* in the Florentine biographies of Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375), Filippo Villani (1325–1407), Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444), and Giannozzo Manetti (1396–1459). Huss and Longinotti ask how these later readers responded to Petrarch's vision of a community yet to come partly by postulating a work in progress between the so-called Middle Ages and a Renaissance in the making, partly by highlighting their strategies of using Petrarch's temporality, and partly by constructing competing perspectives to define their own specific communities.

Daniel Purdy's chapter, "Missionary Accommodations: A Genealogy of Goethe's World Literature", draws the readers' attention to the prehistory of Goethe's interest in Chinese literature and his theory of world literature. Purdy shows the seminal importance of the global media network constituted by Catholic missionaries to Goethe's notion of world literature, which can be seen as a secular version of the

early modern Catholic church's ambition to build a worldwide community that encompasses both European and Asian beliefs, or Christian doctrine and elite Chinese culture. Accommodation is the strategy that the missionaries took up toward Chinese culture for their vision of a global church, which predated modern cosmopolitanism.

Adam Davis, in his essay "Discordant Ideations of a German Nation? Contrasting Herder's and Fichte's Nationalistic Conceptualizations", focuses on the nation and nationalism as central concepts in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophies of *Welten* [worlds]. Davis shows that German literary and philosophical pursuits around 1800 carried an enormous burden in addressing the drastic political, economic, and social changes in Europe. These debates about literary and philosophical representations of nationalism were fundamentally shaped by two volatile and complex thinkers: Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) and Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), with Herder accentuating the possibility of a humanistic brand of liberal nationalism, while Fichte espoused what the essay describes as a more maliciously nationalistic model of modern society. Davis puts Fichte's fervent pontifications about a German nation in dialogue with Herder's more egalitarian conceptions. While both thinkers shared a similar vision of humanity's historical progress, their theories of language set them apart: where Herder saw benefit in "foreign" cultural influence, Fichte's exceptionalism ultimately collapsed into ethnic parameters that negated outside influence. The essay argues that Goethe's concept of world literature is more closely related to Herder's than Fichte's understanding of language and culture.

As alluded to above, Ban Wang's essay, "Rethinking the Idea of All-under-Heaven and Nation-State in Modern China", discusses the connection between cosmopolitanism and the nation-state in three modern Chinese thinkers: Liang Qichao, Sun Yatsen, and Mao Zedong. While acknowledging the value of cosmopolitanism in the fashion of Kang Youwei's *datong* and the Confucian ideal of *tianxia*, these thinkers emphasised the importance of political sovereignty and the nation-state as the only means to save China from imperialism and warfare. Nation-building, unlike narrow-minded nationalism, is not a barrier to world peace. Rather, an imperialist power politics that disregards justice and equality in the pursuit of international domination causes conflict and chaos. The Chinese writers discussed by Ban Wang

thus believe that a healthy nationalism and national identity are foundations for world unity.

As suggested by its title, Gloria Chicote's contribution, "Popular Culture as a Starting Point of the Global: Latin-American Literature at the Turn of the Century", takes Latin American popular literature as a point of departure to think about literature's entangled globalities. Chicote takes us to "the South" – as an aesthetico-political paradigm and as an epistemological realm of knowledge – to re-consider the debates on world literature that this volume examines, pushing for an "off-centre perspective" on these issues. Literary communities here emerge both within and through the dissemination of popular print media in Ibero-America from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The claims to worldliness inherent in these popular productions, as well as their visions of literature, Chicote suggests, are circumscribed not only by their distinct "topographical space" but also by various migratory processes. River Plate literary media such as brochures, magazines, and loose sheets were often produced cheaply in order to reach a wide range of readers and consumers. The demand for such artistic productions was steady at the time, with their dialogical circulation negotiating the competitive relations between academic and popular circuits as well as the "falsely pre-established limits" between them. The resounding success of this kind of popular print literature and the communities it created expands and challenges Western understandings of literature from the distinct perspective of the Ibero-American South.

Stefan Keppler-Tasaki's contribution, "Towards a New West-Eastern Divan: Goethe, World Literature, and the Pacific", brings together Goethe and the US-American project of westward expansion to further complicate our understanding of world literature. Against the backdrop of the German writer's famous introduction of the trope of world literature, Keppler-Tasaki focuses on such different writers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thomas Mann, Ferdinand Grautoff, Oswald Spengler, and Alfred Döblin. His discussion sheds new light on competing transatlantic imaginations of the Pacific (and, more specifically, the ocean-linking construction of the Panama Canal) as a site of historical and global literary significance. Much of this, Keppler-Tasaki argues, unfolds in fictional apprehension of a paradigmatic conflict between European empires and the exoticised Other in and beyond the

Pacific, so that world literature becomes a cultural practice in and through which hegemonic notions of white supremacy and imperial subjugation are either being promoted or contested.

In her chapter "Meditating with Hermann Hesse: *Siddhartha*, Spirituality, and World", Chunjie Zhang examines the idea of world spirituality in Hermann Hesse's influential novel *Siddhartha* (1922) from the perspective of spiritual psychology. Combining his Protestant upbringing and his enthusiastic learning from Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism, Hesse expresses in this work his core spiritual understanding of self and cosmos as a unity that does not differentiate between race, gender, class, or nation. Literary imagination serves as a medium for Hesse's pursuit of the spiritual and psychic healing of personal wounds and collective trauma caused by warfare, economic recession, and social upheaval in the early twentieth century. Zhang explicitly objects to interpretations of *Siddhartha* that see the work as an expression of Hesse's exoticism and orientalism. Instead, she emphasises Hesse's holistic approach toward various confessional traditions and his yearning for spiritual healing, arguing that, in addition to other theoretical approaches, the discussion about world literature today can benefit from exploring the relationship between spirituality and literature in a global context.

Susanne Frank, in her chapter "Competing Claims to World Literature as Heritage (The Mid-1930s and Beyond)", intervenes in current debates about world literature(s), in which the notion of heritage, seen primarily as a matter of national interest, is reserved for national literature, as opposed to world literature. Reconstructing a long tradition of treating world literature as an example of cultural heritage with global reach, she traces "heritage" as a key concept in competing conceptions of literature in the 1930s, whose shared point of departure was the protection of world culture against the threat of fascism. In a universalist-humanist conceptualisation of world literature as humanity's heritage, various claims to globality competed with each other: an approach to literature as "the International of the Spirit" (Gor'kii), the Soviet (Leninist) operative formula of "critical appropriation/assimilation" (used extensively at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934), André Malraux's idea of the *musée imaginaire* (foreshadowed in his metaphor of a creative conquest of the literary heritage during the "First International Congress in Defence of Culture" in June 1935),

but also Leo Spitzer's "translatio studii" and Erich Auerbach's "philology of world literature". But while the Soviet imperial program saw translatability as the precondition for its own implementation in the service of transregional education and community building, and while Malraux's encyclopaedic project for an "imaginary museum" advanced an understanding of translatability as technical reproduction (including the photographic representation of artworks), the German expatriates Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach problematised translation fundamentally, developing an approach of "transnational humanism" that conceived of translation as a tool for approaching and at the same time making visible the untranslatable.

In her chapter "Latin American Literature and the UNESCO: Towards a Humanist Inclusive Concept of World Literature after 1945", Susanne Klengel looks back at processes of cultural reconstruction after the devastations of the Second World War. Recognising the historical complexity of this moment in time, Klengel pays tribute to UNESCO's founding discourse of a "new holistic humanism", despite its contemporary ineffectiveness and despite Latour's later theoretical critique of anthropocentrism. On the basis of archival material, the essay traces negotiation processes within a new kind of community, a transnational group of intellectuals, including numerous participants from the "South", who felt responsible not only for "rediscovering" concepts such as humanity, or humanism, but also for examining and working through them from the perspective of a much wider world beyond Europe. After reviewing the agenda of UNESCO's second Director-General, the poet and politician Jaime Torres Bodet (1902–1974), and his emphasis on a "Latin American humanism", Klengel focuses on the reconciliatory power attached to an inclusive concept of the literatures of the world, concretised in UNESCO's large-scale translation project. This project set in motion a paradigm shift from "classics" (with their symbolic and Eurocentric weight) to "great books" or "masterpieces" and finally (after 1952) to "Œuvres Représentatives". Abandoning "classical" connotations of uniqueness, universality and indispensability, this impressive and diverse corpus of world literature, which comprises over a thousand works under the title of *UNESCO Collection of Representative Works*, is symptomatic of a deep intercultural conflict between the "old world" and "young nations". By highlighting the dilemma of reconciling universality and

particularity, it can also be understood as a forerunner of the "new world literatures" and their bridge-building between "centre" and "periphery", North and South.

Jutta Müller-Tamm's essay, "Literary Worlds and World Literatures in 1960s Berlin (East and West)", focuses on the divided city of post-war Berlin whose literary life in the 1950s and 1960s was characterised by the struggle for cultural recognition, the promotion of cultural internationalisation, and an ever-growing cultural competition. Taking as her starting point the reviews of two literary festivals held in the Western and Eastern part of the city in the 1960s, Müller-Tamm discusses the mutually stimulating dynamics of cosmopolitanism in West Berlin and socialist internationalism in East Berlin. Both ideological factions sought to outdo each other by implementing or, at least, cultivating competing notions of a world literary scene. While West Berlin became the object of a political strategy that sought to overcome the city's insular provinciality by proclaiming West Berlin an international cultural centre, the government of the GDR interpreted Western cosmopolitanism as a matter of cultural imperialism and, in turn, sought to increase the prestige of German socialist literature by promoting an international network of socialist writers, translators, and publishers. Müller-Tamm's essay thus explores a crucial example in the literary and cultural institutionalisation of two competing political visions of modernity, internationalisation, and social progress.

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Bernhard Huss, Nicolas Longinotti

Petrarchan Temporalities under Construction

Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374) was arguably the preeminent European intellectual of his time, the owner of what may well have been the most extensive private library of the fourteenth century, certainly one of its most informed readers and most prolific writers, and, above all, an outstanding networker. As such, Petrarch took credit for having inaugurated a new era: Reaching back over the intervening centuries of the 'Middle Ages', he sought to bring the texts of antiquity into the present, where he negotiated them within a network of his contemporaries. In one of his *Letters of Old Age*, Petrarch explicitly portrayed himself as the founder of an intellectual community that transcended the borders of Italy, consisted of people younger than himself, and would continue to be active and effective after his death:

> Illud plane preconium quod michi tribuis non recuso, ad hec nostra studia multis neglecta seculis multorum me ingenia per Italiam excitasse et fortasse longius Italia; sum enim fere omnium senior qui nunc apud nos his in studiis elaborant. [There is indeed one praise that you attribute to me that I do not reject, that of having excited to these studies of ours, neglected for many centuries, the talents in Italy and perhaps even farther than Italy; I am in fact about the oldest of all those who now toil in these studies here.] (*Seniles* 17.2.62)[1]

And indeed: Petrarch did contribute to the initiation of one of the key epochal components of 'the Renaissance', namely the supra-regional, transnational, and transtemporal movement commonly referred to as 'humanism'. Being credited with its quasi-autonomous creation, Petrarch eventually became the famous 'father of humanism', a *titre honorifique* that was, in no small part, the result of Petrarch's own

1 Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are the authors' own.

sophisticated strategy of self-presentation.[2] Crucially, Petrarch did not limit his community building to forming a network of concrete members alive in his time; rather, his goal was to establish "a virtual community of both the living and the dead" (Wojciehowski 2015, 28) – and, we may add, of the denizens of the future (see below).

The most important medium for Petrarch's construction of a global community of past, present, and future writers and readers was his correspondence.[3] Due to the public prominence and great fame of their author, Petrarch's letters were coveted cult objects even in his lifetime: Enjoying an almost relic-like status, their possession conferred significant prestige. With said letters, Petrarch effectively claimed a place beside one of the most canonical authors of antiquity: Petrarch's "rediscovery" of most of Cicero's letter collections in Verona (1345) inspired him to build up epistolary corpora such as had not existed in the centuries before, creating in the process an early modern communication platform based on the ancient epistolographic model.[4]

Petrarch wrote a total of four collections of letters,[5] of which the *Familiares* and the chronologically subsequent *Seniles* are particularly important for our topic. Petrarch usually locates the letters spatiotemporally through factual, but sometimes also fictitious, indications of place and time (Goldin Folena 1998, 78–79). This positioning in the concrete here and now is linked to an effort to establish a "synchrony

2 Existing scholarship has come to widely diverging assessments of Petrarch's importance for the humanist movement that emerged in fourteenth-century Italy. See most recently Ferrara (2021, 201–204), with rich bibliographical references.

3 On Petrarch's letters as a means of his transnational community building, see Marcozzi (2021, incl. bibliography).

4 For a general overview of Petrarch's epistolography, see Ascoli (2015, incl. bibliography; here esp. 121). Cf. Goldin Folena (1998); Fenzi (2003, esp. 562); Monti (2001).

5 *Familiares*: 350 letters in 24 books, composed between 1325 and 1366, structured as a collection between 1345 and 1366; dedicated to 'Socrates' (Ludwig van Kempen). *Epystole*: 66 letters in verse, composed between 1318 and 1355, in circulation since 1364; dedicated to Barbato da Sulmona. *Seniles*: 127 letters in 17 books, composed between 1358 and 1374, structured 1361–1374; dedicated to 'Simonides' (Francesco Nelli). ("Posteritati", the "Letter to Posterity", traditionally used to be integrated into the *Seniles* as their eighteenth and last book, see for example Elvira Nota's 2013 edition of the *Seniles*, vol. 5, for the Belles Lettres; the new edition by Rizzo and Berté excludes "Posteritati" from the corpus of the *Seniles*). *Sine nomine*: 19 anonymous letters (plus preface) against the Avignon papacy. Cf. Ascoli (2015, 121).

with the Ancients" (Quondam 2016, 219) that transcends historical periods: Not only does Petrarch cast himself as the new Cicero – he also stylises his letters (which, according to *Familiares* 1.1, he chanced upon in his own house) as newly discovered ancient texts that he has snatched from destruction, in analogy to Cicero's letters (Monti 2001, 80–82). Petrarch thus endeavours to transepochally synchronise his own epistolography with that of his prominent Roman predecessor.

Petrarch's circle of addressees[6] is constituted via inclusion and exclusion.[7] Included are people with whom Petrarch has or claims to have a close relationship of *familiaritas* (Goldin Folena 1998, 62–63, 66, 69). These are old friends or politically important personalities in church and state, but also intellectuals – in fact, the letters are aimed at creating a 'community of scholars' (Ascoli 2015, 127–128). Somewhat paradoxically, Petrarch's efforts were geared toward the creation of an 'elitist *societas* of equals'. We know from extant correspondence with Petrarch that his letters often evoked a highly emotional response (Stroppa 2016, 129–133), and that their reception was frequently collective, for example when the addressee would read the letters aloud (Stroppa 2016, 120–121).

Petrarch emphasises that the letter is a medium for communication with absent people, and that absence operates as a powerful stimulant for the exchange between friends. To Luca Cristiani ('Olympius'), who unsuccessfully attempted to visit him in Vaucluse with Mainardo Accursio, he writes:

> Sed quoniam dura leniorem in partem flectere sapientis est, cogitemus id celitus actum, ne me ut optabatis invento, congressu amici fervor ille tepesceret animorum, quo nunc, ut reor, per absentiam irritato, pro paucorum forte dierum gaudio prerepto multorum nobis annorum iocunditas compensetur. [But since in adversity the wise man always turns to the brighter sight of things, let us imagine that it was an act of heaven, and that by not having found me as you wished, your overwhelming desire to meet with your friend has not cooled, and that *as a result of the irritation caused by my absence the joy we would have had perhaps for a few days will be compensated*

6 See the detailed analysis by Stroppa (2016, incl. bibliography; esp. 116–117, 120–121); cf. Ascoli (2015, 122).

7 Cf. Fenzi (2003, 552–560); Wojciehowski (2015, 31–32).

> *for by the delight of enjoying each other's company over a period of many years*.] (*Familiares* 8.2.2. Transl. Bernardo, emphasis ours)

Thus, epistolary communication extends communicative presence over a very long period of time – which is, of course, a crucial component of the formation of global temporalities by means of texts.

Yet, as previously stated, Petrarch's communicative community also comes about through exclusion. Trenchantly criticised in his other writings, members of certain social groups are barred from playing a role as partners in his epistolography: Legal and medical professionals, but also the representatives of the established academic system, whom Petrarch suspects of being mindless, formalistic 'scholastics', do not qualify as addressees.

Petrarch considerably reduces the complexity of the topics he discusses with his epistolary partners, subjecting them to the perspective of his own Stoicist and Augustinian moral-philosophical approach to all circumstances of life, a perspective the letters appear to be taking for granted: Petrarch allows for a measure of disagreement among friends, but does not brook dissent when it comes to the core of his message. Petrarch's role is that of a spiritus rector, a centre of the intellectual community he himself has created: He is "al centro della rete" [at the centre of the network], a "supervisore delle amicizie altrui" [supervisor of others' friendships] (Fenzi 2003, 564). As the focal point of the network of correspondence, he is constantly preoccupied with keeping in touch with the members of his epistolographic community and repeatedly discusses relevant threats, such as messages being lost or deliberately intercepted; time and again, the letters' performative dimension is emphasised.

The programme of the collections is announced in the very first letter of the *Familiares*,[8] which is addressed to one of Petrarch's oldest friends, 'Socrates' alias Ludwig van Kempen (Lodewijk Heyligen, Ludovicus Sanctus). Petrarch met 'Socrates', a Flemish Benedictine monk and music theorist in the service of Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, when he visited the episcopal see of the latter's brother, Giacomo Colonna, at the foot of the Pyrenees in Lombez, Gascony – a prime example of Petrarch's wide-ranging social and intellectual contacts. It is to 'Socrates' that Petrarch also addresses the last letter of the *Familiares*, wherein

8 See Goldin Folena 1998, 51–59 and Dotti's commentary in his edition.

he announces the subsequent collection of letters, the *Seniles*. The friend thus serves to frame Petrarch's epistolary project by creating an overarching macrostructure.

The first lines of *Familiares* 1.1 already make clear that Petrarch's letters are steeped in loss, death, and absence, that the "shadow of death" (Ascoli 2015, 124) hovers over them:

> Quid vero nunc agimus, frater? Ecce, iam fere omnia tentavimus, et nusquam requies. Quando illam expectamus? ubi eam querimus? Tempora, ut aiunt, inter digitos effluxerunt; spes nostre veteres cum amicis sepulte sunt. Millesimus trecentesimus quadragesimus octavus annus est qui nos solos atque inopes fecit. [What are we to do now, dear brother? Alas, we have already tried almost everything and no rest is in sight. When can we expect it? Where shall we seek it? Time, as they say, has slipped through our fingers; our former hopes are buried with our friends. The year of 1348 left us alone and helpless.] (*Familiares* 1.1.1–2. Transl. Bernardo)

The mention of the year 1348 refers to the outbreak of the plague in Italy,[9] which claimed the lives of many of Petrarch's friends, including his lyrical beloved Laura. The beginning of this collection of letters presents the texts it contains as a transtemporal compensation for the losses incurred, a reaction to a ubiquitous threat to human existence that encompasses not only human bodies, but also texts: one's own writings as well as old manuscripts (*Familiares* 1.1.3–4, 1.1.7).

Petrarch, as already mentioned, stylises his collections of letters as corpora of friendship. However, he omits private matters in the narrower sense, the discussion of details of everyday life – his entire writing activity under the sign of *familiaritas* and *amicitia* does not turn the author at the centre of the network into a private confidant. Petrarch always remains a "public friend" (Wojciehowski 2015, 29);[10] and he not only performs moral-philosophical reflections as a subject, but always presents his own person as their object.

The central topic is human strengths and weaknesses, as well as the importance of self-criticism, often with an affective and emotional tinge. The affects create a bridge not only to contemporaries, but also

9 For Petrarch's perspective on the plague, see Huss (2022); on the *Familiares* as a response to the death toll of the pandemic, see Wojciehowski (2005, 270–279).

10 See also Goldin Folena (1998, 66, 69); Wojciehowski (2005, 289).

to the great authors of antiquity, to whom Petrarch addresses almost all the letters of the final, twenty-fourth book of the *Familiares*: Like Petrarch himself, Cicero and Seneca wrote great texts which they ultimately failed to live up to. Petrarch, in all friendship, criticises these authors as he criticises himself, a gesture clearly meant to contribute to the formation of a global, transtemporal community of intellectuals.

The writing process, the incessant work on communication across spatial and temporal boundaries, is not merely optional; rather, it determines Petrarch's entire existence as its "condizione di vita" (Goldin Folena 1998, 61):

> Sed cum cetera suos fines aut habeant aut sperent, huius operis, quod sparsim sub primum adolescentie tempus inceptum iam etate provectior recolligo et in libri formam redigo, nullum finem amicorum caritas spondet, quibus assidue respondere compellor; neque me unquam hoc tributo multiplex occupationum excusatio liberat. Tum demum et michi immunitatem huius muneris quesitam et huic operi positum finem scito, cum me defunctum et cuntis vite laboribus absolutum noveris. Interea iter inceptum sequar, non prius vie quam lucis exitum operiens; et quietis michi loco fuerit dulcis labor. [But although all things must have their boundaries or are expected to, the affection of friends will allow no end to this work which was begun haphazardly in my earliest years and which now I gather together again in a more advanced age and reduce to the form of a book. For I feel impelled to answer and to correspond with them constantly, nor does the fact that I am so terribly busy serve as an excuse for avoiding this responsibility. *Only then will I no longer feel this obligation and will have to consider this work ended when you hear that I am dead and that I am freed from all the labors of life. In the meantime I shall continue along the path I have been following, and shall avoid any exits as long as there is light.* And the sweet labor will serve for me almost as a place of rest.] (*Familiares* 1.1.45. Transl. Bernardo, emphasis ours)

Writing ceaselessly, the author strives to maintain the precarious community with intellectual partners. The medium of the letter is indispensable for the establishment of such fleeting temporal communities:

> Dulce michi colloquium tecum fuit, cupideque et quasi de industria protractum; vultum enim tuum retulit per tot terras et maria teque michi presentem fecit usque ad vesperam, cum matutino tempore calamum cepissem. Diei iam et epystole finis adest. [This discourse

> with you has been most pleasant for me and I have drawn it out eagerly and as though by design. It has kept your face constantly before me throughout a great number of lands and seas, as if in my presence until dusk, though it was with the early morning light that I had taken up my pen. But the end of the day and of this letter is now in sight.] (*Familiares* 1.1.47. Transl. Bernardo, emphasis ours)

As discussed above, the twenty-fourth and final book of the *Familiares* addresses several great authors of antiquity, including Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, Horace, and Quintilian. It is based on an "interpretazione non cronologica, ma metastorica dell'antichità" [not a chronological interpretation of antiquity, but a metahistorical one] (Monti 2011, 82), with the author explicitly positioning himself on the threshold between past and future ("ante retroque respiciens", *Familiares* 24.1.22). Recalling one's own readings brings to mind the texts one has read and the authors who wrote them; evoking memory is the remedy for the volatility of time, and correspondence with friends from long ago bridges the temporal gap to when they physically existed. This form of transtemporal and transnational communion is facilitated by the use of a more or less 'classical' Latin as the linguistic basis of communication. In the here and now, Petrarch frequents the ancient authors' places of residence (for instance, Virgil's hometown of Mantua, from where he claims to write to Virgil). Complementary to this, the reading of ancient authors (like the historian Livy) virtually transports him from his own lifetime to ancient Rome:

> Nunc vero tibi potius tempus est ut gratias agam cum pro multis tum pro eo nominatim, quod immemorem sepe presentium malorum seculis me felicioribus inseris, ut inter legendum saltem cum Corneliis, Scipionibus Africanis, Leliis […] et non cum his extremis furibus, inter quos adverso sidere natus sum, michi videar etatem agere. [Now it is rather the time for me to express my gratitude to you for a number of things, but especially for the fact *that you often make me forget present evils by transferring me to happier countries.* As I read I seem to find myself with the Cornelii, the African Scipios, the Laelii […] and not with these cursed thieves among whom I was born under an evil star.] (*Familiares* 24.8.4. Transl. Bernardo, emphasis ours)

Especially with regard to poetry, Petrarch's letters seek to create a transtemporal bond that unites its few true masters in what then nevertheless becomes a sizable community. To that end, chronotopical con-

tact with the afterlife is absolutely indispensable. In Book 24, Petrarch repeatedly sends greetings to long-dead authors, as if it were no problem to establish a club of living and dead poets that transcends the passing of time to serve as a model for posterity. Only in the case of Homer does Petrarch have doubts: Could he have slipped beyond our reach?

Yet the communication thus envisaged includes not only Petrarch's predecessors, but also us, the readers of posterity, Petrarch's future community of "friends" that he tries to build – accordingly, the end of the last letter of the *Familiares* switches from the addressee "Socrates" to a broader readership, asking us to read carefully and thoughtfully.

In his authorial activities, Petrarch connects past, present, and future: "Cum antiquis nempe loquitur, qui legit, at cum posteris, qui scribit" [For he who reads speaks to his ancestors, but he who writes speaks to his descendants] (*De remediis* 2.96[97].14; our translation suggests a relation *inter familiares* between *antiqui*, the readers and writers of the present moment, and their *posteri*). Petrarch's effort to learn from the past, to discuss this knowledge in the present, and to pass it on to future recipients corresponds to this. When we read Petrarch's texts, we are to assume the same position that Petrarch took in reading Cicero, Seneca, or Livy:

> Scriberem libentius, fateor, visa quam lecta, nova quam vetera, ut sicut notitiam vetustatis ab antiquis acceperam ita huius notitiam etatis ex me posteritas sera perciperet. [I confess that I would be more willing to deal with things that have been seen rather than read, and with things that are current rather than remote, *in order to pass on to future generations the knowledge of this era, just as the knowledge of the past has come to me from the ancients*.] (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 9. Emphasis ours)[11]

Petrarch also hopes for something in return: transtemporal and transspatial affection. For his timeless communities, transferable to all countries and languages, are based not only on sober reflection and shared interests – they are also a matter of affect and emotional bonds:

11 Cf. *Familiares* 6.4.7.

> Si vero forsan studii mei labor expectationis tue sitim ulla ex parte sedaverit, nullum a te aliud premii genus efflagito, nisi ut diligar, licet incognitus, licet sepulcro conditus, licet versus in cineres, sicut ego multos, quorum me vigiliis adiutum senseram, non modo defunctos sed diu ante consumptos, post annum millesimum dilexi. [If in some way the fruit of my labours has quenched the thirst of your curiosity, I only ask for one reward: that you love me, even if you do not know me, even if I am locked in a sepulchre, even if I am now reduced to ashes, as I have loved so many by whose vigils I have felt helped, and I have loved them even though they were dead, or rather: already worn out by an infinity of years.] (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 38–39. Emphasis ours)

Should this objective materialise, then the never-ending authorial effort that defined Petrarch's entire life will have been worthwhile:

> Nulla calamo agilior est sarcina, nulla iocundior; voluptates alie fugiunt et mulcendo ledunt, calamus et in manus sumptus mulcet et depositus delectat ac prodest non domino suo tantum sed aliis multis, sepe etiam absentibus, nonnunquam et posteris post annorum milia. [No weight is lighter to me than the pen; none is more pleasing; whereas other pleasures are fleeting and do harm as they delight, *the pen soothes when taken in hand and gives pleasure and benefit when put down, not only to its master, but to many others, often even to those who are far away, sometimes even to posterity after thousands of years.*] (*Seniles* 17.2.122. Emphasis ours)

To cast further light on Petrarch's concern with the opinions of future readers, it is worthwhile to consider the Latin poem *Africa*, a work that helped pave the way for his 1341 coronation as poet laureate, and, consequently, his self-fashioning as a modern classical author. At the poem's end, Petrarch addresses his personified work directly and warns it against present times and readers, advising it to stay hidden and reemerge only in the future when a transtemporal community grounded on the imitation of the idealised ancient Greek and Latin world has fully realised itself:

> Heu paucas habitura domos et rara per Orbem
> Hospitia! At si quem vere virtutis amicum
> Obtulerint tua fata tibi, secura repostum
> Angustumque precare locum sub paupere tecto,
> Atque ibi, sola quidem potius peregrinaque semper
> Quam comitata malis, annosa fronte senesce,
> Donec ad alterius primordia veneris evi.
> Tum iuvenesce precor, cum iam lux alma poetas
> Commodiorque bonis cum primum affulserit etas.
>
> [Oh, how few homes will you find and how rare is a friendly shelter in the world! But if your fate presents you with a friend of true virtue, ask for a small and safe place under his poor roof. And there, alone and always unknown rather than in poor company, you will age with a wrinkled face until you reach the beginning of a new time. Then, please, become young again as soon as a nourishing light shines on the poets, and an age more favourable to the good has arisen.] (*Africa* IX, 473–477)

In the temporal perspective outlined, Petrarch's community is still limited to the *pauci* [the few] (cf. IX 473) during his own lifetime. It is only in the future, after Petrarch's death, that this community will expand and hopefully acknowledge Petrarch's oeuvre and the associated temporality (in the sense of a historiographical perspective). So, given that Petrarch's transtemporal community "of both the living and the dead" (Wojciehowski 2015, 28) was still very much under construction by the time he died, how did future readers react to this community yet to come, to this work in progress between the so-called Middle Ages and a Renaissance in the making? The reception of Petrarch's figure in the corpus of his Florentine biographies in the hundred years following his poetic coronation of 1342 will help us to address this question.[12]

In light of the importance of the temporal dimension for Petrarch's community building, we shall focus on how the biographers present the author in relation to ancient models and contemporary writers, thereby addressing Petrarch's own above-mentioned questions: how he was read by his successors (*De remediis* 2.96[97].14), what emotional

12 Angelo Solerti's magisterial edition and study of said biographies remains indispensable to current scholarship (1904). For a comparative approach to the corpus, see Bartuschat (2007).

bonds he created (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 38–39), how his knowledge was received (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 9), and whether future generations profited from his work as he had profited from the ancients (*Seniles* 17.2.122). In our search for answers, we will examine the community's temporal (in the sense of transient) character and the different ways in which Petrarch's community building was harnessed by his successors: For example, Florentine authors claimed the Tuscany-born Petrarch for their political community and, however slightly, modified his temporal profile to suit their own purposes.[13]

Four biographical texts were composed in the century after Petrarch's elevation to poet laureate: Giovanni Boccaccio's (1313–1375) *De vita et moribus Domini Francisci Petracchi de Florentia secundum Iohannem Bochacii de Certaldo* (Boccaccio 2004), written in the years immediately after Petrarch's coronation (Fabbri 1992, 882–883); the biography by Filippo Villani (1325–1407) contained in *De origine civitatis Florentie et de eiusdem famosis civibus* (Villani 1997; Zabbia 2020), a historical work on the history of Florence and its illustrious citizens (after 1381); Leonardo Bruni's (1370–1444) *Le vite di Dante e di Petrarca*, (Lanza 1987, 15; Bruni 1987), a comparison between the two main Florentine authors in the vernacular (1436); and finally, Giannozzo Manetti's (1396–1459) biographies of the 'Three Crowns of Florence', *Vitae Dantis et Petrarchae ac Boccaccii*, published in 1440 (Baldassarri 2003, IX; Manetti 2003).

Based mainly on Petrarch's speech on the occasion of his coronation (Rico 2012, 48), Boccaccio's biography was an attempt to convince the Florentine government to lift the ban against Petrarch's father and allow him to return to teach at the newly founded *Studio fiorentino* (Fabbri 1992, 883). To justify his request, Boccaccio penned a eulogistic text praising Petrarch's talent and presenting him as the reincarnation of Virgil, the prince of Latin poets:

> Que quidem talem tantumque perhibent, nisi fallor, quod, si opinio phylosophi Samiensis veris posset rationibus sustineri, animas hominum scilicet reverti ad alia corpora, iterato in hoc Virgilium omni imbutum dogmate rediisse, non dubito dicerent qui cognoscunt. [If I am not mistaken, those [poems] so great and of such a nature prove

13 For a similar approach to the impact of an author's commemoration on multiple communities, see Scholten (2022).

> that, if the opinion of the philosopher of Samos [Pythagoras] could be supported by evidence, human souls reincarnate in other bodies. I do not doubt that those who know him would say that Virgil, filled with all his knowledge, has returned in him.] (*De vita et moribus*, 8)

Without dwelling further on Boccaccio's praise through comparisons with other ancient authors,[14] we will now proceed to examine the temporal aspects of Petrarch's portrayal in Villani's biography. Even though Petrarch never lived in Florence, Villani harnessed him to the project of constructing an illustrious Florentine literary tradition. Drawing on Petrarch's oeuvre, previous biographers, and first-hand anecdotes, Villani established a model between hagiography and realism (Bartuschat 2007, 161) that would be followed by his Florentine successors, Leonardo Bruni and Giannozzo Manetti.

While Boccaccio praised Petrarch as the reincarnation of the most prestigious Latin author, Villani went a step further. Having described Petrarch as the most prominent Latin writer of his time ("nostra etate", 8), Villani suggests that he not only reached, but excelled his ancient models in their own language:

> Cumque apicem poesis acuratissima diligentia tetigisset, eloquentie que soluto sermone eniteret tanta claruit maiestate, ut prisce facundie scriptores stilo eminentissimo vel execederet vel equaret. [He reached the summit in poetry through his extreme diligence and shone forth in prose with such majesty that he equalled or even surpassed ancient writers in their eloquence and most distinguished style.] (*De origine*, 41)

Thus, Villani places his current Florentine political community under the intellectual patronage of Petrarch, the most elegant Latin writer of all times. After Petrarch's death, friends and fellow poets tried to complete his work, but, with their mediocre style, the difference was blatantly obvious (68). Nonetheless, only a few years later, a different viewpoint on Petrarch's command of Latin and new community building strategies emerged.

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14 Boccaccio situates Petrarch on the same level as Cicero, Seneca, Terence, Virgil, and Theocritus in the respective genres (8–9, 26), and describes bees covering the infant author's lips with honey, as legend attributes to Plato and Ambrose (22). On the artificial character of ancient and early modern biographies, see Beecroft (2010) and, especially, Enenkel (2022).

Following his investiture as Chancellor of the Republic (1427–1444), Leonardo Bruni composed Petrarch's (and Dante's) biography against the background of the renewed political tensions with Milan (Lanza 1991, 147–157). Unlike in previous panegyrics, Bruni writes with a detached tone and focuses on the history of Latin and vernacular literature from a decidedly political perspective. For Bruni, ancient literary studies were linked to political freedom, which is why they faded at the end of the ancient Roman Republic (Bruni 1997, 55–56) and reappeared, far from perfect, in the Tuscan cities when the latter regained their freedom from foreign rule (Bruni 1997, 57). According to this historical perspective, Petrarch is not Boccaccio's and Villani's author who equalled and maybe even surpassed the ancients:

> Francesco Petrarca fu il primo il quale ebbe tanta grazia d'ingegno che riconobbe e rivocò in luce l'antica leggiadria dello stile perduto e spento; e posto che in lui perfetto non fusse, pur da sé vide ed aperse la via a questa perfezione, ritrovando l'opere di Tullio e quelle gustando ed intendendo, adattandosi, quanto poté e seppe, a quella elegantissima e perfettissima facondia; per certo fece assai, solo a dimostrare la via a quelli che dopo lui avevano a seguire. [Francesco Petrarca was the first to possess the intellectual grace to recognise and call back into the light the ancient elegance of the dead and lost style; *and although this was not perfect in him*, *he by himself saw and paved the way to this perfection* by rediscovering Cicero's works, enjoying and understanding them and also trying to adapt himself, as best as he could, to that most elegant and perfect eloquence. *Indeed, he did much just to show the way for those who had to continue the work after him*.] (*La vita di Dante e Petrarca*, 57–58. Emphasis ours)

In Bruni's account, Petrarch is far from perfect, but his rediscovery of Cicero's texts (as a *pars pro toto* of ancient literature as a whole) nonetheless marks him out as a ground-breaking pioneer. Bruni counts himself and his contemporaries among the future generations who surpassed Petrarch's imitation. In so doing, Bruni's community building picks up on Petrarch's temporal construct. However, Bruni also installs Petrarch's figure as a role model to be overcome in order to define his community in opposition to his predecessor's authority: Even if Petrarch was an illustrious Florentine who showed posterity the way forward, Bruni's temporal community claims a more comprehensive

re-actualisation of Latin society through the political freedom of the Republic as opposed to the Milanese tyranny (Lanza 1987, 17).

Up to this point, we have discussed in Boccaccio, Villani, and Bruni three different scenarios in which Petrarch's desire to be praised for his role in introducing new studies (*Seniles* 17.2.62) and pleasing posterity through them (*Seniles* 17.2.122) was taken up and Petrarch's figure harnessed for different attempts at community building. However, in all these examples, the transtemporal community with the ancients based on the historiographical construction of the Renaissance corresponded to a specific political community (*Gesellschaft*).[15] Giannozzo Manetti's case offers a different assessment of this relationship.

Following Villani's example of treating Florentine authors, Giannozzo Manetti was the first to bring together the 'Three Crowns of Florence' (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio), enthroning them as "the response to classical antiquity […] by virtue of their moral worth and unparalleled scholarship" (Baldassarri 2003, XV–XVI). In the introduction, Manetti explains the paradoxical situation of the three fellow citizens (*cives nostri*, 6), praised by uneducated people and despised by scholars. This scorn is due, on the one hand, to the erudite prejudices against vernacular literature, which is why Manetti wrote the biographies in Latin (*Vitae Dantis et Petrarchae ac Boccaccii*, 6); on the other hand, Petrarch and his fellow poets' proficiency in Latin was nothing compared to that of ancient and even contemporary authors:

> Dantem, Petrarcham et Boccacium, tres illos peregregios poetas nostros, quorum vitas in hoc codice nuper adumbravimus, usque adeo in vulgus consensu omnium claruisse constat, ut nulli alii hac vulgari opinione paene illustres poetae a conditione orbis fuisse videantur; quod ideo contigisse arbitror, quoniam illi cum carmine tum soluta

15 The difference between political and cultural communities can be illustrated with the help of the German terms *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*. For an analysis of the respective concepts and a discussion of further categories, see Bickel 2017. In its emphasis on rational bonds and "rules to overcome distrust" (Brint 2002, 3), the *Gesellschaft* is comparable to an official political structure such as that of Bruni's Florentine Republic; the *Gemeinschaft*, meanwhile, is based more on "common ways of life" and "common beliefs" (Brint 2002, 2), representing cultural communities also bound together by shared historiographical constructions that ascribe different roles to Petrarch's authorship.

> oratione in hoc materno scribendi genere ceteris omnibus praestiterunt, cum in latina lingua multis non modo veteribus sed etiam novis nostri temporis scriptoribus inferiores appareant. [Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, our three extraordinary poets whose lives I have sketched in this latest work of mine, seem to have received so much praise from the many that no other poets since the beginning of the world can boast of such fame among the common people. In my opinion, the reason for this lies in their superiority to all other vernacular writers both in verse and prose, whereas in Latin they are clearly inferior not only to many ancient writers, but also to more recent writers of our own times.] (*Vitae Dantis et Petrarchae ac Boccaccii*, 3. Transl. Baldassarri/Bagemihl. Emphasis ours)

Hence, Manetti picks up on Bruni's re-actualisation of Petrarch's community building and invokes Petrarch's authority to define his own community against it. However, he also recognises, within the same political community, at least two cultural communities based on education and language use: the learned elites employing Latin and the ordinary people communicating in the vernacular. While the former despise the 'Three Crowns' for their insufficient knowledge of Latin, the latter appreciate their vernacular works as superior to those of all other vernacular writers, even if that part of their oeuvre is utterly ignored by the erudite (*Vitae Dantis et Petrarchae ac Boccaccii*, 6). Against this backdrop, Manetti's biography operates as a unifying device aimed at bringing together the cultural communities of the learned elites and the ordinary people under the umbrella of a single political community (*Gesellschaft*) united by the Florentine literary tradition.

The present paper examined the characteristics of Petrarch's cultural community through the prism of his epistolary exchange. The second goal of this study was to investigate the reception of Petrarch's community building in the Florentine biographies composed in the hundred years after his poetic coronation (1341). In so doing, we have described Petrarch's attempt at creating an intellectual network around his figure through the construction of epistolary collections oriented on ancient models. This public network consisted not only of a transregional community of friends (at home and abroad), but also of the great authors of antiquity, creating a transtemporal and transnational community defined by the imitation of an idealised ancient Greek and Roman world. In keeping with such a temporal construc-

tion that sought to overcome the Middle Ages by means of a particular re-actualisation of antiquity, Petrarch wished to be read in the same way as he himself read ancient authors (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 9; *De remediis* 2.96[97].14), thereby creating with future generations the same affective bond he felt for his own predecessors (*De viris illustribus*, Pref. § 38–39). However, while Petrarch pursued this affective bond with his correspondents, he portrayed his contemporaries as unable to value the composition of literature and other intellectual endeavours according to ancient principles. Consequently, a community capable of fully appreciating Petrarch's work is presented as yet to come (*Africa* IX, 473–477).

Petrarch's biographers harnessed Petrarch's temporalities under construction to the purpose of defining their own specific communities. While Boccaccio and Villani described Petrarch as the unreachable pinnacle between ancient and modern literature, and staged themselves as part of the chosen few who formed part of his community, successive biographers took a different stand. Picking up on Petrarch's community building, Bruni and Manetti portrayed their communities as the realisation of the Renaissance project espoused by their illustrious predecessor (Huss and Regn 2009, 86–87). To that end, Bruni and Manetti adduced Petrarch's authority to claim a deeper knowledge of the ancient world, and hence their superiority over him. Furthermore, while previous biographies mainly gathered political communities around the figure of Petrarch, Manetti's biography also sought to unite the cultural communities of the erudite and uneducated under the shared banner of the Florentine literary tradition. In such a perspective, a tradition would be founded upon the temporalities constructed by Petrarch, and so, when the Renaissance community building was finally completed under serious reconsideration of the Petrarchan oeuvre through the prism of new historical and philological categories, the author himself would remain a crucial temporal device for the authorisation of future intellectual and political collectives.

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Daniel Leonhard Purdy

Missionary Accommodations: A Genealogy of Goethe's World Literature

Goethe's 1827 conversation with Johann Peter Eckermann about reading a Chinese novel has often been cited as an early articulation of world literature (Blackall 1971, 29–35; Birus 1995, 1–28, 19; Damrosch 2003, 10–13; Mani 2017, 53–54). In response to Eckermann's query that the Chinese characters in the novel must seem very strange, Goethe presents an early account of worldly readers' relationship to a foreign text: "Nicht so sehr als man glauben sollte […] Die Menschen denken handeln und empfinden fast eben so wie wir und man fühlt sich sehr bald als ihres Gleichen nur dass bey ihnen alles klarer, reinlicher und sittlicher zugeht" [Not as much as one expects to believe […] The people think, act and feel almost just like us and it does not take long before one feels oneself to be their equal, except that with them everything proceeds more clearly, purely, and morally] (Eckermann 2011, 31 January 1827. References to Eckermann's *Gespräche mit Goethe* will be cited by the date of the entry). Eckermann's rendition of Goethe's approach to reading a Chinese novel and his own surprised reaction constituted a microcosm of world literary reading practices. As seminal as this exchange may have been in establishing European interest in unfamiliar Asian writing, I wish to argue that Goethe's readiness to identify with Chinese literary figures reflects his adaptation of much older interpretive practices. Goethe's world literature offers a secular expansion of the global media network developed by Catholic missionaries in the early modern period.

World literature, as announced in this famous dialogue, revises and extends early modern efforts to establish a global Catholic church by positing similarities between European and Asian beliefs. The winding connection between Jesuit attempts to accommodate Christian teaching with elite Chinese culture and Goethe's engagement with new Sinology coming from Paris can be uncovered in the immediate biblio-

graphic context of Goethe's inaugural statements. His enthusiasm derives from reading Chinese novels translated into French and English, as well as his subscription to *Le Globe, Journal Philosophique et Littéraire*, which provided him with a review of Abel Rémusat's translation of *Iu-Kiao-Li* [*Les Deux Cousines,* or *The Two Fair Cousins*], a late Ming-dynasty scholar-beauty romance sent to Paris by Jesuit missionaries in the seventeenth century. In formulating his new paradigm, Goethe drew from a foreign journal sent through the mail. The ephemeral, succinct, and intermittent appearances of Goethe's world literature pronouncements confirm their provenance from newspapers, journals, marginal notes, and dinner conversations with friends. The news reports that Goethe patches together into statements about world literature are an effect of the persistent operation of information networks stretching from Europe to China. Even as Goethe's statements initiate a new interest in globally dispersed poetics, they also stand at the end of an early modern tradition of accommodating European and Asian thought.

The post-Reformation emergence of the global Christian church represents one of the preliminary steps towards modern cosmopolitanism (Clossey 2008). Seventeenth-century Jesuit missionaries in China quickly recognised that carrying their message into Asia's largest empire would never be possible as it had been in the Americas through conquest (Mungello 1989; Hsia 2010). Awed by the antiquity and sophistication of Chinese civilization, they searched for underlying principles of commonality. The China mission sought to move past theological differences to detect a shared metaphysical unity between Catholic and Confucian teachings. At the same time that Jesuit missionaries formulated positions accommodating Christian teaching with their distinct interpretation of Confucian canonical texts, they also sought to refute Buddhist arguments as heretical (Kern 1984–1985, 65–126). The Jesuit method had its predecessor in medieval scholasticism's incorporation of Aristotle into the Christian corpus and its contemporary ally in humanism's learned engagement with Greek and Roman texts.

Secular Enlightenment readers first learned to feel empathy with Chinese people by building on the modes of reception fostered by Jesuit missionaries. From the late sixteenth century well up to the Society's 1773 suppression, Jesuits provided information about Chinese

philosophy, politics, morality, and social relations through their many communications with believers in Europe (Friedrich 2011). The missionaries' annual reports, personal letters, translations of Confucian classics (Confucius 1687), as well as treatises on their own mission (Trigault 1617) and Chinese imperial history, were presented in terms appealing to Catholics. Many Jesuit publications were immediately translated into German for the sake of drawing the faithful into the Church's wider missions. Catholic princes, particular the Wittelsbach dynasty, supported the mission through funds and gifts (Eikelmann 2009). Any scholar interested in China would have consulted the many compilations as well as periodical publications of missionary letters, such as the 34 volumes of *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* published between 1702 and 1776 or the 40 German editions of *Der Neue Welt-Bott* published between 1728 and 1756 (du Halde 1747; Dürr 2007, 441–466).

Critics of cosmopolitanism have argued that proximity is crucial to empathy and that humans have a far more difficult time sympathizing with someone on the other side of the globe than their own neighbour. Nevertheless, early modern Church quickly developed modes of emotional identification that encouraged Europeans to form a sympathetic bond with foreigners despite the alienation created by distance and ignorance. The training for such identificatory readings emerged already in the sixteenth century in the form of pious Christian exercises wherein the individual believers contemplated Biblical scenes in order to more intensely understand the motives of the figures acting within them (Loyola 1991). Learning how to project oneself into the thoughts of an Old Testament patriarch eventually made it possible for Europeans to imagine that they could think and feel like a Persian prince or a Chinese emperor. In this brief essay, I wish to sketch out a genealogy that traces the shifting forms of emotional identification starting with early Jesuit representation of Asian martyrs and ending up with Goethe's reading of a Chinese novel (Purdy 2021).

It is important to combine a discussion of emotional-spiritual aspirations with the history of information channels between China and Europe in order to show their mutual motivation and dependence. Although he confines himself to Pietist sources, Albrecht Koschorke's work helps explain that the relationship between media and mentality is not hierarchical, so that information precedes desire, but rather that

the two work together (Koschorke 1999). Desire does not exist absent the ability to generate a circuit of sending and receiving information. To the extent that missionary letters, reports, and dramas asked Europeans to pray for their Chinese and Japanese brethren, the Catholic Church created an early emotional bond between Europeans and Asians through its many edifying and educating missives.

Among its many facets, Jesuit accommodation in China constituted itself as an interpretive strategy, a deliberate way of reading and translating texts in order to find a common ingredient between cultures, in order to deliberately? look at past differences to find an imagined unity. Cosmopolitanism here meant asserting a point of commonality despite the obvious reasons why it might be false. In a sense, this method entails overlooking the established norms within a speech community, in order to posit a cultural interaction that could not have existed prior to the material historical conditions that make this reading possible. Accommodation existed only within a world of communication and travel. The interpretations that accommodation produces could not have existed prior to the attempt by Christian intellectuals to identify with Chinese scholars. In Europe, the precedent for such a deliberate misreading was the medieval scholastic appropriation of Aristotle and Plato.

The long history of European identification with Chinese culture begins with accommodation. To the extent that it was not merely a strategy for delivering a Christian message to the Mandarin upper class, accommodation makes the case that Christianity and Confucianism have parallels both in terms of their teaching and history. If late twentieth-century scholars such as Karl Jaspers argue that parallels between Europe and China have long existed, it is the Jesuits who first made this discovery (Jaspers 1955). At the same time, accommodation fostered identifications that often left other Europeans wondering whether the missionaries have abandoned their dogmas and "gone over". Their suspicion asked whether the missionaries had themselves been converted. Such doubts about missionaries as having been seduced by the people they were supposed to convert persisted throughout the Jesuit mission in China. Accommodation with Confucianism is decidedly not refutation, it did not attempt to measure a higher truth on the basis of intellectual combat. It also opened the possibility for Europe to be influenced by China – as Gottfried Leibniz expressed in his famous

suggestion that China send missionaries to Europe to teach practical ethics and peaceful coexistence (Leibniz 1957). World literature depends on a similar ability to recognise relatedness as it appears in mediated representation; it requires a chain of mediation, translations, letter writing, and most importantly the ability to draw analogies despite differences. Goethe's confidence in the ascendancy of world literary relations was based on his ability to recognise parallels by plucking literary constellations out of the texts.

One key difference between Catholic accommodation with China and Goethean world literature concerns the type of texts relied upon to mediate between Europe and Asia. Jesuit missionaries focused on Confucian canonical texts to formulate a theological and philosophical kinship, while the Goethean position shifted to understanding Chinese poetry and prose fiction (novels, romances). The poetic and empathetic reading of foreign poetry and literature became more important to Sinologists as the status of philosophy declined among Europeans eager to understand China. Abel Rémusat's introduction to his 1826 translation of *Les Deux Cousines* (translated then once more from the French into English as *Two Fair Cousins*) formulates the clearest case for the shift (Iu-Kiao-Li 1827). The assertion that literature more effectively reveals the intimate qualities of Chinese society than reports written by European travellers marks a shift in the epistemological approach to understanding foreign cultures away from metaphysical comparison of philosophical treatises and anthropological evaluation of language and politics in favour of an aesthetics of identification. We can trace a history of European engagement with China through such succession of genres. In each case, these categories were constructed to organise Chinese writing within a framework that allowed identification by the imaginary European reader. The Jesuits isolated specific teachings of Confucianism, in order to integrate Chinese thought into Christian theology as much as pagan Greek philosophy had been incorporated. Enlightenment anthropology replaced natural theology with a taxonomy that isolated China's defining features. Goethe's world literature concept in turn focused on lyrical poetry and romances as writing forms shared commonly by humanity. In each case, the discourse constructs an ideal European reader as much as it imagines a definitive Chinese representative.

Hegel's demotion of Confucianism as no more than untheoretical, practical advice below the level of Cicero's *De officiis* sets the tone for the nineteenth-century disregard of Chinese philosophy (Hegel 1986, 142). To trace the decline, Hegel notes that Confucius had a high standing during Leibniz's era. As Confucianism lost its standing among European intellectuals, poetry and the novel begins to be taken seriously as a cultural expression. Hegel in his characterization of Chinese administrative elite also availed himself of Abel Rémusat's translation (Hegel 1986, 158). In broad historical terms, Goethe's appreciation for Asian literature stands at odds with the dominate tendency in nineteenth-century Germany and Austria to hierarchise cultures, a bias that is strongly reinforced by Hegel's account of *Weltgeist* moving on from Asia, leaving China as an ossified old civilization.[1] Within Goethe's pronouncements, literature replaces philosophy as the textual vehicle for intercultural understanding.

Chinese stories were important to Goethe and Schiller in the 1790s as they were searching for inspiration in foreign literature.[2] In studying Asian literatures, Goethe was not interested in organizing anthropological knowledge so much as spurring his own creative ability to write poetry. Rather than positing and applying an overarching concept of humanity and poetry, Goethe focused on detecting resemblances between literary texts. To the extent that these similarities were then understood as belonging to a larger unity, Goethe shared in the premodern presumption of an organic wholeness to human existence; however, he was more concerned with how texts overlapped and intersected than in the application of an abstract concept to diverse forms of writing. The recognition of such similarities was greatly enhanced by the increased circulation of texts through expanding early modern media circuits across the Indian Ocean.

Well before Eckermann arrived in Weimar, Goethe and Schiller were trading novels and histories (*Der Briefwechsel* 1984, 8). Schiller sent Goethe the first Chinese novel published in Europe: *The Pleasing*

1 Robert Bernasconi (2016) shows how Hegel is also adapting news from the failed 1793 Macartney Embassy to China with increasingly hostile intent.

2 Erich Trunz provides a concise overview in *Hamburger Ausgabe*, Vol 1, 774–776. The single best article on the subject remains Christine Wagner-Dittmar's "Goethe und die chinesische Literatur" (1971). See also Beutler (1928), Bauer (1972), and Mommsen (1985).

History appeared 1761 in London and then again in 1766 as a German double translation, entitled *Die angenehme Geschichte*, by Christian Gottlieb von Murr (*Der Briefwechsel* 1984, 148). In 1801 Schiller proposed revising *A Pleasing Story* as he was completing his revision of Gozzi's comedy, *Turandot*. In starting to write a new German version of *A Pleasing Story*, Schiller focused first on the protagonist's intense will to secure justice for the wronged people he meets during his travels. Even in its fragmentary state, it becomes clear what themes from the Chinese novel Schiller wanted to accentuate. Whereas Murr's narration was smothered with footnotes to Jesuit sources explaining the smallest details of Chinese society, Schiller immediately grabbed the reader's attention. Given that early English and German translations turned the narrative into an excuse for anthropological commentary, Schiller takes a new approach by distilling a plot driven by the urge to defend the weak through revenge and the imposition of justice. His opening lines echo the *Sturm-und-Drang* of *Die Räuber*:

> Zu Tahming, einer großen Stadt des chinesischen Reiches, lebte ein vornehmer Jüngling, Tiehtschongu genannt, der den Wissenschaften oblag. Seine Gestalt war schön, seine Seele großmütig und edel; er liebte die Gerechtigkeit bis zur Leidenschaft, und seine Freude war, dem Unterdrückten beizustehen. Da war er rasch und kühn und scheute kein Ansehen; nichts konnte seine Hitze mäßigen, wenn er eine Gewalttat zu rächen hatte. [Near Tahmin, a large city in the Chinese empire, there lived a noble young man, named Tiehtschongu, dedicated to learning. His figure was beautiful, his soul magnanimous and noble. He loved justice with a passion and his joy was to fight for the oppressed. In such cases, he was bold and daring and shied away from nothing; nothing could cool his ardor when he was avenging a crime.] (Schiller 1954, 361)

While Schiller never completed this adaptation, the fragment shows that he considered Chinese translations as a potential source for his own writing. Goethe similarly turned to Chinese and world literature as a hidden source. Anil Bhatti cites a letter Goethe composed but did not send to his editor Cotta wherein he spelled out his intentions too clearly for his own liking.

> Ich habe mich nämlich im Stillen längst mit *orientalischer Literatur* beschäftigt, und um mich inniger mit derselben bekannt zu machen, mehreres in Sinn und Art des Orients gedichtet. Meine Absicht ist

> dabei, auf heitere Weise den Westen und Osten, das Vergangene und Gegenwärtige, das Persische und Deutsche zu verknüpfen, und beiderseitge Sitten und Denkarten übereinander greifen zu lassen. [I have quietly busied myself with oriental literature, and in order to understand it more deeply, composed much in the in the sense and style of the Orient. My intention is to connect, in a cheerful manner, West and East, the past and the present, Persian and German and to allow each side's mores and thinking to reach into the other.] (Goethe 1965, 306)

Goethe writes here that he is reading oriental literature in secret because he had always had the habit of not revealing his creative intentions. This same secrecy explains probably why he never sent the letter – for it provides an all-too clear and confident statement of purpose. In his analysis of this passage, Bhatti emphasises Goethe's desire to connect two poetic traditions together in a cheerful manner, in order to call attention to the *Divan*'s playful-performative quality that avoids the colonial logic in its spatial (east, west), temporal (past, present) or cultural (Persian, German) structures (Bhatti 2013, 22). Weimar writers did not only look over older works, they also participated vicariously in some of the first efforts to establish secular scholarship on China. One of the earliest German journals dedicated to the Orient and to China specifically was Julius Klaproth's *Asiatisches Magazin*, published by Friedrich Justin Bertuch in Weimar. Julius Klaproth had taught himself Chinese as gymnasium student in Berlin by gaining access to Chinese books in the Hohenzollern palace. According to Abel Rémusat, Julius Klaproth was the first knowledgeable person to have read and catalogued the Chinese holdings in the Prussian collection (Walravens 1999). Over the course of his career, Klaproth studied in Berlin, St. Petersburg, Weimar, and Paris, eventually building connections between Goethe and French Sinologists. In reading Klaproth's 1801 proposal for *Das Asiatische Magazin*, we can see how Bertuch's other publications served as a template for Klaproth's new Orientalist undertaking. The editorial format and market position were similar to the journals providing fashion news from Paris and London, even if the subject was quite different. Like the earliest editions of Bertuch's *Journal des Luxus und Moden*, Klaproth wanted to find content initially by emulating, or in this case translating from existing French and English publications. Justus Bertuch's publishing house, the *Landes Industrie*

Comptoir, had established itself through its very successful *Journal des Luxus und der Moden*, yet its continued growth was in providing geographical works about the non-European world. The cosmopolitan readership that Bertuch had called into existence through his fashion journals took a great interest in travel writing and geo-political histories of the wider world. In the process of publishing this short-lived journal, Klaproth came into contact with Goethe, who was eager to learn more about China. Martin Gimm goes so far as to describe him as Goethe's "studentische Hilfskraft" [research assistant]. While this label may be more amusing than accurate, all told Klaproth was in Weimar at least four times: November 1802; November 1803; April 1804; August, November, December 1813, and he continued to communicate with Goethe later after he joined Rémusat's Sinology circle in Paris (Gimm 1995, 229–567).

Klaproth's major selling point for the *Asiatisches Magazin* was that no moderately priced, German-language journal addressed what he imagined was a yet untapped demand for Oriental studies in Central Europe:

> Ich habe den Plan, eine Quartalschrift von einer Art, wie sie uns noch gänzlich mangelt, nemlich für die orientalische Litteratur, herauszugeben. Der Inhalt soll theils aus eignen Abhandlungen, theils aus Übersetzungen und Auszügen orientalischer Schriftsteller bestehen. Dabei werde ich vorzüglich sehr kostbare und in Deutschland kaum gekannte englische und französische Werke […] benutzen. [I have a plan to publish a type of quarterly unlike any we now have, namely one dedicated to Oriental literature. The content will consist of my own essays, some translations and excerpts from Oriental writers. For that purpose, I will rely upon English and French works that are largely unknown in Germany.] (Walravens 1999, 20)

Klaproth's publishing strategy underscored the two-step process whereby Germans first gained access to news from Paris and London, which in turn informed them about the wider globe. In his descriptions of world literature, Goethe sketched out the same process, whereby Central European readers first gained access to French and British sources, in order to then read literature from outside Europe. The *Asiatisches Magazin* was supposed to supply articles on history, geography, natural history, antiquities, philosophy, and philology that were not aimed at scholars alone but to provide "pleasant entertainment" for

just those educated men who do not aspire to be called scholars. Bertuch eventually asked that poetry and mythology also be included (Klaproth 1809, 22). Goethe consulted the *Magazin* as he was composing his "Noten und Abhandlungen" to *West-östliche Divan* (Goethe 1888, 286). Klaproth's journal was not supposed to depend on first-hand accounts but rather draw on the already existing archive of Asian materials in European collections. He had, after all, stumbled across the Chinese manuscripts lying forgotten in the Hohenzollern library and spent much of his career working on material in St. Petersburg, Berlin and Paris.

Following the 1773 suppression of the Jesuits, missionary reports espousing a consistent theological position were replaced by ethnographic modes of writing that constructed the Orient as an archive with diverse languages and cultures, rather than a single, coherent imperial system of administrative power and metaphysical truth. Knowledge about China lay dormant in German libraries for long stretches, forgotten, unrecognizable to most people who stumbled across it, then at striking moments this knowledge was mobilised, rediscovered, brought back into circulation. Klaproth and Rémusat's reliance on translating, deciphering, and interpreting manuscripts reflected the shift away from first-hand travel reports in favour of an emerging philological approach toward the Asian texts that had been amassed in European libraries by the Jesuits during the seventeenth century. Whereas the Jesuit Du Halde had carefully culled missionary reports before they appeared in the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, Klaproth's Asian magazine sought to select, translate, and explain diverse manuscripts sitting in libraries without producing a single coherent image of China. The urge to visit East Asia never subsided, and Klaproth did join a Russian embassy to the Chinese border, collecting languages and books along the way, as well as providing an anonymous report. When the embassy failed, Klaproth blamed the Russian organisers for not having studied Jesuit histories of earlier diplomatic missions to the Chinese court (Klaproth 1809).

Weimar writers also had a direct connection to the ill-fated British Embassy to Beijing led by George Macartney. Another of Bertuch's foreign correspondents, Johann Christian Hüttner, accompanied the entourage in 1793 to Peking where he served as a translator and secretary, before translating John Barrow's official report of the trip into

German.[3] As the London correspondent for Justus Bertuch's publishing house, Hüttner contributed to *London und Paris*, which augmented the *Journal des Luxus und der Moden* with celebratory accounts of the cosmopolitan world of these two cities. These reports included updates of the latest travelogues and exploration accounts in the years 1814–1829. While Goethe had held Bertuch's world reports on foreign trends initially in disdain, he regularly read Hüttner's reports in order to purchase books for the Weimar library. Karl Guthke considers Hüttner to have been a major source for Goethe to understand European expansion (Noyes 2006, 450; Guthke 2001). In a report to *London und Paris*, Hüttner laid out how capital cities served as nodal points that gathered information from the larger, more dispersed world. The intersection of different networks allowed an individual traveller to encounter the widest world through a two-step process, wherein one travelled to a major city in order to meet even more well-travelled people: "Vielgereiste Leute gehören unter die ersten geistigen Genüsse, welche man in den Clubs und vermischten Gesellschaften großer Städte zu erwarten hat. London steht darin keiner andern nach, und man kann zweifeln, ob irgendwo eine solche Verschiedenheit von Reisenden zusammen fließe, als hier" [Widely traveled people are among the highest intellectual pleasures that one can expect in the clubs and mixed societies of larger cities. London stands ahead of all other cities in this regard, and one would doubt that there is any place in the world where a greater variety of travelers come together than here] (Hüttner 1799, 7). As with Goethe's discussion of world literature, travel accounts were divided between Europe and beyond. The London correspondent writes: "Es ist anziehend genug, mit Männern zu reden, die Europa durchzogen haben; aber noch weit angenehmer, Seefahrer und Abentheurer anzutreffen, die lange Jahre auf entfernter Erde lebten, und weite, gefahrvolle Meere durchsegelten" [It is attractive enough to speak with men who have traveled through Europe; however, it is even

3 The German edition was published in Weimar by Bertuch's firm: Johann Barrow's *Reise durch China von Peking nach Canton im Gefolge der Großbrittannischen Gesandtschaft in den Jahren 1793 und 1794*. Transl. by Johann Christian Hüttner (Weimar: Landes-Industrie-Comptoir, 1804). Vol. 1. An Austrian version appeared a year later: *John Barrows Reisen nach China (1793–1794)*, deutsch von Hüttner, in der Bibliothek der neuesten und interessantesten Reisebeschreibungen, XXII, XXIV (Vienna 1805).

more pleasant to meet seafarers and adventurers, who lived for many years on foreign soils and, furthermore, sailed across dangerous seas] (Hüttner 1799, 7). For a provincial German, travel to a metropolis entails meeting people who have come from even further away. In lieu of visiting a metropolis, because, like Goethe, one was too old, journals and newspapers provided the closest substitute. For Goethe his subscription to *Le Globe* provided him with access to Parisian literary culture comparable to Hüttner's reports from London.

When Goethe announces to Eckermann that he is reading a Chinese novel, there would have been only three available to him in a European language. The first, *A Pleasing Story* (1761), had already been a topic in his correspondence with Schiller in 1796. Goethe also often mentioned a romance written in Cantonese verse, *Chinese Courtship*, that had been translated in 1824 by Peter Perring Thoms, a merchant stationed in Macao with the East India Company. The third novel, *Les Deux Cousines,* appeared in 1826 just before the conversation with Eckermann. The decisive connection between Goethe and Rémusat's translation was the Parisian journal, *Le Globe*, which arrived in Goethe's hands with each postal delivery.

The French journal provided the direct link between Weimar and Abel Rémusat's translated Chinese novel. Not only the novel, but also the translator's introduction were clear influences on Goethe's speech about world literature. Goethe's insistence to Eckermann that Chinese fiction was quite similar to European novels reiterates Rémusat's appeal to the French reader in the introduction to *Les Deux Cousines*. Both writers were eager to find similarities between prose fiction in both cultures. Their focus on literary analogies reinforced in turn the Western reader's ability to identify with Chinese figures. While Goethe mentions the translation first in May 1827, a few months after Eckermann's conversation, a review of the novel printed in *Le Globe* (23 December 1826) would have been on his desk already by the New Year (1826, 299). Heinz Hamm has also shown through a careful analysis of Goethe's marginal comments in his personal copy of *Le Globe* that he had enthusiastically absorbed the laudatory review of Rémusat's translation (Hamm 1998, 376–377). Whether Goethe already owned a copy of the translation, sent perhaps by Klaproth from Paris, cannot yet be answered. Still, it remains clear that Goethe's remarks reiterate the contemporary Parisian discourse about Chinese literature (Sondrup 2010,

37–46). For all its contemporaneity, Goethe's enthusiasm for *Les Deux Cousines* also shows how the origins of modern Sinology were built upon the earlier Jesuit missionaries, for the original Chinese volume Rémusat translated had been resting in the French royal collection for well over a century, most certainly a gift to Louis XIV for his support of the China mission. Indeed, one attempt to render a translation had been made around 1700 (Sieber 2013, 13), but it was not until 1826 that the Jesuit gift became a public sensation. Taking together all the sources behind Goethe's encounter with the Chinese novel, we can recognise a material and intellectual lineage passing from the Jesuit missionaries' mediation between Asia and Europe to the first European articulations of a world literature.

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Adam Davis

Discordant Ideations of a German Nation? Contrasting Herder's and Fichte's Nationalistic Conceptualisations

In today's discussion about world literature, which routinely draws on Johann Wolfgang Goethe's brief conversation with Johann Peter Eckermann in the early nineteenth century, I consider it meaningful to investigate the concomitant realm of German literary and philosophical representations of nationalism and patriotism around 1800. One must undoubtedly dabble with two thinkers who, arguably, laid the foundation surrounding this highly volatile and complex topic. As products of Enlightenment, both Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) and Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) held distinctive views of society and of the nation. I argue that, while Herder accentuates the possibility of a humanistic brand of liberal nationalism, Fichte falls short in espousing these views, ultimately falling prey to malicious nationalistic endeavours. Both Fichte and Herder's philosophies concerning language, culture, and the nation remain relevant to date. There has been a resurgence of scholarship on Herder, for example, in the last two decades. Much of this scholarship seeks to refute claims, predominantly made in the late twentieth century, that Herder espoused theories of the nation that are exclusionary and harmful. Indeed, Herder has been accused of promoting xenophobia, but he has also been credited with working against chauvinism and towards a recognition of other cultures.

Similar claims have been levied against Fichte. The aim of this essay is thus to examine an array of key ideas of Herder and Fichte and to situate the former's concept of the nation along more liberal and egalitarian lines, in contrast to the latter's more problematic nationalist conceptions. To accentuate these views, I will first delve into Herder's theory of language and then juxtapose it to Fichte's ideas in *Reden an die deutsche Nation* [*Addresses to the German Nation*] (1808). I aim to show that Fichte's thinking is more susceptible to co-option and slip-

pages into exclusionary ethnic parameters. In order for us to more clearly understand their key differences, let us first consider the historical circumstances under which both thinkers formulated their respective theories.

An enormous shift in philosophy, history, and politics was set in motion by the Enlightenment during both Herder and Fichte's lifetime. The growing popularity of empiricist forms of cognition combined with new industrial modes of production ushered in an age that sought to challenge the status quo. Religious orthodoxy and conformity to dogma were no longer the defining anchors of life. Indeed, the Age of Enlightenment was one of revolution, politically and intellectually. Technological innovations, which allowed for the industrialisation of manufacturing, and a shift in consciousness away from codified religious adherence to a self-aware sense of individualism marked the decades around 1800. These shifts drastically changed the social, economic, and political landscape in central Europe.

Prominent scholars such as Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm, and Benedict Anderson attribute the emergence of modern nationalism to the advent of eighteenth-century European industrialisation. Benedict Anderson argues in *Imagined Communities*:

> In Western Europe the eighteenth-century marks not only the dawn of the age of nationalism but the dusk of religious modes of thought. The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism, brought with it its own modern darkness. With the ebbing of religious belief, the suffering which belief in part composed did not disappear. Disintegration of paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation: nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What then was required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning. As we shall see, few things were (are) better suited to this end than an idea of nation. (11)

The economic imperatives of modernity coupled with the "disintegration of paradise" predict nation as an inevitability. Although other scholars, such as Todd Kontje and Caspar Hirschi, have pointed out that the idea of nationalism in various fashions developed well before the Industrial Revolution, I follow Anderson's understanding of the era's characteristics and use it for my analysis of Herder and Fichte's philosophies regarding nationalism.

Herder's take on the nation is not aligned with the commonly held understanding of contemporary nation-states that directly correlates institutions of power and governance with the body populace. Rather, Herder was sceptical of authoritarian forms of government, as embodied by absolutist rulers, and envisioned the nation on purely linguistic and cultural terms. Herder's theories of nationalism imply a vehement objection to all forms of bigotry and state-sanctioned violence and oppression. Isaiah Berlin points out in *Three Critics of the Enlightenment*, Herder differentiated patriotism and nationalism:

> Patriotism was one thing, nationalism another: an innocent attachment to family, language, one's own city, one's own country, its traditions, is not to be condemned. But he [Herder] goes on to say that aggressive nationalism is detestable in all its manifestations, and wars are mere crimes. (2013b, 224)

To this day, detangling love for one's country from violent forms of nationalism, predicated upon differential preference, remains problematic. In the following, I argue that Herder's concept of nationalism is cultural and pluralist, and thus at odds with the contemporary understanding of the term. I will also show that Herder's theory of language contains a humanistic worldview, on which his concept of nationalism relies. On the other hand, I contend that Fichte, too, takes a linguistic and cultural approach to conceive of a German nation, mostly prominently articulated in his *Reden an die deutsche Nation* [*Addresses to the German Nation*], 1808). Fichte insists that Germans possess a special nature and occupy a special time in history that will lead to the founding of a German nation. Fichte's German exceptionalism, however, is at odds with Herder's pluralistic view of a cultural nation and ultimately collapses into an ethnocentrism that does not welcome or reject anything that is not German.

1 Language and Nation in Herder's Philosophy

In addition to his theory of nationalism, Herder is also well known for his contributions to the theory of language and the philosophy of history. To him we can attribute the theories that developed modern linguistics. A discussion focusing on Herder's theory of language is relevant to his idea of nation because they form the core of his worldview, according to which history, culture, and politics can all be understood

via linguistic formations. Herder used the term 'nation' as early as 1772 in his *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* [*Treatise on the Origin of Language*]. Here, however, nation refers not to the nation-state as we know it today, but rather designates a group of people who share linguistic and cultural traditions. While Germany would not become a nation-state until nearly a century later in 1871, the discourse about nation originated in the period around 1800. Hagen Schulze points out: "[T]erms such as 'Fatherland', 'Volk', and 'Nation' became political key-words [predominately] under the impact of the Napoleonic occupation" (50). This early usage aligns with the points made in the introduction to Herder's treatise: nation, deriving from the Latin '*natio*' or 'tongue', refers to a group of people who are defined by linguistic proximity (Hirschi 2012, 12). It also evokes a narrowly circumscribed concept of the nation constructed as early as the Middle Ages. Godfried van Benthem van den Bergh explains in his essay "Herder and the Idea of a Nation": "Before Herder's perspective, the concept 'nation' had a more limited meaning. Latin 'nationes', for example, designated groups of university students" (2018). The term "nation" thus meant community or group without a necessarily political implication.

For Herder, language plays an essential role in the *Bildung* [education] of the individual and consequently the flourishing of culture and *Humanität* [humanity].[1] Culture and *Humanität*, in turn, are essential components of a flourishing nation. Indeed, language for Herder is fundamental to cognition and being, it allows individuals to understand their environment. Through language, we discover and interact with the world, and we learn how to express ourselves. The notion that language is the foundation of all cognitive interaction is a core concept in

1 Herder develops and differentiates the term *Humanität* [humanity] from other like terms such as *Menschlichkeit* [mankind] and positions it as a state of being, an ideal towards which 'mankind' is striving. As Robert Clark explains in *A Companion to the Works of Johann Gottfried Herder*, "'Mankind' is the aggregate of all human individuals, past, present, and future, considered as real, tangible, and physical. 'Humanity' (Latin *humanitas*, French *humanité*) is an abstract term referring to the ideal state capable of attainment by mankind; secondarily it is the latent potentiality that mankind has for the attainment of that ideal. Hence 'humanity' is both an ideal condition and a definable real quality" (2009, 94). *Humanität* is a tangible throughline in Herder's philosophies, from his theories on language to his later theories concerning the state and politics.

modern linguistics. As Michael Forster points out in his entry in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:

> Herder can claim to have virtually established whole *disciplines* that we now take for granted. For example, it was mainly Herder (not, as has often been claimed, Hamann) who established fundamental ideas concerning an intimate dependence of thought on language that underpin modern philosophy of language. (Forster 2024)

Herder's work on the philosophy of language dates back to the 1760s. In *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Literatur* [*Fragments on Recent German Literature*] (1767–1768), he compares German and European historical conditions and argues the overbearing importance of philosophy as a result of Enlightenment thought leads to a lack of emotion and empathy. Language, as a vehicle of cognition, offers a metric to measure cultural evolution. For Herder, language and culture are highly susceptible to the shaping influence of geography and climate, which are also important for historical development. According to Herder, a language is influenced by the natural environment and historic period in which it is used. Thus, when comparing German with ancient languages, such as Hebrew or ancient Arabic, Herder attributes differences between the two to historically specific cultural and economic preoccupations. He states in the *Fragmente*:

> Ihre [Sprache] ist reich an Vieh: Naturnamen sind in ihr häufig: im kleinen Buch der Hebräer, das wir allein noch übrig haben, sind schon 250 botanische Wörter: Namen, die unsre Sprache zwar kann ausdrücken, aber nicht auszudrücken weiß. [Their language is rich in livestock. In it names of natural things are frequent. In the small book of the Hebrews, which is all that we still have remaining, there are already 250 botanical words, names which our language can but does not know how to express.] (Herder 1767–1768, 53. Transl. Forster)

The plethora of botanical words that Herder considers characteristic of ancient Hebrew is indicative of interactions between language and region. A contemporary fascination with the rich vocabulary relating to "snow" in several indigenous Alaskan vernaculars, for example, implies a similar concept of language. It stands to reason that a group of people who live in a snow-laden region need more words to express the idiosyncrasies and fine differences in such an environment that is vital for

their survival. Conversely, the languages of populations who live in more arid climates would likely be characterised by an absence of such descriptors in favour of others that better suit their particular needs.

As this example shows, Herder considers language a natural, organic medium that evolves in tandem with the 'nation' that speaks it. In order to fully understand and appreciate any culture, one must understand its language. It follows that literature, like language, provides a standard by which one can assess cultural progress. Herder argues: "Ihr könnt also die Literatur eines Volks ohne ihre Sprache nicht übersehen, ihr könnt jene durch diese kennenlernen, ihr könnt beide durch einander ausbessern, denn ihre Vollkommenheit geht mit ziemlich gleichen Schritten fort" [So you cannot survey the literature of a people without their language, you can get to know them through these, you can mend both through each other, for their perfection progresses in quite similar fashion] (1767, 178). In *Fragmente*, Herder offers an appraisal of the status quo of German literature and grapples with the direction in which German language and culture were headed. In particular, he is concerned that the German language was at an impasse, stuck between its youthful, sensual origins and the cold, calculating political and scientific impetus of the Enlightenment. Herder discusses two conceptualizations of language: language as a functional tool, used for pragmatic purposes; and language as an evolving organism that possesses artistic potential and is capable of articulating the full range of human emotion and experience. He asks in the *Fragmente*:

> Wo steht unsre Deutsche Sprache? In allen Staaten ist zu unsrer Zeit die Prose die Sprache der Schriftsteller, und die Poesie eine Kunst, die die Natur der Sprache verschönert, um zu gefallen. Gegen die Alten und gegen die wilden Sprachen zu rechnen, sind die Mundarten Europens mehr für die Ueberlegung, als für die Sinne und die Einbildungskraft. [...] Die Prose ist uns die einzig natürliche Sprache, und das seit undenklichen Zeiten gewesen – nun sollen wir diese Sprache ausbilden? Wie kann das seyn? Entweder zur mehr dichterischen Sprache, damit der Stil vielseitig, schön und lebhafter werde; oder zur mehr philosophischen Sprache, damit er einseitig, richtig und deutlich werde; oder wenn es möglich ist, zu allen beiden. [Where does our German language stand? In all states of our time prose is the language of the writer and poetry an art that beautifies the nature of language in order to please. Compared to the old and wild forms of speech, the vernaculars of Europe are

> more suited for contemplation, rather than for the senses and imagination. […] Prose is for us the only natural language, and has been so since time immemorial – should we develop this language now? How can that be? Either towards a more poetic language, so that the style will become versatile, beautiful, and lively; or towards a more philosophical language, so that it becomes one-sided, correct, and precise; or if it is possible, towards both.] (Herder 1767–1768, 38)

The thoughts expressed in these passages refer to the Enlightenment's emphasis on rationalism, which, as Herder believes, has permeated the German literary and linguistic sphere. He further argues that contemporary attempts to rejuvenate German literature by merely imitating the great works of antiquity provides no solution to the task at hand. For many of Herder's contemporaries, the works of the ancient Greeks epitomise the highest literary and cultural achievements. While Herder lauds the works of antiquity, he points out that mere imitation of the ancient writers would hinder the development of a unique German literary voice in the eighteenth century. Every language offers new ways of understanding and seeing the world in a given period of time. This unique contribution, however, is lost if writers only imitate literatures of a long-gone past in a different geographical area and fail to interact with their own natural and historical environments.

Herder is particularly critical of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803), a German poet, who, like many of his contemporaries, broke with the rationalism of the Enlightenment and tried to reinvigorate German poetry. Klopstock is referenced in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's (1749–1832) famous epistolary novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (1774) and plays an influential role in the literary movement known as "Sturm und Drang" [Storm and Stress]. Acknowledging Klopstock's contribution to German literature, Herder points out his limitations:

> Leset den Homer, und denn leset Klopstock; jener malet, indem er spricht; er malet lebende Natur und Politische Welt: dieser spricht um zu malen, er schildert; und um neu zu seyn: eine ganz andre Welt; die Welt der Seele und der Gedanken, da jener sie hingegen in Körper kleidet und spricht: Laß sie selbst reden! [Read Homer and then read Klopstock. Homer paints when he speaks; he paints living nature and the political world; Klopstock speaks in order to

> paint, he depicts – and in order to be new – a quite different world, the world of the soul and of thoughts, whereas Homer by contrast clothes these in bodies and says 'Let them speak for themselves!'] (Herder 1767–1768, 55. Transl. Forster)

Herder highlights the issues of translation and imitation of Homer in Klopstock's work in order to show that it is not sufficient to merely imitate the style of great works from the past. Rather, one must find and articulate the identity of a German literary voice, the voice of a cultural nation.

Herder's criticism of Klopstock's style also reveals how an author, who is skilled and praised for his odes and faithful translations of the classics, nonetheless encounters problems, for example, in transcribing Greek hexameters into German prose. Herder notes that the song-like quality of ancient Greek hexameters cannot be fully rendered in German. Any attempt to transpose the entire linguistic idiosyncrasies of one cultural context into another is doomed to fail. Herder states in the *Fragmente*:

> Ihr wollt Deutsche Hexameter machen; machet sie so gut ihr könnet, und alsdenn lasset dem ohngeachtet die Versart drüber drücken, wie man es Klopstock rieth, oder bittet, wie Kleist, dies Sylbenmaas als Prose zu lesen. Könnet ihr Hexameter deklamieren? Wohl! so werdet ihr auch wissen, daß das die beste Deklamation ist, die seine Füße am meisten verbirgt, und nur alsdenn hören läßt, wenn sie die Materie unterstüzzen. Sehet! So wenig ist der Hexameter und die Polymetrischen Sylbenmaaße unsrer Sprache natürlich: bei den Griechen foderte ihn die singende Deklamation das an den Gesang gewöhnte Ohr, die vieltrittige Sprache; bei uns verbeut ihn Sprache und Ohr und Deklamation. [You want to make German hexameters? Make them as well as you can, and then nevertheless have the verse form printed over them, as *Klopstock* was advised to do, or request, like *Kleist*, that this meter be read as prose. Can you recite hexameters? Good! Then you will also know that the best recitation is the one that most hides its feet and only lets them be heard when they support the substance. See! The hexameter and the polymetric meters are so little natural to our language; with the Greeks their *singing* recitation, their ear *used to song*, and their *variously paced* language demanded it, but with us language and ear and recitation forbid it.] (Herder 1767–1768, 68–69. Transl. Forster)

While applauding the efforts of German authors to synthesise Greek idiosyncrasies into the German language, Herder ultimately diagnoses an incompatibility between the two languages that does not allow a smooth translation of style. It is well known that Herder's preoccupation with the German language and the state of German literature, vis-à-vis French linguistic influence, in *Fragmente* was motivated by his study of Greek antiquity. Charles A. Grair references in *The Literature of Weimar Classicism*, "Johann Gottfried Herder's *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität* (Letters for the Advancement of Humanity, 1793–1797) echo his Weimar compatriots' belief in the ethical perfection of antiquity. For him, too, the Greeks revealed the possibilities of an ideal human existence" (79). As a keen observer of the history and culture of his time, Herder believes that the German language was being stifled by the ubiquity of spoken French, a sentiment he shares with many of his contemporary Germans. Indeed, French was the language of the German aristocracy and of life at court. All matters of political and philosophical import were discussed in French, while German was regarded as an inferior language, spoken only by the commoners and peasantry. Even the Prussian King Friedrich despised German culture. Schulze notes in *The Course of German Nationalism: From Fredrick the Great to Bismarck 1763–1867*, that "His [King Friedrich's] world, the world of the intellect, of culture and good taste, was a French world; for him, things German meant his father's deeply detested court, that dull, unintellectual, bigoted and uneducated milieu, reeking with beer and tobacco fumes" (44–45). During the Napoleonic conquest of Germany, French was the language of the occupation forces and, as such, fuelled nationalistic anti-French sentiments.

Herder's attempt at a literary rejuvenation was motivated, at least in part, by the gap in knowledge and literacy between the upper and lower classes. Herder's push for a new appraisal of language and literature was aimed at the *Volk*, the common people, in an attempt to foster a sense of identity founded in language. For Herder, however, the need to develop one's own language was not tied to an aggressive German nationalism based on ethnic parameters, which is the case of Fichte. Rather, Herder sought to promote the development of the unique properties of the German language and culture, which had not been allowed to fully develop under French cultural hegemony. Although Herder pushed back against the overabundance of French cultural and

linguistic influence, he advocated for the unfettered development of not only German but all national cultures and remained vehemently opposed to all forms of political or cultural exclusionism. This notion is perhaps most evident in his later writings concerning European transgressions. In *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit* (1774), he writes,

> Je mehr wir Europäer Mittel und Werkzeuge erfinden, euch andern Welttheile zu unterjochen, zu betrügen und zu plündern— vielleicht ists einst eben an euch zu triumphiren! Wir schlagen Ketten an, womit ihr uns ziehen werdet: die umgekehrten Pyramiden unsrer Verfaßungen, werden auf eurem Boden aufrecht kommen, ihr mit uns – gnug, sichtbarlich geht alles ins Grosse! Wir umfaßen, womit es sey, den Kreis der Erde, und was darauf folgt, kann wahrscheinlich nie mehr seine Grundlage schmälern! Wir nahen uns einem neuen Auftritte, wenn auch freilich blos durch Verwesung! [The more we Europeans invent means and tools to subjugate, to deceive, and to plunder you other parts of the world … Perhaps it will one day be precisely your turn to triumph! We affix chains with which you will pull us; the inverted pyramids of our constitution will turn upright on your ground; with us you will… Enough, it is evident that everything is tending to a larger whole! We embrace the circle of the earth – whatever we may do this with – and what comes next can probably never any longer narrow this circle's foundation! We are approaching a new act [of the play], even if admittedly only through decay!] (579. Transl. Forster)

As a thinker who has championed pluralism and advocated for the freedom of all cultural communities, Herder sees great value in learning other languages and in gaining a deeper understanding of other cultures. He believes that culture, much like language, is not static; cultures and languages continue to evolve and, in doing so, come to integrate aspects of other cultures and languages. Sonia Sikka points out in her book *Herder on Humanity and Cultural Difference*: "[F]ar from holding the view that cultures should shun foreign influence, Herder largely sees cultural interaction as a good thing, as long as it is not the result either of violence or imitation arising purely from a sense of cultural inferiority" (7). Herder does not see foreign influence as a threat—as long as it does not seek to extinguish the culture or language of another.

Herder's philosophy of language shows that his concept of the nation is not xenophobic in nature. Herder supports every culture's right to develop its own literature and language while also seeking to rejuvenate German literature and culture. As Alan Patten points out in his article "'The Most Natural State': Herder and Nationalism," "Herder found his fellow Germans to be too enthralled with the French language and culture and claimed that they needed to foster their own cultural and linguistic development. In 1788, he circulated a plan for 'the first patriotic institute to foster a common spirit in Germany' in which he called for the establishment of a German academy that would be charged with caring for the German language, studying history of Germany, and encouraging national development" (686). I agree with Patten's argument that Herder's nationalism is predominantly a cultural one: "Herder was concerned to promote the 'cultural nation', not the 'political nation'. Rather than aim for political unity or the sovereignty of the German people, he sought to energise the spiritual, linguistic, and aesthetic formation of the German nation" (658).

At the same time, Herder believes that a plurality of linguistic and cultural influences benefits one's own culture. Although he remains critical of the German tendency to imitate [*nachahmen*] Greek and Latin antiquity, as the case of Klopstock shows, Herder understands that one can learn a great deal from the study of ancient languages. He writes in the *Fragmente*:

> Alle alten Sprachen haben, so wie die alten Nationen, und ihre Werke überhaupt mehr karakteristisches, als das, was neuer ist. Von ihnen muß also unsre Sprache mehr lernen können, als von denen, mit welchen sie mehr verwandt ist; oder der Unterschied zwischen beiden liefert wenigstens den Sprachphilosophen eine Menge Stoff zu Betrachtungen. [All ancient languages have, like the ancient nations and their works in general, more that is distinctive than what is newer. Hence our language can inevitably learn more from them than from those languages with which it is more closely related; or at least the difference between the two sides supplies philosophers of language with a mass of data for observations.] (Herder 1767–1768, 65. Transl. Forster)

> Von diesen Schriftstellern [Greek] kann die Deutsche Sprache unstreitig viel lernen; weil ies ich in die Griechische eher und biegsamer schicken kann, als in die Lateinische; weil die Griechische es

> auch unstreitig mehr verdient, und weil für die Deutschen eine ausgebildete Poesie und Prose des guten Verstandes, ohnstreitig die beste Sprache ist. [From these authors the German language can unquestionably learn much, because it can adapt itself more readily and more flexibly to the Greek language than to Latin, because the Greek language also unquestionably deserves it more, and because for the Germans a developed *poetry* and *prose* of the good understanding is unquestionably the best language.] (Herder 1767–1768, 74. Transl. Forster)

The desire to foster literary *Bildung* is apparent in Herder's theories of language. Endeavours to revive elements of classical literature and art were crucial to the aesthetic project in Weimar. Herder believes that, if the Germans could integrate and properly translate the classics, they would be well on their way to a linguistic and cultural renaissance and rejuvenation. This is not a question of mere *nachahmen* [imitation] but *nacheifern* [emulation].

Beyond recognizing value in ancient languages, Herder also saw value in cross-cultural/linguistic exposure to Germany's neighboring countries, even France. Herder writes in *Fragmente*:

> Wir wollen die Französische Munterkeit, und Freiheit in unsere Abhandlungen einführen, und mit dem Deutschen Nachdruck begleiten. [...] Ich habe seit einiger Zeit meine Nebenstunden auf eine Untersuchung des Lächerlichen in Sitten, und des Lächerlichen in der Vorstellung und dem Ausdruck, nach seinem Hauptbegriff und seinen vielerlei Arten, gewandt: und habe im Französischen wirklich mehr Worte gefunden, weil diese Nation, die ohnedas mehr und lieber lacht, als die Deutschen; mehr Bemerkung aus der Cultur des Umganges zieht, als wir, und sich überhaupt mehr zu erklären weiß, wie die Seele durch den Körper spricht, als unsere Sprache. [...] Und überhaupt hat unsere Sprache durch Übersetzungen von der Französischen Prose des Umganges seit einigen Jahren schon merklich viel gewonnen. [We [Germans] wish to import, with German emphasis, the French liveliness, and freedom into our treatises. I have for some time devoted my extra hours to an investigation of the farcical in manners, and the farcical in conception and expression, according to its main concept and its many varieties: and I have actually found more words in French, because this nation, which anyway laughs more and likes laughing more than the Germans; draws more observations from the culture of ac-

> quaintance than we do, and in general knows how to explain itself more how the soul speaks through the body than our language. […] And our language has certainly, via translations of French prose throughout the course of a few years, won much.] (Herder 1767–1768, 139–141)

Herder ends the *Fragmente* by expressing his faith in the German literary project:

> Allein, man sieht auch, daß in jeder Gattung der Schreibart kein Genie sich seiner Muttersprache schämen, oder sich über sie beklagen darf, weil überhaupt für einen jeden vortrefflichen Schriftsteller die Gedanken Söhne des Himmels, die Worte, Töchter der Erde sind. [Alone, one also sees that in every genre of writing no genius should be ashamed of his native language, or complain about it, because for every excellent writer thoughts are the sons of heaven and words the daughters of the earth.] (Herder 1767–1768, 184)

In sum, two elements are important for Herder's idea of nation. First, Herder sees intrinsic value in the literary and cultural productions of all nations and communities on Earth. Second, he is opposed to cultural imperialism in all forms. These two elements in his thought allow insights into how Herder's ideas on language and culture contribute to his historical and political theories, as well as his overarching thesis regarding the nation as a cultural community. These views stand in stark contrast to the ideas of Fichte, who is more commonly associated with stoking the flames of a harmful variant of nationalism, an ethnocentric nationalism that subverts Herder's egalitarian ideas.

2 Johann Gottlieb Fichte's Reactive Addresses to the German Nation

In my view, Fichte's nationalism takes a more aggressive form than that of Herder. This rings particularly true when we consider the social and political impact of Fichte's *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (*Addresses to the German Nation,* 1806) at a time of political upheaval caused by Napoleon's pan-European campaigns. Fichte's experience of the invasion of the French into German-speaking territories, which is commonly associated with a paradigmatic shift in German nationalistic sentiments, directly influenced his thinking. Herder, however, didn't live to see the warfare. Fichte nonetheless shared some of Herder's

views on the role of language and culture in reinvigorating German national consciousness.

Like Herder, Fichte grew up in a family of modest means. Born in Saxony on 19 May 1762, "he was the eldest son of poor and pious ribbon weavers". Fichte's "extraordinary intellectual talent" was recognised by a local baron who provided him monetary support (Breazeale 2023). With the passing of his benefactor, Fichte was forced to find employment as a tutor, a position on which he was not particularly keen. After a disappointing interview with the prominent philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), Fichte was resolved to demonstrate his mastery of Kantian philosophy, which resulted in the 1792 publication of *Versuch einer Kritik aller Offenbarung* [*Attempt at a Critique of All Revelation*] (1792). Fichte's gambit paid off. Kant, impressed by Fichte's understanding of his philosophy, publicly praised the young philosopher. This newfound success ultimately landed Fichte a position in Jena as a professor of philosophy and a platform from which he was able to reach a larger audience. His rather brazen and energetic demeanour as a public speaker enhanced his fame, and the French Revolution galvanised his thinking.

In the introduction to their 1922 translation of Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*, R.F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull note that "[t]he tracts which the French Revolution inspired Fichte to write at this time, and which established the rights of people on the basis of the inherent moral freedom of man, increased his fame; but at the same time they caused moderate and conservative men to regard him as a radical and dangerous teacher" (xii). This perception of Fichte as a political radical along with his contentious philosophy of religion and his ground-breaking epistemological masterpiece, *Wissenschaftslehre* [*Foundations of the Science of Knowledge*] gave rise to allegations of atheism in 1798/99.[2] In his essay *Ueber den Grund unsers Glaubens an*

2 Throughout the course of his philosophical forays, Fichte establishes his own epistemological system, the *Wissenschaftslehre*, which he uses as a framework to inform his other notions. It is in essence a new conception of transcendental philosophy which Fichte applies to ethics, *Recht* [law], nature, and religion. It is regarding the latter, that Fichte's argument in *On the Basis of Our Belief in a Divine Governance of the World* concerning the existence of God is "primarily negative, inasmuch as it explicitly denies that any postulate of the existence of a

eine göttliche Weltregierung [*On the Basis of Our Belief in a Divine Governance of the World*] (1798), published in *Philosophical Journal*, Fichte works through his ideas concerning a philosophy of religion in accordance with the principles of his *Wissenschaftslehre.* This unfortunately did not calm the waters but rather led to formative charges of atheism, leading to Fichte's dismissal from the University of Jena. The invasion of Napoleon's armies into German-speaking territories and the humiliating defeat of the Prussian army at Jena and Auerstedt (1806) forced Fichte to reside in Königsberg. Two years later he would deliver his *Reden* in Berlin.

When we consider the political circumstances under which Fichte delivered his *Reden*, it becomes easier to see why they present a stark contrast to the ideas espoused by Herder. And yet, it has been argued that Herder, like Fichte, contributed to the problematic form of nationalism that began to flourish in the twentieth century. There are indeed similarities between the two philosophers, particularly regarding the role of language in the formation of a nation. Unlike Herder's philosophy, however, Fichte's *Reden* were eagerly received by German nationalists of the twentieth century. As Arash Abizadeh notes in "Was Fichte an Ethnic Nationalist? On Cultural Nationalism and its Double":

> the chauvinistic character of the *Reden's* nationalism, combined with the history of the text's subsequent reception in Germany which marked it as an icon of German nationalism, has rather too closely tied the *Reden* to the darkest hours of the twentieth century. (334–335)

On the other hand, some scholars see Fichte as a champion of a German nation defined by republican values and untainted by ethnic nationalism. According to Abizadeh, this view is predominant in French scholarship:

> In France Fichte is commonly treated as a central figure in the history of modern political philosophy […] the dominant view that has emerged in France – represented by Fichte scholars such as Xavier Leon, Martial Gueroult, Alain Renaut, Luc Ferry and Etienne

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God independent of the moral law is justifiable on the philosophic grounds" (Breazeale 2023).

> Balibar – is that the *Reden's* nationalism is decisively not of the ethnic variety. (335)

Indeed, many more contemporary (non-French) scholars are inclined to re-examine Fichte's nationalistic pontifications in a more charitable light. Daniel Breazeale is chief among them. In a volume titled *Fichte's Addresses to the German Nation Reconsidered* (2016), he and others aim to reconsider and re-examine Fichte in the context of Enlightenment and nationalism, a take that I share with them. Abizadeh insightfully claims that "while Fichte officially defines nationality in terms of language and culture, his linguistic-cultural nationalism collapses into ethnic nationalism" (334).

At the beginning of the *Reden*, Fichte sets the stage by defining what he sees as a pivotal moment in the course of German history. As the title indicates, he is quite literally addressing the German nation in an attempt to foster a sense of nationalist cohesion in response to the invasion and occupation of German soil by French forces. He begins by declaring that the German nation is at a historical precipice, moving from one era to another. Recognising the volatility of the political situation, he defines who the Germans are in the hopes that they can save the nation:

> Bloß von Deutschen und für Deutsche schlechtweg, sagte ich. Wir werden zu seiner Zeit zeigen, daß jedwede andre Einheitsbezeichnung oder Nationalband entweder niemals Wahrheit und Bedeutung hatte, oder, falls es sie gehabt hätte, daß diese Vereinigungspunkte durch unsre dermalige Lage vernichtet, und uns entrissen sind, und niemals wiederkehren können; und daß es lediglich der gemeinsame Grundzug der Deutschheit ist, wodurch wir den Untergang unsrer Nation im Zusammenfließen derselben mit dem Auslande, abwehren, und worin wir ein auf ihm selber ruhendes, und aller Abhängigkeit durchaus unfähiges Selbst, wiederum gewinnen können. Es wird, sowie wir dieses letztere einsehen werden, zugleich der scheinbare Widerspruch dieser Behauptung mit anderweitigen Pflichten, und für heilig gehaltenen Angelegenheiten, den vielleicht dermalen mancher fürchtet, vollkommen verschwinden. [Only of German and simply for Germans, I said. In due course we shall show that any other mark of unity or any other national bond either never had truth and meaning or, if it had, that owing to our present position these bonds of union have been destroyed and torn from us and can never return; it is only by means of the common characteristic of being German that we can avert the downfall

> of our nation which is threatened by its fusion with foreign peoples, and win back again an individuality that is self-supporting and quite incapable of any dependence upon others. With our perception of the truth of this statement its apparent conflict (feared now, perhaps, by many) with other duties and with matters that are considered sacred will completely vanish.] (Fichte 1808. Transl. Jones and Turnbull)

According to Fichte, finding common national characteristics and defining the German identity are critical goals in the process of unification. It is particularly in the fourth address that Fichte makes the contention that the German 'nation' is at a historical precipice, and only Germans possess the potential to undertake such an endeavour, peoples of other nations and cultural influence fall short of the criteria and must not be allowed to interfere with the process.

The fourth address, titled "Hauptverschiedenheit zwischen den deutschen und den übrigen Völkern germanischer Abkunft" [The Major Difference between the Germans and the other Peoples of Germanic Descent], makes clear Fichte's penchant to parse out ethnic differences. Like Herder, Fichte is highly cognisant of the intrinsic value and role of language in the cultural foundations of a given nation. Yet, unlike Herder's pluralism and egalitarianism, Fichte's ideas ultimately collapse into a linguistic and cultural *Reinheit* [purity]. Herder does not establish a linguistic hierarchy or claims any linguistic purity as the foundation of a nation. At the beginning of the fourth address, Fichte lays out European ethnic groups in terms of their cultural and linguistic parameters, writing:

> Ferner reicht es hin den Deutschen insbesondere nur im Gegensatze mit den andern neben ihm entstandenen germanischen Völkerstämmen zu bezeichnen; indem andre neueuropäische Nationen, als z.B. die von slawischer Abstammung, sich vor dem übrigen Europa noch nicht so klar entwickelt zu haben scheinen, daß eine bestimmte Zeichnung von ihnen möglich sei, andre aber von der gleichen germanischen Abstammung, von denen der zugleich anzuführende Hauptunterscheidungsgrund nicht gilt, wie die Skandinavier hier unbezweifelt für Deutsche genommen werden, und unter allen den allgemeinen Folgen unsrer Betrachtung mit begriffen sind. [Further, it is sufficient to distinguish the German particularly, in contrast only to the other Teutonic peoples who came into existence with him. Other neo-European nations, as, for instance, those of Slav descent, do not seem as yet to have developed dis-

> tinctly enough in comparison with the rest of Europe to make it possible to give a definite description of them; whereas other of the same Teutonic descent, as, for instance, the Scandinavians, although the main reason for differentiation (which will be stated immediately) does not apply to them, are yet regarded here as indisputably Germans, and included in all the general consequences of our observations.] (Fichte 1808, 55. Transl. Jones and Turnbull)

Immediately of concern is Fichte's singling out of Slavic nations compared to the descendants of Germanic peoples. These implications of course remind one of the catastrophic role in which this doctrine played in Nazi ideology. In defining the German identity based on geographical and ethnic criteria, Fichte is then able to prescribe linguistic metrics for these groups. He continues,

> Somit ist unsre nächste Aufgabe, den unterscheidenden Grundzug des Deutschen vor den andern Völkern germanischer Abkunft zu finden, gelöst. Die Verschiedenheit ist sogleich bei der ersten Trennung des gemeinschaftlichen Stammes entstanden, und besteht darin, dass der Deutsche eine bis zu ihrem ersten Ausströmen aus der Naturkraft lebendige Sprache redet, die übrigen germanischen Stämme eine nur auf der Oberfläche sich regende, in der Wurzel aber todte Sprache. [With this our immediate task is performed, which was to find the characteristic that differentiates the German from the other peoples of Teutonic descent. The difference arose at the moment of the separation of the common stock and consists in this, that the German speaks a language which has been alive ever since it first issued from the force of nature, whereas the other Teutonic races speak a language which has movement on the surface only but is dead at the root.] (Fichte 1808, 61–62. Transl. Jones and Turnbull)

For Fichte, a living language holds much more value than a 'dead one'. It is disconcerting for obvious reasons that Fichte categorises a language in such binary terms, which points towards the more problematic contentions he makes concerning 'nation'. For him, Germans have grown up in rich cultural-linguistic regions and are therefore far better suited for the task at hand: the creation of a German nation. The question of purity for Fichte then partially boils down to that of cultural inheritance, but it relies predominantly on natural acquisition, which is the proximity to German territory. For those Germanic peoples who

have strayed outside of the area of linguistic influence, ostensibly learning other languages and cultural traditions, their link to what constitutes a *rein* [pure] German sphere of influence will have been tainted. Language, as the dominant purveyor of cognition and cultural tradition, is transmitted from generation to generation. Those who have remained in "purely" German territories, steeped in the practice of the language, are thus the only people who are able to truly integrate and understand German culture. Fichte argues:

> So verhält es sich, sage ich, mit einer Sprache, die von dem ersten Laute an, der in demselben Volke ausbrach, ununterbrochen aus dem wirklichen gemeinsamen Leben dieses Volkes sich entwickelt hat, und in die niemals ein Bestandteil gekommen, der nicht eine wirklich erlebte Anschauung dieses Volks und eine mit allen übrigen Anschauungen desselben Volks im allseitig eingreifenden Zusammenhange stehende Anschauung ausdrückte. [Such is the case, I say, with a language which, from the time the first sound broke forth among the same people, has developed continuously out of the actual common life of this people, and into which no element has ever entered that did not express an observation actually experienced by this people, and, moreover, an observation standing in a connection of wide-spread reciprocal influence with all the other observations of the same people.] (Fichte 1808, 57. Transl. Jones and Turnbull)

Clearly, there are some similarities to the notions espoused by Herder. Both see language in organic, natural terms. Both recognise the propensity of culture to propagate from within a given linguistically defined territory. Fichte and Herder disagree, however, with respect to the exceptionality of the German cultural-linguistic status. While Herder views foreign influence as an enriching factor, Fichte ultimately sees it as a hindrance. Fichte does not entirely exclude the possibility of foreign elements existing in German culture and language as long as it does not interfere with the process of the *Bildung* [cultivation] of German culture.

Fichte continues:

> Lasset dem Stammvolke dieser Sprache noch so viele einzelne andern Stammes und andrer Sprache einverleibt werden; wenn es diesen nur nicht verstattet wird, den Umkreis ihrer Anschauungen zu dem Standpunkte, von welchem von nun an die Sprache sich fort-

> entwickle, zu erheben, so bleiben diese stumm in der Gemeinde und ohne Einfluß auf die Sprache, so lange, bis sie selbst in den Umkreis der Anschauung des Stammvolks hineingekommen sind, und so bilden nicht sie die Sprache, sondern die Sprache bildet sie. [It does not matter if ever so many individuals of other races and other languages are incorporated with the people speaking this language; provided the former are not permitted to bring the sphere of their observations up to the position from which the language is thereafter to develop, they remain dumb in the community and without influence on the language, until the time comes when they themselves have entered into the sphere of observation of the original people. Hence, they do not form the language; it is the language that forms them.] (Fichte 1808, 63. Transl. Jones and Turnbull)

From a contemporary vantage point, this passage is problematic because of its obvious xenophobia and nationalism. It is not difficult to see how such ideas could be utilised to stoke nationalistic fervour. Tellingly, copies of Fichte's *Reden* were doled out to German soldiers during the First World War. Fichte's take on the course of history and the uniqueness of German potential reveals a sense of German exceptionalism that mirrors contemporary manifestations of toxic nationalism. As Abizadeh points out, Fichte's *Reden* conveys ethnic discrimination. Abizadeh highlights notions of this exceptionalism as "Fichte's notorious chauvinism" because "Fichte claims, only the Germans are a proper nation with an original living language" (2005, 356). In Fichte's theory, the Germans are in a unique position in that they possess a living, active language and are therefore properly equipped to ascend to the next stage of history in which a German cultural nation would flourish. Such flourishing would not be possible, were foreign cultural influence to stifle it. True, Herder also claims that German language and culture were being suppressed by the ubiquity of French, but he does not go so far as to infer that any contact or mixing of such influences should be completely eliminated. Herder saw intrinsic values in all cultures and languages, even French.

Fichte's problematic insistence on an ethnically pure German culture void of foreign influence is perhaps best illustrated in the thirteenth address, in which he writes:

> Die ersten, ursprünglichen und warhaft natürlichen Grenzen der Staaten sind ohne Zweifel ihre inneren Grenzen. Was diselbe Sprache redet, das ist schon vor aller menschlichen Kunst vorher durch die blosse Natur mit einer Menge von unsichtbaren Banden aneinander geknüpft; es versteht sich untereinander, und ist fähig, sich immerfort klarer zu verständigen, es gehört zusammen, und ist natürlich Eins und ein unzertrennliches Ganzes. Ein Solches kann kein Volk anderer Abkunft und Sprache in sich aufnehmen und mit vermischen wollen, ohne wenigstens fürs erste sich zu verwirren, und den gleichmässigen Fortgang seiner Bildung mächtig zu stören. [The first, original, and truly natural boundaries of States are beyond doubt their inner boundaries. Those who speak the same language are, long before any human art begins, by unadorned nature herself already joined together by a multitude of invisible bonds; they understand each other and are capable of making themselves understood to one another ever more clearly; they belong together, and are by nature one, an inseparable whole. Such [a whole] cannot wish to absorb or mix with or: interbreed with any people of different descent and language without at least at first becoming confused and violently disturbing the even progress of its culture.] (Fichte 1808, 176. Transl. Abizadeh)

It is hard to ignore the implications in Fichte's *Reden* that promotes a genealogical concept of the nation, which can, in turn, be used to legitimate and fuel aggressive nationalist endeavours. At the same time, there are also passages that point to a cosmopolitanism because Fichte also speaks about the acceptance of foreign influence and peoples in the building of a nation. It is thus necessary to develop a more comprehensive understanding of Fichte's nationalist thinking.

Richard T. Gray argues that Fichte also expresses ideas of national inclusivity. In his article "Economic Romanticism: Monetary Nationalism in Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Adam Müller", Gray notes that Fichte, before the *Reden*, defines the nation in economic terms:

> Seven years prior to his *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (Speeches to the German Nation), which have become infamous as documents that defend a linguistically and culturally oriented theory of German nationhood based on the self-aggrandizing proposition that the Germans belong together in a national community because they constitute an ordinary, self-identical, and authentic *Urvolk*, Fichte formulates a very different theory of German nationhood

> based on economic and monetary principles. […] This is a principal nondiscriminatory theory that includes in the national community all those who participate in its economic exchanges, regardless of race, religious creed, class, etc. (543)

While Fichte may have developed a more open and tolerant conception of the nation in his economic theories, I nonetheless highlight the drastic shift that occurred in his assessment of the German nation after the French occupation of German territories. It is not surprising that he would embrace a hostile attitude in the presence of a foreign occupying force. Marina F. Bykova posits in *Fichte's Addresses to the German Nation Reconsidered* that Fichte's rhetoric throughout the *Reden*, as a response to the French occupation, is "particularly susceptible to misappropriation". She continues:

> In addition to his nationalist vocabulary and passionate style, Fichte's elevation of Germanness to a kind of metaphysical essence and his nationally oriented vision of society provided perhaps just the right combination of philosophical justification, populist appeal, and ideological malleability to make a compelling case. (Bykova 2016, 134)

Bykova, however, argues that despite these shortcomings there is enough "valuable material" throughout Fichte's literary and philosophic *oeuvre* that warrant a more charitable view. Bykova namely addresses Fichte's "humanistic project of *Bildung*", which encompasses humanity as "a natural whole" (2016 134–135). Indeed, even the *Reden* contains passages that suggest a different view of the nation that differs from the common denotation of a narrow-minded nationalism.

Fichte's seventh address, "Noch tiefere Erfassung der Ursprünglichkeit und Deutschheit eines Volkes" [Even Deeper Understanding of the Originality and Germanness of a People], expounds further upon his concept of *Urvolk* [ancestral people] and the properties attributed to it. In this address, Fichte is concerned with the activity of the Volk in their pursuit of a German nation. Activity is crucial in Fichte's brand of German Idealism – a philosophical doctrine concerning the appearance of things and the *Ding an sich* [things in themselves]. Fichte frequently refers to the dichotomy of activity-life and inaction-death. Purpose and recognition of life, for Fichte, can be described as a desire for action, a striving of sorts that seeks to affirm the self. Isaiah Berlin recognises

this point and highlights the notion of activity in *The Roots of Romanticism*:

> From this he [Fichte] expands the whole vast vision which then proceeds to dominate the imaginations of the Romantics, whereby the only thing which is worthwhile, as I have tried to explain, is the exfoliation of a particular self, its creative activity, its imposition of forms upon matter, its penetration of other things, its creation of values, its dedication of itself to these values. This can have its political implications, as I hinted, if the self is no longer identified with the individual but with some super-personal entity, such as a community or a Church or a State or a class, which then becomes a huge intrusive forward-marching will, which imposes its particular personality both upon the outside world and upon its own constituent elements, which might be human beings, who are thereby reduced to the role simply of ingredients of, or parts in, some much bigger, much more impressive, much more historically persistent personality. (109)

Berlin then goes on to cite Fichte's seventh address in which Fichte offers more open parameters concerning the activity and building of the German nation. The following statement by Fichte illustrates Berlin's argument:

> In der Nation, die bis auf diesen Tag sich das Volk schlechtweg oder Deutsche nennt, ist in der neuen Zeit wenigstens bis jetzt Ursprüngliches an den Tag hervorgebrochen, und Schöpferkraft des Neuen hat sich gezeigt; jetzt wird endlich dieser Nation durch eine in sich selbst klar gewordene Philosophie der Spiegel vorgehalten, in welchem sie mit klarem Begriffe erkenne, was sie bisher ohne deutliches Bewußtsein durch die Natur ward, und wozu sie von derselben bestimmt ist; und es wird ihr der Antrag gemacht, nach diesem klaren Begriffe und mit besonnener und freier Kunst, vollendet und ganz, sich selbst zu dem zu machen, was sie sein soll, den Bund zu erneuern und ihren Kreis zu schließen. Der Grundsatz, nach dem sie diesen zu schließen hat, ist ihr vorgelegt; was an Geistigkeit und Freiheit dieser Geistigkeit glaubt, und die ewige Fortbildung dieser Geistigkeit durch Freiheit will, das, wo es auch geboren sei, und in welcher Sprache es rede, ist unsers Geschlechts, es gehört uns an und es wird sich zu uns thun. Was an Stillstand, Rückgang und Zirkeltanz glaubt, oder gar eine todte Natur an das Ruder der Weltregierung setzt, dieses, wo es auch geboren sei, und

> welche Sprache es rede, ist undeutsch und fremd für uns, und es ist zu wünschen, daß es je eher je lieber sich gänzlich von uns abtrenne. [In the nation which to this very day calls itself simply the people, or Germans, originality has broken forth into the light of day in modern times, at any rate up to now, and the power of creating new things has shown itself. Now, at last, by a philosophy that has become clear in itself, the mirror is being help up to this nation, in which it may recognise and form a clear conception of that which it hitherto became by nature without being distinctly conscious of it, and to which it is called by nature; and a proposal is being made to this nation to make itself wholly and completely what it ought to be, to do this according to that clear conception and with free and deliberate art, to renew the alliance, and to close its circle. The principle according to which it has to close its circle is laid before it: to those who believe in spiritual reality, those who believe in the freedom of the life of the spirit, those who believe in the eternal progress of the spirit through the instrumentality of freedom, whatever their native land may be, whatever the language which they may speak, they are our race, they are part of our people, or they will join it late or soon. All those who believe in arrested being, in retrogression, in eternal cycles, even those who believe in inanimate nature, and put her at the helm of the world, whatever may be their native country, whatever may be their language, they are not Germans, they are strangers to us, and one would hope that one day they would be wholly cut off from our people.] (Fichte 1808, 103.)

This quote stands in rather stark contrast to other statements by Fichte throughout the *Reden* concerning the *Volk* and German nation. Surprisingly, the exclusion in this passage is not grounded in ethnocentrism but rather directed against those who would seek to deny not only the German nation-building project but the larger project of human activity and *Bildung* [self-cultivation]. Berlin continues:

> This, to do Fichte justice, was not a chauvinistic German sermon, because by Germans he meant, as Hegel meant, all the Germanic peoples; that makes it perhaps not very much better, but a little better. This category includes the French, it includes the English, it includes all the Nordic peoples, and it includes some of the Mediterranean peoples as well. Even so, the heart of the sermon is not simply patriotism, or simply an attempt to arouse the waning German spirit, crushed under the heel of Napoleon. The main

> thing is this broad distinction between those who are alive and those who are dead, those who are echoes and those who are voices, those who are annexes and those who are the genuine article, the genuine building. (2013a, 111–112)

Berlin offers a more-balanced reading of Fichte here, even though he still raises questions concerning the overall message of the *Reden*.

In conclusion, while Fichte may not endorse a purely ethnocentric brand of nationalism, the slippages we have highlighted above are nonetheless enough to arouse healthy suspicion. At best, Fichte's theory of the nation is inconsistent. There are moments when Fichte seems open to an intercultural concept of the nation, even though much of the *Reden* promotes ethnic purity. While parts of the *Reden* express inclusiveness, they are overshadowed by those passages that are highly reactionary and lend themselves all too easily to the dangerous slippages towards an exclusionary nationalism. And while Bykova and others have unearthed more favourable components of Fichte's philosophies, particularly those in the *Reden*, compared with his ethnocentric concept of the nation, Herder's open-ended and tolerant notion is more appealing to us today. It is hard to predict what attitude Herder would have adopted, had he lived long enough to witness the occupation of German territory by the French troops. It could be possible that such a shocking political experience would have awakened in him more aggressive nationalist sentiments as well. As it stands now, however, the discrepancies between Fichte and Herder demonstrate different concepts of a cultural nation. Considering today's highly volatile, nationalistic political environment, there are indeed some things we can take to heart from Herder's more tolerant conceptualisations of a cultural nation. Fichte's theories, however, are more susceptible to politically motivated nationalism and should be regarded with due caution.

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Ban Wang

Rethinking the Idea of All-under-Heaven and Nation-State in Modern China

Schooled in the discourse of *tianxia* 天下 (all-under-Heaven), modern Chinese thinkers tend to view the nation-state as a major roadblock to world peace and a unified world. In his *Datong shu* 大同書 [book of great community], Kang Youwei 康有為 views the nation-state as the source of conflict, chaos, and misery in human history (2005, 68–69). Warlike and self-serving, the nation-state's mission was to expand its power and acquire territory. To achieve world peace and a cosmopolitan world, the warring states should agree to lay down their arms, erase the borders, and ultimately abolish the nation-state (68–69). But Liang Qichao 梁啟超, Kang's student and associate, disagreed, and took the nation-state more seriously. By confronting the Western nation-state Liang looked to the build-up of China's own nation-state. On the other hand, he also viewed the nation-state as a means of moving toward a cosmopolitan state.

Observing the Paris Peace Conference 1919, Liang saw a cosmopolitan spirit at work and envisioned the prospect of the "cosmopolitan state" (*shijiezhuyi de guojia* 世界主義的國家), which names the title of a section in his long essay *My Travel Impressions in Europe* (1999, 2978). While Liang appreciated the peace initiatives, which resonated with the ancient Chinese *tianxia* vision, he was aware that interstate geopolitical rivalry remained the intractable reality at that moment and stood as the biggest barrier to world peace. China was barred from being a player in the League's decision procedures. All major powers were eyeing China's vast territory, markets, and material resources. To count on the powerful nations to recognize China and look after her interest was a dangerous illusion.

On the other hand, Liang realised that the League of Nations heralded an aspiration that might reconcile cosmopolitanism and nation-state. Premised on cosmopolitanism of mutual help and reciprocity

among nation-states, the peace-making procedures suggested that the state's sovereignty is not absolute and must be curbed by joint efforts in a network of international relations.

Nation building was indeed necessary for China and could pave the way toward the cosmopolitan state based on *datong*. Liang projected an image of the nation-state that is not self-interested, narrow-minded and parochial but grounded in a planetary ethic. The journey progresses in a spiral from the individual to family to nation-state, culminating in a peaceful and unified world. Drawing on the Confucian doctrine of "cultivate the self, order family ties, govern the country, and bring peace to all under heaven," Liang describes a self that is not self-serving but sociable, and a nation-state that is not aggressive but a team player:

> The ultimate aim of an individual's life is to make a contribution to humanity as a whole. Why? The reason is that humanity as a whole is the upper limit of the self. If you want to develop yourself, you need to move in this direction. Why must the state exist? The reason is that with a state, it is easier to rally the cultural power of a national group; to perpetuate and grow it so that a country will be able to contribute to humanity as a whole and help the world grow as well. Building a state is thus a means of advancing humanity, just as the coordination of a municipal government with self-governing local regions is a means of building a state. In this light, individuals should not rest content with making their own state wealthy and powerful but should instead make their nation an addition to humanity. Otherwise, the state is built to no purpose (1999, 2985).

It has become a habit of thought among modern Chinese thinkers to engage and overcome the nation-state while looking forward to a *tianxia* utopia. From Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao to Sun Yatsen 孫中山 and Mao Zedong 毛澤東, thinkers steeped in *tianxia* traditions attempted to work through the nation-state by enfolding it within their world vision.

In *Reflections on the French Revolution*, Edmund Burke argued: "To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle […] of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind" (1912, 46). The nation-state, rooted in the little platoon of families and local communities, is an indispensable link in the

trajectory from the local toward the unity of the human community. In his book *Tianxia tixi* 天下體系 [world system], Zhao Tingyang 趙汀阳 zeros in on Burke's point and suggests that the Western political order is arranged in the order of "the individual—community—nation-state", with nation-state as the ultimate threshold of politics and legality. The Chinese political vision, in contrast, reverses the order, going from "tianxia—state—family", with *tianxia* as the top priority of political thinking (2005, 17).

Wary of Western colonialism, thinkers like Kang Youwei ignored the modern nation's robust republican culture. Liang Qichao, however, gave much thought to the Western-style nation-state. Schooled in the long tradition of *tianxia*, Liang sought to find a way to engage the nation-state and transcend it. To him the nation-state is both a scourge and an opportunity. A scourge because it was the source of world conflict and chaos, as the major colonial nation-states were bent on carving up China and controlling its markets and pillaging its resources and people. The colonialist tendency reflects the nation-state's capitalist economic system, which Liang called "nationalist imperialism of great powers" (lieqiang de minzu diguozhuyi 列強的民族帝國主義) (1999, 857). Caught in this whirlwind of imperialist-nationalist aggression, China's survival was in grave doubt. However, Liang recognised the nation-state's inner political strength and popular power. The beauty of national politics is self-rule and popular sovereignty. "Unless we pool together the strength of our nation and foster our own nationalism", Liang writes, "China had no way to resist Western nationalist expansion" (657). The nation-state presents a great opportunity and an exemplary: An open-minded national republic, based on self-rule, popular sovereignty, and an enlightened citizenry, presented an indispensable means for China's survival in the forest of nations.

1 Reconciling Private Morality with Public Morality

Kang Youwei's suspicion of the nation-state gave valence to Liang's indictment of narrow-minded nationalism. Narrow and brutal patriotism has a perverse morality and code of honour. The nationalist elite "cannot help but be partial each to his own state. The patriots' wills are fixed upon and limited to their own state"; "they consider fighting for

territory and killing other people to be important duty and great accomplishment" (Kang 2005, 68–69).

The term "narrow-minded patriotism" occurs frequently in Liang's writing and refers to the expansionist and self-interested predilection of Western nation-states. Later in the War of Resistance against Japanese Invasion, Mao Zedong also deployed the term "narrow-minded nationalism" to describe the loyalty of Japanese soldiers to the imperialist agenda as well as the chauvinism of the GMD that privileged the ruling class at the expense of the broad masses. In the same vein, Liang Qichao thought the nation-state, imported from the West, was hard to fit into the Chinese *tianxia* vision. Its belligerency recalled the geopolitical landscape of war-like kingdoms in the Spring and Autumn and Warring State era. During that period, geographical barriers divided separated groups and kingdoms, and ambitious states rivalled and fought with each other in grabbing land, amassing populations, and plundering resources. This situation prompted the kings and their advisors to preoccupy themselves with state crafts and state building. As a result, *guojia sixiang* 國家思想 [state thinking] prevailed. State builders, thinkers, and advisors were recruited and eagerly sought after (666). But state thinking was contested by emerging Confucian political thought. *The Spring and Autumn Annals*, a Confucian classic, proposed the *tianxia* order as a solution to state rivalry. *Tianxia* aimed to break down the boundaries of states, rally all states under one ruler, and through normative values and a universal culture, realize peace in the world. Liang writes:

> Since the birth of Chinese civilization, Chinese have always refused to recognize the nation-state to be the highest form of human community. Chinese political philosophy frequently takes the whole of humanity as its end. So the goal is to pacify all multitudes and to preserve peace, safety and stability for all under heaven. The state, incidentally, like family and kinship, is only a stage toward the formation of tianxia. China's political culture preoccupied itself not merely with a particular region or group in the world of humans. Chinese political thoughts deemed this type of [nation-state] politics unnecessary, because the state just seeks unity and solidarity within a community and expresses antagonism toward the outsiders. (1999, 3604)

The first principle of world governance in *tianxia* style aimed at the unification of multiple states, Liang asserts.

Comparing *tianxia* with the nation-state, Liang finds that the former is a politically weak concept whereas the latter promises a strong institution. Equipped with autonomy, ethnic coherence, solidarity, and self-protection, a national polity was what China sorely lacked and urgently needed. For centuries, a complacent *tianxia* mentality and mode of governance prevailed and replaced the militant and tough-minded "state thinking" marking the Warring States era. As a cultural rather than political umbrella, *tianxia* seems unable to foster the cohesion of a race and a people and lacks the capacity to forge a tightly knit political community. Liang's well-known lament that for millennia Chinese knew only *tianxia* and have no sense of themselves as a nation-state (665), disavowed *tianxia*, which was outdated and a sure sign of China's backwardness and vulnerability. A *tianxia* regime is unfit for the modern inter-state world, is unable to compete with Western nation-states, and is at risk of being eliminated. It stands as barrier to regaining China's strength in global competition and in the social Darwinist jungle of the strong prevailing over the weak.

Threatened by colonial nation-states, China badly needed a form of nation-state. "To resist the imperialism of the major nation-states and to prevent calamity and save lives, we must implement policies of nation-state" (1999, 657), Liang writes. Apparently, a historical trend embraced by all peoples in the world, the nation-state was an important modern institution. China's millennial political culture must draw strength and inspiration from this modern polity. The world has become an arena of nation-states. One needs to stand up and match other nations with strength and sovereignty in order to enter the world with dignity. The nation-state is the ticket into the modern world.

In *Discourse on the New People*, Liang elaborates on the popular politics and power of the nation-state. He defines the nation as "a people who share the same ethnicity, language, religion, and custom and regard each other as blood kin. They strive to achieve independence and self-rule and establish a comprehensive government in order to serve public goods and to ward off foreign rules" (656). It is instructive to distinguish between two parts of Liang's definition. The first part reveals a sense of nationalism rooted in primordial bonds of family and kinship ties, echoing Burke's little platoon. The primordial bonds char-

acterize the prepolitical, prenational nature of *tianxia*, where people have obligations only to their family and allegiance to their kin, village, and region. This circle of identification and belonging, ironically, resembles the primordial and ethnocentric notion of nationalism, confirming the "narrow mindedness" that Kang Youwei and Liang associated with the selfishness, parochialism, inwardness, blood ties, and antagonism of the Western nation-states. Just as private morality undermines public sphere, the self-serving nation-state tears societies and the world apart. In their refusal to take the world as a larger whole, the Western nation-states treat it as an empty space up for grabs—open to free completion, occupation, and annexation. The world is fragmented and torn apart: it is but an arena of struggle and competition among selfish colonialist and imperialist powers.

The second part of Liang's nationalism contains a politically creative dimension. As a republic, the nation-state does not have to be a straight and organic outgrowth from its primordial and pre-national roots. Although it may inherit ancient genealogies, a national formation must strategically carry over the primordial kinship and cultural heritages and proceed to transcend them in order to reconstitute a higher political arrangement. Nation-building entails a transformation of the cultural tradition, on which a political regime is based, and an updating of pre-political allegiance: it is a process of transforming these historical givens into the imagined community and solidarity. The prior historical, cultural, and ethnic relations may be inherited but must be updated to fit modern relationships among members of modern society, nationals and citizens. The people, though hailing from disparate villages, ethnicities, and families, would strive to build an independent government of their own and pursue the common goods. The nationals are political actors and citizens. Rather than passive inheritors of past wisdom and traditions, they should strive to build a new political community with independent spirit.

A new Chinese nation-state, Liang suggested, may foster a public ethos and citizenship by shedding the prepolitical sense of *tianxia*. In *Discourse on the New People* Liang avers that *tianxia* morality is alien to national political consciousness, because it is confined to private, personal, and kinship relations. One's love and obligation are towards the nearest kin and to personal relations in the traditional hierarchies. Under the rubric of *si* 私 [private sphere], this morality is what has

made Chinese politically apathetic and indifferent, unaware of themselves as constituents of a political community. The Empire has survived for ages without a robust unity, solidarity, and territorial integrity. The loose *tianxia* order contrasts sharply with the political cohesiveness of a modern national community. *Tianxia* looks like a natural landscape, an extensive empire with mixed ethnicities, a cyclical condition for economic and social reproduction of life, and a society in which ordinary people live in families, villages, and small communities. Everyone is an individual with particularistic ties to family and kin. *Tianxia*, in short, refers to a world of particularistic, unconnected communities marked by disparate and diverse pursuits of livelihood by unpolitical individuals. In the face of inter-state conflict and assaults of foreign aggressors, the system's vulnerability is self-evident. This lack of national cohesiveness and solidarity is what prompted Sun Yatsen to deplore the Chinese people as "a slate of loose sands" (Sun 1986, 238). On the other hand, "state thinking" becomes desirable and necessary and needs to be recovered.

Nation-state thinking requires an ethic that Liang calls *gongde* 公德, often translated as "public morality". Public morality is opposed to *side* 私德 [private morality]. An enduring legacy of *tianxia*, private morality is concerned with the individual's moral integrity and virtue attainable in programs of self-cultivation and learning among the literati. The self is disengaged from public affairs and is unconcerned with the common good. A more pernicious form of private morality is manifest in the pursuit of private interest and profit, eroding and destroying public space. By contrast, public morality insists on commitment, service, and devotion to the common good, upholding a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the collective.

Private morality undermines common goods and leads to political decay. In imperial administration and hierarchy, this mindset fuelled corrupt behaviour rooted in a relationship of patronage and favours. In Francis Fukuyama's description, private morality of kinship is extendable into politics and regulates "a reciprocal exchange of favours between two individuals of different status and power, usually involving favours given by a patron to the client in exchange for the client's loyal-

ty and political support" (2014, 86).[1] In a well-run state, the emperor and his ministers should relate to each other under the mandate of civil service and administration. But the private exchange of personal favours and benefits erodes and destroys the civil, "public" sphere. Yet, an empire, Liang asserts, is by "no means an exclusive property at the disposal of the emperor and his subjects" (*fei junchen suo neng zhuanyou* 非君臣所能專有). If the political order runs on the premise of private morality through the swapping of favours and advantages, politics is reduced to a trade-off between two private persons and has nothing to do with the totality of common goods (1999, 661). Political institutions would degenerate into an exchange between two self-serving individuals at the expense of public wellbeing and prosperity. If a government following the principle of *tianxia* is supposed to care and provide for all people, private dealings are nothing short of stealing from the common resources. The phrase *jia tianxia* 家天下 (privatizing the whole world under Heaven) denotes the way in which emperors and nobles treat all the lands and population as a private family estate. When private morality prevails, the Chinese are unaware and nonchalant of common interests beyond their local and kin attachment. The contrast between private and public morality prompts Liang to lament that Chinese, familiar with *tianxia*, know nothing about *guojia* 國家 (nation-state), and though attached to family, kin and local community, they have no sense of themselves as a political community (413–414).

Here is a paradox. By associating private morality with *tianxia*, Liang is suggesting that *tianxia* has no way of fostering a public ethos and its parochialism is far from a universal order. This claim calls into question the prevalent understanding of *tianxia*'s universality and inclusivity. It has been a consensus that *tianxia* owes its universalism to a broad public morality as the source of legitimate order for all beings under Heaven. The moral foundation of *tianxia* makes sense only under the rubric of *gong* 公 [public sphere, commons]. *Gong* has two meanings. The first is that everyone under Heaven is the most im-

1 In *Political Order and Political Decay*, Fukuyama speaks about China of the Qin and Han dynasties as the first modern state, with its impersonal bureaucracy and meritocracy. But the patrimonial pull of private, kinship, and family ties constantly erodes the broad administrative system, which was in fact the *tianxia* system. Liang Qichao is deploring the same patrimonial relationship.

portant resource and thus the care for their wellbeing and needs determines a state's political legitimacy. The second meaning is that whoever is in charge of a country should not take possession of the land and territories for his private enjoyment but should follow the Mandate of Heaven by winning the hearts and minds of all people. *Tianxia* attracts people to the benevolent king, unites them under one order, and rallies them under one system of values. This sweeping capacity captures the essence of the word *de* 德 [morality or virtue], which could be translated into "political morality." When a kingdom has *de*, it will have the support of people and possess lands and wealth. In this light, the *tianxia* order describes the unity of all people across the realm, far and near, under *dezheng* 德政 [moral political order].

Gong is a form of publicness and a space of commons. But the question arises: can we take *gong* to refer to the public space of a modern nation-state? *Gong* is the most prominent concept in the canonical statement of *tianxia* in *Records of Rites* (*Li ji* 禮記, a work of Confucianism compiled during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE to 220 CE):

> When the Great Way was practiced, the world was shared by all alike. The worthy and the able were promoted to office and men practiced good faith and lived in harmony. Therefore they did not regard as parents only their own parents, or as sons only their own sons. The aged were cared for till the end of their lives, the able-bodied pursued proper employment, while the young were nurtured in growing up. Provisions were made to care for widows, the orphaned and the sick. Men had their tasks while women had their hearths. They hated to see goods lying about in waste, yet they did not hoard them for themselves; they dislike the thought that their energies were not fully used, yet they used them not for private ends. Therefore all evil plotting was prevented and thieves and rebels did not arise, so that people could leave their outer gates unbolted. This was the age of Great Harmony.[2]

With rich meanings of "all under heaven", commonwealth, common good, world community, and public space, *gong* projects a broad commitment and fealty beyond personal, family and kinship ties. In terms of emotion and attachment, *gong* is about mutual care and uni-

2 The English translation is from de Bary and Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 343.

versal benevolence, and looks very much like the civic virtue and mutual empathy of a modern citizenry in a national republic. It envisages a society in which each has his or her interest cared for and is able to empathize with other people as if all belong to one family and kin. This picture resonates with Rousseau's ideas of civic virtue and citizenship. Civic virtue describes a citizen's "passionate affection for his fellow citizens and for the shared conditions of their common life" (Eagleton 1990, 24). It is about the pity we feel for each other or for animals in trouble. Citizens are able to project "a kind of empathetic imagination [that enables us to transport] ourselves outside ourselves, and identifying ourselves with [suffering humans and] animal[s]" (Eagleton 1990, 24). In the *Liji* passage above, loving one's parents is less desirable and is a form of private morality, but the capacity to extend love to others' parents is *gong*, public morality. The affective extension of private attachment to a broad sympathy prompts Liang to say that "private morality is by nature not incompatible with public morality" (1999, 661). Filial piety, gratitude and duty are the essence of private morality, but a citizen's gratitude and duty to the nation works in the same way. A citizen with public morality is able to push private love and duty outward. Just as we owe our parents our life, so we owe our political community our wellbeing, identity, and protection. Private morality and public morality are intertwined as two sites of a continuum. Here private morality, initially embedded in primordial kinship ties, is extended to a citizen's virtue (*minde* 民德) and to the public ethos of a nation.

Thus we see an updated, modernised *tianxia* that is consistent with national public morality, pointing to the notion of the *tianxia* state. The *tianxia* state begins with the intimate ties of family and kin but reaches beyond them to broad moral and social horizons. In carrying over from private to public morality, it treats all people as members of one family and gives equal care to all. The patrimonial exchange and pursuits of private interests are frowned on. The "modernity" of *tianxia* lies in a broad extension of private bonds to public morality, to civic virtue, which hopefully could be extended further to a cosmopolitan ethos beyond locality, ethnicity, and nation.

For all its wellbeing, harmony, empathy, and mutual care, the ancient *tianxia* order lacks the politically integrative power, mechanism, national economy, industry, military, and legal system associated with

the nation-state. It is true that *tianxia* is concerned with the vision according to which all people under heaven are showered with benevolence from the top down, and emperors, as exemplified by the ancient kings Yao and Shun, are all wise and capable leaders. They worked hard to serve the people with care and benevolence, and treated the whole empire as a commons shared by all (Sun Zhongshan 1986, 327). The sage king fostered people's morality and took care of their wellbeing and needs, manifest in the policy of *yangmin* [fostering and cultivating people]. As "the Kingly Way" distinct from "the overbearing way", *tianxia* describes the way in which the wise king inculcates people with moral ideas and correct behaviour. But this paternalist order runs counter to the popular sovereignty of a modern nation: It leaves people with little space for initiatives and agency. Pointing to this glaring lack of people's participation, Liang Qichao comments that the ancient mode of governance was for the people and of the people, but not by the people (3605). To update and modernize the idea of *tianxia* requires enabling the people to build their own society and to govern themselves. Individuals, through their self-directed moral reform, will educate themselves to become a people endowed with public morality. Instead of the Kingly Way showering benevolence, the "public" means delegating self-education to the people themselves so that they become citizens of a modern nation. In this argument, the notion of popular sovereignty replaces and supersedes *tianxia*'s paternalistic and universal care of the multitudes.

If a national people can build a nation-state with a public ethos, the Chinese nation would be on the way to the *tianxia* state. As we saw earlier, particularistic obligation and allegiance can be rendered open-minded: moral sentiments can spiral from one's family to other family, from one's village to the nation, and from one's own nation to other nations. This extensive moral outreach starts from the particular and private entities but treats them as a stage toward a broadest goal of *tianxia*. *Tianxia* politics does not only work on behest of a nation's interest and security. It goes on to serve the interests and peace of the whole world. Young people in such an open-minded state would be able to value the Chinese tradition as well as respect all other traditions. China must learn from the West and synthesize all precious cultural elements to create a world culture. This is the way China as a national republic makes contributions to a world republic.

2 Sun Yatsen: Nationalism is the Basis for Word Unity

Liang's concept of *tianxia* state anticipates Sun Yatsen's nationalism. Japanese scholar Mizoguchi Yuzo suggested that Sun's vision of the Chinese nation-state, indebted to the *tianxia* tradition of morality and peace, radically departs from Japan's model (1999, 97–98). Sun's nationalist vision involves the care of *shengmin* 生民 [ordinary men and women], their rights to economic wellbeing and equality as well as political independence.

With the mission toppling the Manchu rule and resisting colonialism, Sun took Liang's state thinking more seriously. Recognizing the key concept of national self-determination advocated by Woodrow Wilson, Sun saw an opportunity in that principle for the colonised to emancipate themselves from colonial powers and achieve independence. Among Sun's three key principles for saving China, nationalism goes first. The principle of national self-determination, though manipulated by the League of Nations, would enable China to push back against the Western imperialist powers that dominated international order. Although Woodrow Wilson advocated national self-determination for re-making the world order, the Paris Peace Conference turned out to be a betrayal of that principle. The Western powers, including Japan, grabbed their war spoils and redrew boundaries for new spheres of influence.

Sun Zhongshan called for recovering of national sentiments. Chinese could resort to historical kinship, clan, and family relations and treat them as stepping-stones towards national unity. Particular groups, regional and blood ties, the sense of native place and belonging, and emotional linkages could be broadened to rally diverse populations for national unification. Instead of being an impediment to national cohesion, these primordial relations provide an enabling affective condition for fragmented communities and diverse ethnicities to rally themselves into a nation. "Family relations (*zongzu* 宗族) can be extended to become the relation of nationality" (Sun 1986, 238, 240). Beginning with family bonds, one moves to clan loyalty, and finally extends to national fealty, knitting together small groups into a large national group. In the past, one's loyalty was due to kings, but a modern nation-state cannot dispense with a sense of loyalty. Instead of monarchs, modern loyalty

should be attached to the country, and more importantly to the people (Sun 1986, 244).

Sun's reading of *gong* in the *Liji* text echoes Liang Qichao's invocation of people's power by putting popular sovereignty into the mouths of Confucius and Mencius. The statement "When the Great Way was practiced, the world was shared by all" was a plea for a great community of *datong* ruled by the people's power" (Sun 1986, 262). *Tianxia* politics is "the affairs of the multitudes; and governing means that the people run governmental affairs" (1986, 255). Strife among monarchies bent on becoming the hegemon was the main source of war and chaos. But a peaceful *tianxia* world will arise from a modern democracy. "After founding of a republic, who is to be the emperor? The people would be emperors. Four hundred millions would be emperors" (270).

Sun regarded nationalism and nation-building as a way toward cosmopolitanism. The October Revolution of Soviet Russia had achieved national self-determination and succeeded in building a modern nation-state. Lenin's notion of self-determination fuelled a movement to combat the domination of the imperialist and colonialist powers over the colonised. It called for mobilizing and assisting over one billion people in the world to fight one million oppressors and promoted the independence of movement of Asian peoples. National self-determination of all colonised and weak nations is the basis for broad internationalist alliance and movement. This cosmopolitanism dovetails with the *tianxia* tenet of "assisting the weak and helping the fallen", which is the "true cosmopolitan spirit" (Sun 1986, 231).

But the dream of cosmopolitanism cannot be achieved without nationalism and nation-state. The cosmopolitanism touted by the major imperial powers is a mirage and a trick to maintain the unjust international order and is hostile to national self-determination waged by colonised and oppressed people. China was a colony under foreign rule, and it was premature for Chinese elites to talk about cosmopolitanism. The urgent task is to promote nationalism and achieve national independence. Sun devoted a whole lecture to the topic "Nationalism Is the Basis for World Unity" (*Minzu zhuyi shi shijie datong de jichu* 民族主義是世界大同的基礎) in the collection *Three People's Principle* (*Sanmin zhuyi* 三民主義).

National independence means achieving the status of equality and freedom with other nations. To achieve it, China must first become a nation:

> Today we should revive China's lost nationalism, rallying people of four hundred millions strong to fight for peoples of the world in the name of justice […] Out of fear of this thinking, the imperialist powers come up with a dubious doctrine and they seek to trick us with cosmopolitanism. They say the world must progress, that humanity's vision should be far and wide, and that nationalism is too narrow […] It is under such misleading influence that some Chinese new youth advocate a new culture and oppose nationalism. But the doctrine of cosmopolitanism should not be accepted by a subordinated nation. We are a subordinated nation, and we must restore our nation to the status of equality and freedom with other nations before we discuss cosmopolitanism. If we are to promote cosmopolitanism, we must first strengthen nationalism. (Sun 1986, 253)

Assisting the weak and helping the fallen is "what a strong nation is supposed to do," and constitutes a project of "ordering the nation and preserving the world peace" (1986, 253).

The appeal to *tianxia* and *datong*—a world order of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among nations deepens the connections between nation building and international outlook. The Chinese nationals should appeal to *gongli* 公理 [universal principle] by supporting the weak and helping the fallen. Sun's thinking, in short, brings the nation-state into the *tianxia* framework.

3 A People Can Be Nationalist and Internationalist

An admirer of Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, Mao Zedong in his early years proposed the union of the popular masses and the founding of a party on the national scale as the means of achieving it. He divided the world into two parts: a small ruling class of aristocrats and capitalists, and workers and labouring people of the whole world. The ruling class exploited labouring people economically, oppressed them politically, and dominated the masses by means of military and police force. Perceiving the injustice and inequality in the global expansion of capitalism and colonialism, Mao viewed the violent rebellion of worker movements in Europe as an attempt to resist oppression: "Do onto others as they do to you." Evoking Russian anarchist Kropotkin, Mao

articulated the union of the popular masses by blending anarchist ideas into *tianxia* language. The anarchist movement promoted the morality of mutual aid in economic production, and envisaged a world where working classes work for themselves voluntarily. The ruling aristocrats and capitalists were made to work and help working people rather than harm them. Going beyond the working-class interests, however, the ideas of anarchism "are broader and more far reaching." Anarchists "want to unite the whole globe into a single country, unite the human race in a single family, and attain together in peace, happiness, and friendship […] an age of prosperity" (Schram 1992, 380).

The global union of the popular masses, however, grew out of numerous small unions. Segments in region, class, and profession would be organised into larger groups until they could be united into a working-class nation. The Soviet Russians had set an example, and Hungary had risen up, and a "new toilers' and peasants' government also appeared in Budapest. The Germans, Austrians, and Czechs have done the same" (Schram 1992, 380). In China, social movements by small groups would be led by a revolutionary party that would finally be a party with national sovereignty.

Class and *nation* inform Mao's analysis. The class analysis points in the direction of internationalist alliance and mutual aid among working people in colonies. The national category, on the other hand, points to the nation-state as a strong unit based on territorial sovereignty and the self-defence capacity to resist foreign aggression. In the war against Japanese imperialism, the nationalist concern was high on the agenda in the United Front between Communists and Nationalists. Observing that the Chinese must be nationalists before they could join the international movements, Mao deepened Sun's notion of national self-determination in the moment of national crisis. All Chinese at this critical moment should be nationalist actors in the struggle to resist colonialism and drive out imperialist invaders. Nationalism also has cultural and historical roots: It requires a cultural revolution in consciousness and morality to transform its traditional culture to become a new, modern one. Mao wrote that the modern Chinese nation had grown out of the China of the past, and that we "must not lop off our history. We should sum up our history from Confucius to Sun Yatsen and take over this valuable legacy" (Mao 1965, 209). Communists are internationalists, but "we can put Marxism into practice only when it is

integrated with the specific characteristics of our country and acquires a definite national form" (1965, 209).

On the other hand, Mao claimed that revolutionaries are not just nationalists but also communists. Communists are not only patriots committed to national defence and sovereignty but also internationalists interested in the liberation of all working classes worldwide. Communists are broad-minded patriots, and their patriotism makes sense only in the context of an international struggle against fascism and imperialism. Good patriotism is congenial to internationalism because oppressed nations and peoples shared a common destiny and should work in concert to change the world order dominated by colonialist nations (Mao 1965, 196).

In an interview with Mao in Yan'an, the American journalist Agnes Smedley raised the question of the entwinement of nation and internationalism. She asked Mao "if the policy of a united front implied that the Chinese communists had abandoned the class struggle and turned into simple nationalists", Mao replied:

> The Communists absolutely do not tie their viewpoint to the interests of a single class at a single time, but are most passionately concerned with the fate of Chinese nation […] the Chinese communists are internationalists. They are in favor of the world communist movement. But at the same time they are patriots who defend their native land […] this patriotism and internationalism are by no means in conflict, for only China's independence and liberation will make it possible to participate in the world communist movement. (Schram 1966, 201)

At the founding of the PRC in 1949, Mao reminded his audience that Kang Youwei wrote *Datong shu* but did not have a chance to realise the idea of world community. As a new nation-state, China now had an opportunity. Barring the bourgeois, imperialist nation-state, China's path to reach the great world community was "through a people's republic led by the working class" (Mao 1965, 414). Like Mao, Joseph Levenson linked *tianxia* with what he called "communist cosmopolitanism" (1971, 7). Chinese Marxists must mobilize the toiling masses in the national liberation to achieve socialism. Self-determination of a nation and emancipation of worldwide working classes fit into a nation-international nexus. As Pheng Cheah puts it, "proletarian emancipation necessarily involves the emancipation of the oppressed peoples

elsewhere because the exploitation of other peoples through colonization is intimately connected to the exploitation of workers within the 'domestic' space of a colonial power" (2003, 189). The key to this link of the nation to the world is the emphasis on the people first as decolonizing nationalist and then as the worldwide liberator of working classes. And these agents are nationalist and internationalist at the same time, captured by Levenson's phrase "communist cosmopolitanism".

A national people are both "nationalist and internationalist at the same time" (Levenson 1971, 6). Peoples of different nations are capable of understanding each other, not because they are individuals with cosmopolitan empathy, but because they belong to the same international class. As Levenson wrote,

> Cultural cosmopolitanism, *on a class basis* (italics in the original), seemed to pair with nationalism, not to impair it. For the *jenmin* of all nations were supposed to have a common cause, while the *jenmin* of each nation (especially China) was supposed virtually to constitute the nation. If the local bourgeois failed to make the common cause with "the people" (*jen-min*), they are denationalized, as imperialists or running dogs of imperialists, disqualified for the *min-tzu* (*minzu*) variant of "people". (1971, 8)

The "denationalized" nationalist of the GMD affirms the narrow-minded patriotism and self-serving official nationalism that work against the public space and the common good. When the GMD, under the banner of nation, failed to represent the will of the Chinese people, it lost legitimacy as national government and became a comprador entity subordinated to the imperialists. However, a nation constituted by its people is able to identify with another national people, and this opens the door to international affinity and solidarity. This people-to-people relation is the basis for mutual support and sympathy on an international scale and underlies socialist internationalism.

The nexus between nation and internationalism marks a modern form of the *tianxia* state. It breaks away from the logic of ethnic and cultural identity rooted in the parochial line of blood ties and family relations. Internationalism here means the alliance of peoples with the shared fate of victimhood and oppression, an awareness of the common fate of working classes across national boundaries, and the need for mutual understanding and sympathy. The Chinese people must first stand up as a sovereign nation-state and then extend a helping

hand to other peoples in the world in order to forge affinity and solidarity in the spirit of internationalism. Hence internationalism, a form of political cosmopolitanism, is "to pair with nationalism, not to impair it" (Levenson 1971, 8). Peoples of diverse nationalities are peer groups whose separate pursuits of independence make a common cause.

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Gloria Chicote

Popular Culture as a Starting Point of the Global: Latin-American Literature at the Turn of the Century

1 Theoretical Framework

The concept of "world literature" is not new, as it is almost 200 years old now. The novelty of re-examining it lies in analysing its intersection with the concept of "global literature" from an off-centre perspective.

Famously, it was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who, in his letters to Johann Eckermann in 1827, coined the expression "world literature" with the purpose of questioning the absolute validity of national literatures and getting into the extended and unstable borders to which the diffusion of Western culture and literature led in the rest of the world. This process gave rise to a new field of study: comparative literatures. From then on, different approaches and perspectives proliferated, such as those of "world culture" or "world music", which originated in European centres of excellence with the purpose of carrying out the study of other cultures from Eurocentric comparative parameters.[1]

The scope of the concept, as defined by Goethe, became the norm for the development of the literary studies of the nineteenth century and of the first half of the twentieth century, but since the second half of the twentieth century until today, approaches have changed and radial conceptions (from a centre to multiple peripheries) have been replaced by new morphologies, such as *rhizomes* (Deleuze 1980) or *archipelagos* (Ette and Müller, 2012).

The broadening of this perspective also led to a broadening of paradigms which went from *world literature* to *global literature* and *worlds of literature* and leads us today to rethink literary works in their

1 Paradigmatic examples are the archive of the Vienna Academy of Sciences in 1889, a similar one in Paris in 1900 and the Phonogram Archive of Berlin University Institute of Psychology in 1905.

translations in multiple languages and technologies, which allow them to circulate re-signified in different contexts from their countries of origin. This new dimension of world literature would allow access to literary works from the wider context of global media dissemination beyond the national or cultural frameworks which define them less and less, but which show how the product is the result of the interaction not of one sphere but of several public and transnational spheres that are increasingly connected by the mass media.

On this occasion, I would like to focus on a particular culture – that of printed Latin American popular literature – to analyse these dissemination movements beyond languages, national borders, and the falsely pre-established limits between academic circuits and popular circuits.

As a contribution to this volume, *Literatures, Communities, Worlds: Competing Notions of the Global*, I will give some examples of the constitution, not of world literature but of "worlds of literature" from the analysis of the phenomenon of printed popular literature which spread in the Latin American environment in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century, and conclude with some considerations about the development of that phenomenon until today.

To this end, this contribution is divided into four interconnected axes:

a) The hypothesis of the existence, in the field of popular culture in Latin America, of a specific product: the popular late nineteenth and early twentieth-century editions present in different countries, which allow thinking of the emergence of a transnational popular culture prior to the development of the culture industry in Theodor Adorno's sense (1984). This movement refers to a set of sectors in charge of the creation, production, exhibition, distribution and/or diffusion of services and cultural goods, such as art, entertainment, design, architecture, publicity, gastronomy, and tourism. Whereas the concept of sector originates by the end of the 1970s, *a posteriori*, the concept of cultural industries is not understood as such until the late 1990s, when the significance of mass culture is clearly defined.

b) The concept of *South* as a set of epistemological, aesthetic, cultural or political discourses and knowledges, each one of which is associated with different topographical spaces.[2]

The *South* appears as the articulating concept of a newly emerging paradigm, which is scientific and social in its entirety. From this perspective, the *South* allows resizing trans-disciplinary networks, building thematic bridges, and moving along the 'motorways' of knowledge which oppose old fragmentations: "Themes are galleries where different kinds of knowledge go to meet each other" (Sousa Santos 2009, 49).

This approach also allows going beyond the limits of disciplines and studying natural phenomena as social and humanistic ones, and it even uses expressions proper of the humanities or the arts to refer to exact or natural sciences such as "particle game", "molecular theatre", or the "biography of chemical reactions". But this approach also leads us to consider all knowledge as local and total: science is also a translator, that is to say, it incentivises particular and local concepts and theories to emigrate to other cognitive places to be used outside their context of origin. This new paradigm destroys the myth of scientific objectivity: Any knowledge, just like art and any cultural manifestation, is situated, subjective and political. The humanities become bearers of the ecological and material foundations of culture. In this sense, we, every and each of the components of that collective, are free to appropriate and re-signify knowledge from the chronotope where we are positioned, to say it in Bakhtinian terms (Bajtin 1987), as situated knowledge (Haraway 1991), or as an attempt at positioning in the alienation and acceleration forms (Rosa 2016), regionality and globalisation studies (Ette and Müller, 2012), which establish themselves in postmodern society.

c) The concept of *South* understood from the cultural production of the space of the South (in this case, South America), that is to say, as the practices of the space carried out from the cultural and discursive place of the South.

What I propose is to indicate in which sense alternative ways of thinking of the space are able to go beyond or revise dichotomies characteristic of the models of the global North, such as those of centre/

2 In the concept of *South*, the emphatic affirmation of *suralidad* is also articulated: "the unbearable suralidad of being", as Javier Milanca defines it (2023).

periphery, civilization/barbarism, and others. In this sense, the South becomes a dynamic space of conviviality in which complex cultural interactions are in dialogue, for the definition of which some theoretical contributions may be productive here. The term "contact zone" was introduced by Mary Louise Pratt (1991), and it refers to the space of the colonial encounters in which individuals separated by geography and history come into contact with one another and establish asymmetric and permanent power relationships in which coercion, inequality, and conflict prevail. To this constellation I add the concept of *entre lugar* [between place] coined by Silviano Santiago (1978) and redefined by Raúl Antelo (2014), which, in its own formulation, relativises any lineal relationship of Latin American culture with its insertion in Western culture: Cultural representations are marked by their *entre lugar* representation.

In this sense, the connection between indigenism and environmentalism in Latin American culture is essential, together with the processes and histories of colonialism and decoloniality. Analysing this connection allows studying in more detail how different social, economic, and/or cultural processes occur and intersect in our continent in present globalised times marked by conviviality of dissimilar cultures and actors in the same place; it allows illustrating how the different social actors are articulated as well as how they operate within these processes; and it allows showing how those processes and the actors who participate in them have an influence in the construction and/or transformation of social representations of space and time in the context of the current world order (Costa et al. 2017). We can speak of an epistemological alliance between indigenism and environmentalism in this context because social representations of space and time, on the one hand, reinforce the use and dissemination of concepts such as that of "sustainable development" and, on the other, guide the practices of global and local social actors who participate in that alliance. In all cases, relationships of tension and conflict become evident in which the transformation and/or reconstruction of space and time representations express how power between the social actors involved in those practices is negotiated.

d) Last, I would like to draw attention to the popular cultural productions which emerge from migratory processes.

The centrality of migratory processes constitutes a core point in the political, social, and cultural history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The great diasporas were one of the stigmas of the twentieth century: men and women travelled all over the world because they dreamt of a place for the realisation of their utopias, because they were expelled due to hunger or for political reasons, because they were obliged to travel to spaces from which they never returned. All diasporas, as Arjun Appadurai (2001) suggests, introduce the strength of the imagination, whether they are memory or desire, giving rise to new mythographies, which become foundational statutes of new social projects and are not simply a counterpoint to the certainties of everyday life. The multiform body of voices which on the American Continent were transmitted in print illustrates these physical and mental movements since, collectively, it contributed to recover the memory of the land which immigrants had to leave, and repeatedly returned as a need for reuniting with characters, spaces, habits, tastes, which once again were re-signified in new living situations.

With the conceptual framework mapped out along the above four axes, I would like to return to the object of analysis by focusing on a place, the Latin American Continent, and on a corpus, popular literature.

2 Printed Popular Literature in Ibero-America

The concept of printed popular literature is introduced with specific features in a range of theoretical approaches in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; in its own formulation, it incorporates a new factor to the creation and diffusion process of cultural products: the printing press. While from romantic postulates popular literature was linked to oral diffusion, the inclusion of printed forms in this paradigm led to the need of new and precise definitions of the field. Printed popular literature accounts for a complex process in which the making of a new social actor is incorporated: a massive and urban reading public, which will constitute the fluctuating concept of people imposed in modern history since the invention of the printing press; on people with different competences in reading and writing skills, in a system of diffusion of knowledge leading to mass culture.

It is worth giving, then, a set of definitions before analysing the different components of the syntagma "printed Ibero-American popular literature". By describing a set of manifestations as "popular", I am referring to cultural products developed both in the rural and in the urban social environments outside of institutions, since they are reproduced in alternative circuits (non-scholarly) and transmitted together in an oral and/or written way. "Printed literature" refers to a fixing of literary discourses in prose and/or verse form carried out by means of the printed support, which includes not only the linguistic textuality, but which also incorporates iconography and musical notation as major codes. Lastly, the adjective "Ibero-American" refers to the vast postcolonial map, which includes both Spain and Portugal as well as the Latin American countries and which results from different stages of domination and independence. This is why I consider texts written in Spanish and Portuguese a phenomenon of identical roots. I include them here together with other languages related to the consecutive migratory processes which took place in different Latin American countries.

In the Ibero-American environment, printed popular poetry has a long history that goes back to the fifteenth century and continues into the present. In the second half of the fifteenth century, shortly after the first printing presses – German in origin – were installed in the Iberian Peninsula, loose sheets with various contents began to be printed and sold at very low prices at urban markets. These sheets were intended to disseminate fashionable songs among a wider public that was increasingly curious about the entertainment habits of the court, which they wanted to reproduce in order to imitate them and, in this way, appropriate them. The sheets were also called string loose sheets (because they were offered hanging from strings in order to be sold) and, later, because of their success, they were transformed into brochures and booklets which incorporated more content.

For the first time, this marketing circuit, which had not existed before, would determine the inclusion of literary products in the market economy and cause urban centres to become radiating cultural nodes in which high culture was transmitted to the popular classes. The novel technology of the printing press allowed the fast reproduction of the texts and the reduction of costs for their dissemination to recipients

with an increasing capacity of spatial and social mobility (Catalán 1997; Godzich and Spadaccini, 1986).

The phenomenon is at its peak at the moment the conquest of the Americas takes place; in the *New World* the same practices are reproduced both in colonial times and in the post-independence period. There is evidence of the arrival of loose sheets in Mexico and Peru from the beginning of the Spanish domination (Leonard 1979). From its early stages, printed popular literature was one of the main non-institutional information and education channels of the popular classes. The regulatory systems of public policies were complemented or came into tension with the spontaneous manifestations of the popular classes. Through loose sheets, the appropriate behaviour patterns for men and women were moulded, the principles of bourgeois morality were disseminated and, above all, the foundations were established for a sensitivity which has lasted up to the present time. Besides, once it had started, this cultural practice spread without any interruption, even during the military confrontation periods between Spain and its colonies, because this phenomenon went through the history of the popular classes and was re-signified in a multifaceted and extensive way according to the needs of its socio-historic context.

However, it is during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the resounding success of printed popular literature occurs, as demonstrated by the Brazilian string literature, the River Plate brochures, the Chilean *popular lira*, or by the Mexican *corridos* (Chicote 2012), among others, and it is accompanied by a steady flow of commercial interchange with the peninsular printing presses and the theatre companies that travelled between Spain and the Americas and within the different Latin American countries.

3 Brochures and Magazines in the River Plate Cities

Let me illustrate this with the specific example of a case of North/South and South/South feedback.

In the River Plate culture (Argentina – Uruguay) of the early twentieth century, the proliferation of brochures and booklets of popular origin and contents became particularly important as they flooded the market and marked both the editorial and scriptural tendencies of the decades to come. But what were the reasons for that

emergence? First, the deep social changes in the make-up of the population. Second, the result of the public policies aimed at this new "people". Since the late nineteenth century, Argentina appeared as a multifaceted social array made up of an amazing number of ethnic configurations, which was emerging with differing components: the Argentine-creole elite descending from the Spanish conquerors and in charge of the organization of the new country; the millions of European immigrants invited by the economic project announced by the State (1914 census: 7,885,000 inhabitants, of whom 50% were foreigners, of whom 80% were Italian and Spanish); the peasants displaced to urban environments (the flourishing cities of Buenos Aires, Rosario, La Plata and also Montevideo in Uruguay); and the aboriginal groups, which, massacred and made invisible, continued to bear the brunt of territorial expansion policies.

The making of Argentine culture in its foundational period was characterised by a strained coexistence of its dissimilar actors. New men and women created a miscellaneous social fabric. At the same time, they experienced cultural mandates such as the need for *argentinisation* and the vehicle for its implementation: public instruction. Education, which became the main strategy for the modernisation of public power, reached natives, foreigners and foreigners' children, and determined the emergence of an absolutely new cultural horizon: the consolidation of reading and writing as a mass means of representation, open now to a much bigger circle than that of the elite. This group complemented existing print products with products such as periodicals and innumerable popular editions, which began to be reproduced. Dozens of titles were printed weekly in the River Plate cities to satisfy the interests of a mobile and varied society. Those brochures were cheap products, which responded to an urgency for reading; they were consumed and thrown away; they neither had the cultural prestige of the book nor were created to be held in libraries. Diversity is no doubt the constitutive mark of the phenomenon of mass popular literature. There were publications dedicated to plays, tango texts, erotic literature, radio series scripts, cartoons, or texts for children.

The boom of small-sized collections was such that it provoked critical comments among some contemporaries. Thus, the conservative newspaper *La Razón* referred to this increase in print products as "an orgy of weekly magazines" and as an addictive phenomenon compara-

ble to drug use. The common denominator of these diverse publications undoubtedly consists in the way this means of publishing competes, enters into dialogue, and interferes with the mass media of the modern and cosmopolitan city of the 1930s, with a dynamic and varied offer of theatre shows, cinemas and variety theatres, as well as a huge newspaper circulation. Among the thousands of brochures and magazines disseminated, I will mention some which show the tension between literature, the theatre, radio broadcasting, and the cinema in order to communicate.

The theatre magazines with the biggest readership and fame in those years were *La escena*, which was dedicated to promote the staging of plays and of which there are 795 issues at the Ibero-American Institute in Berlin, and *Bambalinas*, of which there are 762 issues.[3] *Bambalinas* (1918–1934) initially appeared fortnightly and would later appear weekly. Like other popular magazines, it was a publishing project of writers aimed at the diffusion of their works among the masses. That is the reason why this type of "cheap" publication shows the relationship between the academic circuit and the popular circuit.

The entertainment world is also connected with magazines which specialised in erotic literature, which would frequently include relevant illustrations. Most of these publications had a distinct humoristic tone, such as *La novela picaresca* (1918–1921) or the magazine *Medianoche* (1926), which was profusely illustrated.

Musical manifestations were also part of the entertainment culture in the first decades of the twentieth century. The *tango*, the *milonga* and other local styles, together with the foreign ones, like musical theatre, opera and *zarzuela*, were part of the musical heritage which was disseminated together in song books and included in the theatre plays. These genres were aimed at the different segments of immigrant or creole public of both rural and urban origin, which was defining its musical preferences. The song books were widely spread because they allowed the memorisation and reproduction not only of texts but, in some cases, also of melodies. Among the innumerable song books

3 The popular magazines and song books mentioned can be consulted online at https://digital.iai.spk-berlin.de/viewer/index/: *La escena, Bambalinas, La novela picaresca, Medianoche, La milonga popular, Canciones del pueblo, Radiolandia, Sintonía, Chispazos de tradición, El matrero de la luz, El puñal de los centauros, Cinema-Chat.*

circulating in the local market, *La Milonga Popular* (1921–1922) or *Canciones del pueblo* (1922) are prominent examples, which would regularly publish the lyrics of fashionable songs of diverse genres.

When radio broadcasting started, authors, composers, singers and actors extended their sphere of activity to this new medium. Popular magazines also interacted intensely with the success of the radio, which established itself in the homes of all social classes through different formats, among which the dissemination of music occupied a central space. Magazines such as *Radiolandia* or *Sintonía* were intended to spread the news of everything that happened in the entertainment world. *Sintonía* in its issue number 20 of 1933 displays photos of the extremely popular Carlos Gardel under the title *Five gestures of Daddy before the microphone* in which the singer can be seen in different shots taken during his recording sessions. At the time, a very successful genre would emerge: the radio series or radio soap. Magazines like *Chispazos de tradición*, written and directed by Andrés González Pulido, offered stories in episodes in a dramatised way. Stories like *El matrero de la luz* (21 episodes) or *El puñal de los centauros* (43 episodes), which reproduced the live broadcasts of the radio, had casts who enjoyed great popularity and went on show-tours throughout the country.

Within this technological flood, a new language appeared at the horizon: The cinema offered the unexpected possibility of producing moving images which shaped the public's sensitivity. To compete with this new medium that led audiences to confuse fiction and reality, popular magazines would change their format and typography even though they continued using very rustic paper and selling at very low prices. They would include more and more elaborate colour illustrations and photographs, with novel interpellation techniques, both of realistic and avant-garde traditions, in accordance with their purposes of distribution and due to their competition with publications in other languages. They even announced the inclusion of films not only in magazines but also in books, as for example in the following advertisement of *Globito en África*:

> Cine en miniatura: Tal es el libro Globito en África que aparte del cuento bellamente ilustrado, trae 16 películas que se proyectan mediante un aparato muy fácil de armar y manejar. [Mini cinema: Such is the book *Globito en África* which, apart from the beautifully

> illustrated story, brings 16 films which are projected by means of a device easily put together and operated.] (Ray 1946/47)

Cinema-Chat (1919) is a very interesting magazine devoted to the cinema which is brought to us through two issues in the collections of the Ibero-American Institute (IAI) in Berlin. Its contents focus on two strategies for public acquisition: Not only do the issues include biographical information and anecdotes of Hollywood stars to bring them closer to "ordinary people"; they also translate the cinematographic language by creating texts which narrate the feature film plots as if they were stories.

The popular magazines, which were massively published in the River Plate area in the first decades of the twentieth century and were consumed by millions of readers, were a fundamental instrument in the process of the popularisation of culture. These magazines were not alone in this enterprise, which created a novel market that would definitively establish itself in Western culture; they were part of the cultural industry of the mass media. They had to compete with the theatre, live music, the cinema and, later, the radio, and, in this way, they were the protagonists of a duel for the new technologies while using the traditional means available. To that end, they used the textual and iconographic languages printed and disseminated through cheap paper intended to reach the biggest possible number of readers. They undertook, then, the popularisation of the theatre, the diffusion of the lyrics and music of songs, the reproduction of the plots of the movies and of radio programmes. As has been pointed out in popular literature approaches, one of the predominant marks of this type of literary production is its competitiveness with other audio-visual media (Canclini 2001). In the popular books and magazines of the middle of the twentieth century, the language, the linguistic communication that book culture had canonised as the true one, had to compete with the new successful formats. In short, in order to survive, the market of popular magazines faced the uncompromising challenge of including the contents of the mass media through "generic translations" contributed by the different formats, which constructed the preferences and sensitivities of the popular classes until the first half of the twentieth century.

From the decade of the 1940s onwards, any analysis of this process needs to consider new variables that changed the prospect of popular magazines. Among the factors which caused this type of magazine to

start disappearing and transforming into new formats of newsstand literature were the development of talkies, widespread radio broadcasting, the professionalisation of popular publishers, and the decrease in the price of books thanks to the boom of the Argentine publishing market.

4 Projections and Conclusions

In conclusion and to open new contemporary perspectives, it is productive to consider the dissemination of printed popular literature in other countries such as the string literature in Brazil (*folhetos de feira*) or the Mexican *corrido*.

In Brazil, a similar phenomenon to that mentioned for the Spanish colonies is produced. Brazil has no doubt been the cultural area in which ballad collections published in loose or string sheets have had the strongest presence as part of the phenomenon denominated *folhetos de feira*. Especially in the Northeast, there is a hundred-year-old tradition of poetic publications written in different meters by popular authors, which refer to a wide thematic range and include the most current problems in the conservation and transmission of a literary imaginary coming from Europe and Asia through the Iberian Peninsula. Moreover, these texts characterise themselves as being accompanied by xylographs, photographs, drawings, and a variety of graphic compositions, which establish very significant icono-textual relationships (Ruiz-Belloso 2005).

In a recent article, Ricarda Musser (2019) studies the centrality of political subjects in this genre:

> Son centrales, sobre todo, los temas internos brasileño, por ejemplo, la información biográfica sobre presidentes y candidatos presidenciales, escándalos, como la corrupción en las filas políticas y recientemente el proceso de destitución de Dilma Rousseff. En cuanto a los acontecimientos internacionales abordados en este contexto, ocupan un lugar destacado Estrados Unidos, su política y sus presidentes. Así, hay cuadernillos de cordel en los que se compara a Bush y Obama; en los que se aborda la guerra de Irak y Bush y Sadam inician una lucha ficticia; y en los que se abordan también las políticas estadounidenses que pueden ser relevantes o tener consecuencias para América Latina. [The focus, above all, is on Brazilian internal affairs as, for example, biographical information

> about presidents and presidential candidates, scandals, as corruption in political ranks and, recently, Dilma Rousseff's removal process. With regard to international affairs dealt with in this context, the USA, its policies and its presidents occupy a prominent place. So, there are string booklets in which Bush and Obama are compared; in which the Iraq war is dealt with, and Bush and Sadam start a fictitious fight; and in which the American policies which may be important or have consequences for Latin America are also dealt with.] (2019, 250)

Musser focusses on texts which have recently appeared about President Donald Trump and circulate on Internet pages. The central subjects in the string booklets about Trump are the xenophobic rhetoric and the marginalisation and criminalisation of immigrants, and, in this context, also the plans for the construction of a wall between the United States and Mexico.

The *corrido* is one of the most significant expressions in Mexican popular literature. This genre reached its peak in around 1870, achieving its true autonomy and epic sense with the Revolution. The diffusion of the *corrido* is closely linked to the mechanisms of mass culture: the printing of poems on loose sheets was often accompanied by images, by the commercialisation of these printed materials, by the reproduction of the songs in audio-visual media such as the radio, discography and television, and by the steady circulation of the carriers between the rural and urban environments. The *corridos* can have an epic, lyric or narrative character and are an integral part of the life of the people and their expressions. They register all the elements of collective interest: historic episodes, heroes and *caudillos*; bandits; bullfighters; supernatural and terrifying occurrences; crimes, persecuteions and abductions; accidents, disasters and passionate tragedies. Whereas the *corridos* of an epic character had great popularity in the first decades of the twentieth century within the revolutionary framework, those featuring fictional themes have endured up to the present. In particular, *corridos* dealing with bandits have developed a type denominated *narcocorrido*, which re-signifies a series of topics and motifs referring to drug trafficking at the border between Mexico and the USA.

The *corridos* published in loose sheets in Mexico since the period of the Mexican Revolution work in similar ways, and in both cases

these genres are present today in digital productions that utilise the internet. In the Mexican case, the *corrido* originated at the time of the revolution as a loose-sheet news instrument, and today the *narco-corridos* are very popular. They are circulated on the internet to praise the actions of drug-traffickers and in this way give them popularity through the exaltation of violence and the transmission of supposed communal "values".

Hundreds of thousands of brochures and loose sheets were published on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean in the long process of globalisation of Western culture, which had originated during the period of European colonisation but acquired specific marks at the time when it was going through its postcolonial history in Latin America – that is, in territories inhabited by migrants coming from diverse cultures and languages, who struggled to insert themselves into modernity and progress, re-signifying their belonging to the canon of Western culture. These different formats and genres circulated in dialogical and interactive ways among the academic and popular circles in these "new" societies, with bigger flexibility of languages and supports, and were circulated widely through mass culture.

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Stefan Keppler-Tasaki

Towards a New West-Eastern Divan: Goethe, World Literature, and the Pacific

Germany, almost insignificant in American notions of the world today except maybe for its controversial relations with China and Russia, was a laboratory for thinking the global when the modern concepts of *world* and *earth* emerged around 1800. Philosophers like Herder, writers like Goethe, and scientists like Alexander von Humboldt worked hand-in-hand toward what has been called the *geographicisation* of thinking about culture and society. This new model of thought included envisioning both a dynamic "unity of man and nature" and a mankind that is one but also "intrinsically spatialized", differing from region to region (Tang 2008, 13). The "nation of damned professors", as Prime Minister Lord Palmerston called Britain's poor continental cousins of the nineteenth century (quoted in Hawes 2014, 18), was invested in the corresponding enterprises of measuring the world (Humboldt, Gauss), world literature (Goethe), and world history (Hegel, Marx). Subsequently, German academia became a breeding ground for political geography and geopolitical thought as put forward by Friedrich Ratzel, Karl Haushofer, and Carl Schmitt. These problematic intellectuals were internationally influential up until such troubling works as Aleksandr Dugin's 1997 *The Foundations of Geopolitics: The Geopolitical Future of Russia*.

The case of Goethe is particularly noteworthy since the poet and scientist had contributed significantly to understanding nature as an organic, self-regulating entity called earth and had associated the newly measured globe with a new idea of letters, called world literature. "National-Literatur will jetzt nicht viel sagen, die Epoche der Welt-Literatur ist an der Zeit und jeder muß jetzt dazu wirken, diese Epoche zu beschleunigen" [National literature is now rather an unmeaning term; the epoch of World literature is at hand, and each one must strive to hasten its approach], thus his imperative of 31 January 1827, as

recorded in Eckermann's 1836 *Conversations with Goethe in the Last Years of His Life* (Eckermann 1999, 225. Transl. Oxenford; cf. Goethe 2014). The case could be made that literature, by being engaged in the process of world-making, created its own stage. In other words, the geographically conceived world was at least partly designed through and for world literature. The conceptual pair of "world literature" and "national literature" is based on the new spatial model of thought, emphasising the unity of the earth and its cultural and political divides.

On 21 February 1827, only three weeks after his defining statements on world literature, Goethe then predicted the future connection of the eastern and western hemispheres through the United States of America. The flow of thought visible in his conversations supports the claim that the modern idea of the world arose in co-evolution with the idea of world literature. One and a half years earlier, in August 1825, Goethe went through the third volume of Humboldt's America travel book *Voyage aux Régions Équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent* (1805–1834) and learned about the prospective "Verbindung des östlichen und westlichen Meeres" [connection between the eastern and western seas] (Goethe 1899, 94–95, 22. August 1825. Transl. StKT) at the Isthmus of Panama. Humboldt presented construction plans from the 1790s developed by two engineers in the service of Viceroy Revillagigedo. In 1828/29, the geographer asked the new government under President Bolívar to have the difference in sea level between the two coasts measured. After seeing the results, he grew sceptical about the feasibility of a canal since the locks to lift ships up and down would need to be exceedingly large (cf. Humboldt 1808, LX–LXI, Humboldt 2009, 384, and Segeberg 1987, 18–21).

However, Goethe, who once had been in charge of road construction and mining in the duchy of Weimar, stated in February 1827: "gelänge ein Durchstich […], so würden daraus für die ganze zivilisierte und nichtzivilisierte Menschheit ganz unberechenbare Resultate hervorgehen" [if they succeed in cutting such a canal […], innumerable benefits would result to the whole human race, civilized and uncivilized] (Eckermann 1999, 580. Transl. Oxenford). "Es ist vorauszusehen" he specified, according to Eckermann,

> daß dieser jugendliche Staat, bei seiner entschiedenen Tendenz nach Westen, in dreißig bis vierzig Jahren auch die großen Landstrecken jenseits der Felsengebirge in Besitz genommen und bevölkert haben wird. – Es ist ferner vorauszusehen, daß an dieser ganzen Küste des stillen Ozeans, wo die Natur bereits die geräumigsten und sichersten Häfen gebildet hat, nach und nach sehr bedeutende Handelsstädte entstehen werden, zur Vermittelung eines großen Verkehrs zwischen China nebst Ostindien und den vereinigten Staaten. [It may be foreseen, that this young state, with its decided predilection to the West, will, in thirty or forty years, have occupied and peopled the large tract of land beyond the Rocky Mountains. It may, furthermore, be foreseen that along the whole coast of the Pacific Ocean, where nature has already formed the most capacious and secure harbours, important commercial towns will gradually arise, for the furtherance of a great intercourse between China and the East Indies and the United States.] (Eckermann 1999, 580. Transl. Oxenford)

Moreover, he expected that the United States would take control over this project: "Wundern sollte es mich aber, wenn die vereinigten Staaten es sich sollten entgehen lassen, ein solches Werk in ihre Hände zu bekommen" [I should wonder if the United States were to let an opportunity escape of getting such work into their own hands]. He even declared it "durchaus unerläßlich" [absolutely indispensable] for them to affect the passage from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean and repeated: "[I]ch bin gewiß, daß sie es erreichen" [I am certain that they will do it] (Eckermann 1999, 580–581. Transl. Oxenford). Goethe pictured the geographic perfectioning of the globe, with direct communication between the West and East – an enterprise, as Humboldt recognised, that had been already pursued by the Spanish Empire.[1] Goethe expressed his geographical fantasy while the revised edition of his *West-östlicher Divan* [*West-Eastern Divan*] was being printed and to be published in March 1827. By then, Goethe felt that he had outgrown this project of European-Oriental encounter: like a snakeskin that he had cast-off and left behind (cf. Eckermann 1999, 197). Against this backdrop, his enthusiasm for an American-Asian encounter seems to reflect a West-Eastern divan on a new, planetary

1 On the connection between New Spain and East Asia, "bringing the ball of the Earth transpacifically to its definitive (and interest-driven) roundness", see Ette (2016, 266).

level. The fact, for that matter, that Goethe frames his Pacific vision primarily as a trade enterprise with merchant ships running between China and India, on the one hand, and America, on the other, is congruent with his understanding of world literature as a matter of trade, more precisely of a "Freihandel der Begriffe und Gefühle" [free trade in ideas and emotions] (Goethe 1965–1987, vol. 3/2, 471. Transl. StKT), as he put it in a conversation in August 1829.

During the era of westward expansion, the United States strove for economic and cultural independence from England and, looking for friendship with China, made considerable use of German intellectual resources to find its place and mission in the world. On account of his enthusiasm for the American future, Goethe recommended himself as a contributor to the young nation's identity. The American transcendentalists accepted the German writer as part of their cultural heritage. He stood in the centre of a 'German mania' that occupied the intellectual circles of New England at least from the 1820s to the 1850s (cf. Vogel 1955; Van Cromphout 1990; Buell 2003; Sina 2019). A wide array of social actors found convenient support in Goethe's statements for extending the nation's reach to the Isthmus, thus ensuring fast passage between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans to secure the strategic unity of its East and West fleets.

Newspapers of the early twentieth century printed Goethe's 'Panama Canal prophecy' to legitimise American claims. Popular historian Emory Adams Allen quoted it with great satisfaction in his 1913 book *Our Canal in Panama: The Greatest Achievement in the World's History (*cf. Allen 1913, 87–88). The "absolutely indispensable"-clause was used as one of 22 inscriptions at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco between February and December 1915 to celebrate the canal's completion (after its opening in August 1914). The pamphlet explaining the inscriptions deemed it "remarkable for its prophetic character" and praised Goethe as "one of the greatest poets of any age or country", framing him as not just a German man of letters but as a universal mind (Garnett 1915, 15). Strangely, the first translator of Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe in the Last Years of His Life*, the American transcendentalist Margaret Fuller, known as "one of the staunchest advocates of Goethe in her time" (Vogel 1955, 135), omitted the Panama/Pacific conversation from her 1839 rendering, perhaps foreseeing its propagandistic leanings or openness to

abuse. The standard version became John Oxenford's complete translation of 1850.

Very much in line with the new geographic imagination, Ralph Waldo Emerson opened his 1850 essay "Goethe, or the Writer" with the claim that the "constitution of the world" is an ideal task for literature:

> I find a provision in the constitution of the world for the writer or secretary, who is to report the doings of the miraculous spirit of life that everywhere throbs and works. His office is a reception of the facts into the mind, and then a selection of the eminent and characteristic experiences.
> Nature will be reported. All things are engaged in writing their history. The planet, the pebble, goes attended by its shadow. (Emerson 1987, 151)

The most influential American transcendentalist had practiced his German language skills by reading Goethe's *Italienische Reise* in 1833, an autobiographical work dealing specifically with the experience of space and the description of landscape and nature. He proclaimed that *Wilhelm Meister* deals with the spirit of life itself (cf. Emerson 1987, 160) and considered the second part of Faust "the grandest enterprise of literature" ever to be attempted since Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Emerson 1971, 43). Furthermore, his encounter with the *West-Eastern Divan* led him to study Persian poetry and contributed considerably to his interest in the 'Orient' (cf. Vogel 1955, 85; Christy 1978, 156, 317; Buell 2003, 151–153). Emerson regarded the Weimar writer the exemplary man of modernity because he could see unity in multiplicity: "We conceive [...] modern life to respect a multitude of things which is distracting. // Goethe was the philosopher of this multiplicity, hundred-handed, Argus-eyed, able and happy to cope with this rolling miscellany of facts and sciences" (Emerson 1987, 156). He was "the master of histories, mythologies, philosophies, sciences, and national literatures" (Emerson 1987, 157).

Emerson's praise for Goethe, declaring him a representative of the "powers and duties of the scholar or writer" (Emerson 1987, 156), is a remarkable act of entering into a temporal community with other minds and of doing literature in a global perspective. In Emerson's collection *Representative Men*, the essay on Goethe concludes a series of portraits spanning from Plato, Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Swe-

denborg to Napoleon. The reason for Goethe's inclusion in this canon is his unmistakable eye for "the whole earth" and his power "to unite the detached atoms again by their own law" (Emerson 1987, 157). Thus, his presumed comprehension of the world as a dynamic unity secured his role in the emergence of world literature. Moreover, it is noticeable, that Emerson's generosity towards the German sage served to legitimise "the American adventure" (Emerson 1987, 161). The world tended by the 'hundred-handed, Argus-eyed' writer is the same world that "extends itself like American trade" (Emerson 1987, 156). Goethe's prophecy of a grand West-Eastern divan at the Pacific echoes in Emerson's invocation of a "Union of the Farthest East and the Farthest West" (quoted in Pomfret 2016, 63) at the celebration of the Burlingame Treaty in 1868, a milestone in the rapprochement between China and the United States. Emerson's portrait of Goethe in *Representative Men* bears features of a self-portrait and must, as such, be considered a portrait of Goethe as a model American (cf. Buell 2003, 47).

Emerson also stated that Goethe "has said the best things about nature that ever were said" (Emerson 1987, 158). This seems to refer in particular to the essay "Nature" ["Die Natur"], which opens Goethe's scientific writings in the final edition of his collected works. The first English rendering of this text was done in 1839 by another transcendentalist: John Sullivan Dwight, who presented it in an appendix to a selection of Goethe's (and Schiller's) poems. Emerson recommended Dwight's collection to Thomas Carlyle (cf. Vogel 1955, 143; Fullenwider 1986). This vision of that Goethean piece, compiled by Georg Christoph Tobler in 1781/82, presents nature as a unity in diversity about which no consensus can be reached and which thus becomes the object of competing communities: "Jedes ihrer Werke hat ein eigenes Wesen, jede ihrer Erscheinungen den isoliertesten Begriff und doch macht alles eins aus. […] Sie hat sich einen eigenen allumfassenden Sinn vorbehalten, den ihr niemand abmerken kann. […] Sie hat sich auseinander gesetzt um sich selbst zu genießen" [Every one of her works has a being of its own, every one of her appearances the most isolated idea, and yet they all make one. […] She holds up before her an all-embracing meaning of her own, and no one can get a look at it. […] She has divided herself in pieces in order to enjoy herself] (Goethe 1989, 11–12. Transl. Dwight). Regarding the Isthmus of Panama and the divide or

connection between the western and eastern seas, the following observation seems especially fitting: "Sie macht Klüfte zwischen allen Wesen und alles will sich verschlingen. Sie hat alles isolieret um alles zusammenzuziehen" [She makes gulfs between all beings, and all will embrace each other. She has isolated all, to draw all together] (Goethe 1989, 13. Transl. Dwight). Famously, in 1869, the Goethean essay opened the first issue of the science journal *Nature* since the editors felt that scientific knowledge quickly becomes obsolete while "the vision of the poet will remain as a truthful and efficient symbol of the wonder and the mystery of Nature" (Huxley 1869, 11).

The notion that the world is spatialised and diverse, so that all things could strive toward each other, found great appeal in American thought, particularly in connection to the concepts of *E Pluribus Unum*, *Manifest Destiny*, and *universalism*. After the transcendentalists, several German Americans played a significant part in offering Goethe's wisdom for ecumenical, cosmopolitan, and imperialist purposes. One was publisher Paul Carus who received his doctorate from the University of Tübingen in 1876. He emigrated to the United States in 1884 and settled near Chicago, where he managed the Open Court, a publishing company known for its commitment to monistic worldviews and the Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Carus had close ties with Asian scholars, namely Anagarika Dharmapala and D.T. Suzuki. He invited both to the United States, where they would become path-breaking mediators of Buddhism to the West. He authored many articles and an influential book about Goethe. In 1894, he presented a new translation of the Goethean "Nature" essay.

It is unclear who proposed to use Goethe's saying at the Panama Exposition of 1915, but, as a matter of fact, Carus was involved with the education department of the exposition (Henderson 1993, 112). Said department showed distinctive expertise when it quoted Goethe for his canal prophecy and his admiration for the Indian drama *Shakuntala*. Goethe read it as early as 1791 and recommended it in the *West-Eastern Divan* as an eternal work, at home in every country (cf. Goethe 1994, 282; Goethe 2019, 499). A quote from *Shakuntala* ("The moon sinks yonder in the west while in the east the glorious sun behind the herald dawn appears") was used as another inscription at the exposition's buildings, and its choice was bolstered by Goethe's high opinion of the work (cf. Garnett 1915, 21). The exhibition's educational

message that the canal brings the eastern and western hemispheres together coincided with Carus's ecumenical agenda, conveyed through a combination of scriptures from the Eastern and Western canon – not unlike the inscriptions at the Central Library of Los Angeles, chosen by philosopher Hartley Burr Alexander in 1924 and combining the Western with the Eastern Canon (Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tse, etc. with Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, etc.).

Another central figure of the German American community was Harvard scholar Kuno Francke who earned his doctorate in Munich in 1878 and moved to Boston in 1884. Until his retirement in 1929, he ranked as the high priest of German Studies in the United States and championed the use of German culture for the American nation. His biography is very similar to Carus's, but he pursued a rather imperialist agenda instead of an ecumenical one. In 1897, he initiated the foundation of the Germanic Museum at Harvard University, today's Busch-Reisinger Museum. One of Francke's ideas for the exhibition was to reconstruct parts of the interior of Goethe's parental home in Frankfurt (cf. Francke 1904, 4). During the period when American transcendentalism was most active, enthusiasm for German letters reigned at Harvard. Goethe had become part of the school's reputation: From 1816 onwards, he had ties to Harvard scholars, and in August 1819, he donated 39 of his works to the Harvard Library. The accompanying letter lauded the university's high spirit (cf. Olson 2003, 68). Francke, on the other hand, had to deal with the fall of German culture from its former glory at Harvard.

His efforts took many forms, but he did not fail to quote Goethe's Pacific vision to his fellow Americans. He did so in a speech held in Cleveland and New York in 1899 and an article in the November 1899 issue of *The Atlantic* entitled "Goethe's Message to America". He stated: "Here there is a dream of the life beyond, here there is a prophetic delineation of the future world, such as might well have presented itself to Goethe's eye as a continuation and completion of modern American life, with its endless movement, change, and restless striving". Furthermore, he regarded Goethe's description of the colonisation of California and the push into the Pacific as underscoring "an extraordinary insight into the vital problems and tasks of our national development" (Francke 1899a, 612; for a German version see Francke 1899b). Only two years later, in 1901, Theodore Roosevelt became the 26th President

of the United States. He sent the Great White Fleet around the world and through the Pacific to show strength against the new military power Japan. He also had the Isthmus of Panama seized to put canal construction in American hands.

Finally, a third most illustrious German American made use of Goethe's glance at the Western Pacific: Nobel Prize laureate Thomas Mann, who resided in Pacific Palisades, Los Angeles, from 1941 to 1952 and became an American citizen in 1944. As early as in his 1932 Goethe speeches, he idealised the "träumerische[n] und kühne[n] Blick des greisen Goethe" [bold and dreamlike gaze of the old Goethe] (Mann 1990a, 330. Transl. Lowe-Porter) into the new, post-European world. He deemed the late writer's "wachsende Anteilnahme des Alten an utopisch-welttechnischen Fragen" remarkable and magnificent, especially his "Begeisterung für Projekte wie den Durchstich der Landenge von Panama, wovon er mit einer Eindringlichkeit und Ausführlichkeit spricht, als sei es ihm wichtiger als all' Poesie" [growing sympathy […] for utopian, world-technical matters […], enthusiasm for projects like the Panama Canal, about which he wrote with urgency and detail as though it were more important to him than all the poetry in the world] (Mann 1990a, 330. Transl. Lowe-Porter). In 1947, supported by UCLA scholar Gustave Arlt, Mann compiled and introduced an anthology, *The Permanent Goethe*. Published in the first half of 1948, Mann dedicated it to an American audience. In the introduction, he referred to the relevant vision by saying:

> Nicht müde wird der Alte der Erörterung von Möglichkeiten, den Mexikanischen Meerbusen mit dem Stillen Ozean zu verbinden, nicht müde, die unberechenbaren Ergebnisse auszumalen, die solch ein Werk für die ganze zivilisierte und noch unzivilisierte Menschheit zeitigen müsse. Er rät den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, die Sache in die Hand zu nehmen, und phantasiert von den blühenden Handelsstädten, die an dieser Küste des Pazifik, wo die Natur mit geräumigen Häfen schon so glücklich vorgearbeitet habe, nach und nach entstehen müßten. [The old gentlemen never tires of discussing the possibilities of connecting the Gulf of Mexico with the Pacific Ocean; never tires of imagining the incalculable effects of this project on the entire civilized as yet uncivilized world. He advises the United States of America to undertake this work and lets his fancy run riot in the visionary description of flourishing ports to spring up on the shores of the Pacific, where Nature had so generously provided

> spacious roadsteads and harbors.] (Mann 1990b, 753. Transl. Lowe-Porter)[2]

Thomas Mann also clearly noted the relationship between the geographical imagination and the project of world literature. Behind Goethe's vision of the world was "der Liebesimperialismus eines sehr hochgestiegenen Geistes, der die Freiheit namentlich als Größe kannte und dessen Verkündigung der 'Weltliteratur' aus dieser selben Verfassung kam" [the benevolent imperialism of a very lofty mind, which understood freedom in the sense of greatness and whose prophesyings about 'world literature' came from the same source] (Mann 1990a, 331. Transl. Lowe-Porter). Goethe did not live to see the future he envisioned, but Thomas Mann tried his best to be a successor to Goethe who did set foot in the promised land (cf. Keppler-Tasaki 2019).

So far, the historic ramifications of Goethe's Pacific vision all pointed to confidence in humankind's future, in peaceful progress, in exchange and understanding. However, Goethe also spoke of both "sowohl Handels- als Kriegsschiffe" [merchant-ships and men-of-war] (Eckermann 1999, 580. Transl. Oxenford), who would use the new connection between East and West. One of the heralds of American rule over the Panama Canal who cited Goethe's approval was the popular war historian Farnham Bishop. After quoting the "absolutely indispensable"-clause, he remarks:

> Less than twenty years after this prophecy, the United States, by the treaty of 1846, obtained from New Granada the perpetual right of transit for its citizens across the Isthmus of Panama, promising in return both to maintain the neutrality of any trade-routes that might be built there, and to guard the local government against attack by any foreign power. And ever since the making of this treaty and the building of the Panama Railroad, the Isthmus has been kept alive by American business and kept more or less peaceful by American ships and guns. (Bishop 1916, 133)

This statement epitomises the era of Theodore Roosevelt's gun-boat diplomacy, justifying armed support for Panama's separation from Colombia in 1903. Prophecies of a Pacific war comprised much of the speculative war fiction that flourished in Europe following the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71. Initially, this strand of speculative fiction

2 In the German version entitled *Phantasie über Goethe*.

mainly ran simulations of a German follow-up attack on England and a French revanche against Germany. Nevertheless, the rise of two major narratives, the "Decline of the Occident" and the "Yellow Peril", changed the direction of this genre decisively (cf. Clarke 1992; Bloom 2001).

Goethe's idea of world literature implied that Germany, a culture between East and West, Catholicism and Protestantism, would take a central place in it as a "mediator among cultures", leading cosmopolitan elites "to champion lasting literary values" (Damrosch 2014, 1), in particular the values defined by classical cultures at the Mediterranean Sea. Thomas Mann, for example, agreed with the canonical understanding of world literature and with Germany's crucial, although possibly fatal role in introducing the highest intellectual achievements to the world. However, Pacific development bore the great potential to marginalise and provincialise Europe. This decline of the Old World through the emergence of new powers around the Pacific and the shift of an assumed centre of world traffic (i.e., "traffic in peoples, cultures, capital, and ideas"; Nguyen and Hoskins 2014, 2) to the contact zone between America and Asia became a prime concern of German projections for world history in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Aware of Goethe's sayings on world literature and world traffic, Marx predicted as early as 1850:

> Dank dem kalifornischen Golde und der unermüdlichen Energie der Yankees werden beide Küsten des Stillen Meers bald ebenso bevölkert, ebenso offen für den Handel, ebenso industriell sein, wie es jetzt die Küste von Boston bis New Orleans ist. Dann wird der Stille Ozean dieselbe Rolle spielen wie jetzt das Atlantische und im Altertum und Mittelalter das Mittelländische Meer – die Rolle der großen Wasserstraße des Weltverkehrs; und der Atlantische Ozean wird herabsinken zu der Rolle eines Binnensees, wie sie jetzt das Mittelmeer spielt. [Thanks to Californian gold and the tireless energy of the Yankees, both coasts of the Pacific Ocean will soon be as populous, as open to trade and as industrialized as the coast from Boston to New Orleans is now. And then the Pacific Ocean will have the same role as the Atlantic has now and the Mediterranean had in antiquity and in the Middle Ages – that of the great water highway of world commerce; and the Atlantic will decline to the status of an inland sea, like the Mediterranean nowadays.] (Marx 1973, 221. Transl. Cohen et. al.)

Marx welcomed this American-induced acceleration of world history because it had to bring the revolution closer, in Europe and Asia, especially in China (cf. Marx 1973, 266–267). Goethe called at least for the advent of the era of world literature to be accelerated.[3] Like Goethe, Marx conceded the initiative in Panama to the USA since the canal's completion had failed so far due to the small-mindedness of the European trading nations (cf. Marx 1973, 265).

Among the prophets of European decline and a Pacific war stands speculative fiction writer Ferdinand Grautoff who authored three novels on near-future wars. Grautoff was an acquaintance of Thomas Mann from their high-school years in Lübeck, an old trading town on the Baltic Sea, and received his doctorate in maritime history. Early critics regarded him as an expert in military strategy who might have ties to the Imperial High Command of the German Navy (cf. Noack 2015, 241–245). The immediate background of his writings was the surprising outcome of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. Not only did Japan win what would later be considered World War Zero, but the United States also intervened to broker the peace treaty signed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Grautoff, like many of his contemporaries, interpreted all of this as the emergence of new world powers in the Pacific and as a direct challenge to the "Legende der Überlegenheit der weißen Rasse" over the "mongolische Rasse" [legend of the superiority of the "white race" over the "yellow" or "Mongolian race"] (Grautoff 1908, 248, 250. Transl.).

His 1905 debut novel *Armageddon 190–* (originally published as *1906. Der Zusammenbruch der alten Welt*) unfolds the scenario of a fatal conflict between the European powers, which causes the collapse of the Old World and accelerates the world-political rise of the United States and Asian nations. In his 1908 international bestseller *Banzai!* (originally published as *Bansai!*) the Japanese Empire conquers the entire Pacific West of the United States with the support of Asian emigrants, the "enemy within". The Japanese farmers, gardeners, and shopkeepers in California, Oregon, and Washington all turn out to be part of the Asian forces. The government in Tokyo is said to have orchestrated immigration "nach einem bestimmten Plane" [by a perfect

3 On the specific temporality of world literature in Goethe's and Marx's thought as approaching but still in the future, see Puchner (2013).

system] (Grautoff 1908, 105. Transl.) entailing military orders for every single settler. The China Towns reveal themselves as arsenals with underground tunnel systems, while the Japanese-run farms are fronts for weapons purchased from Canada. The United States Pacific Fleet is sunk in a surprise attack. Since the construction of the Panama Canal was neglected, there is no prospect of rapid reinforcements from the Atlantic Fleet.

Typical of German claims to friendship with America, the narrator of this story is supposed to be an American who studied at Heidelberg University, an institution well known for its attraction to overseas students during the nineteenth century, most prominently for Longfellow's stay in 1835/36 (cf. Krumpelmann 1969). The entire novel is written from the We-perspective of the American nation. The preface to the English edition even relates the book's intentions to that of the "long and dramatic voyage of our fleet", i.e., the Great White Fleet of 1907: It is meant "to minimize the danger of a conflict with our great commercial rival in the Far East" by calling the "attention of the American people to the present woeful lack of preparedness" (Grautoff 1909, vii). Grautoff disclosed his authorship using the Latin pseudonym Parabellum from the saying "Si vis pacem para bellum". Under this mask, he summons "[den] Schatten Asiens" [Asia's shadow] (Grautoff 1908, 248. Transl.) in which America could soon disappear:

> Daß wir aber hier in Amerika jahrelang in einem Zustande gelebt haben wie einer, der die dumpfe Ahnung hat, daß irgend etwas Schreckliches plötzlich hereinbrechen werde, […] das fühlen wir heute alle, da wir jetzt wissen, welcher Punkt unsern Blick damals hätte fesseln sollen, welcher Aufgabe unsere Kräfte hätten dienen müssen. Aber wir gingen wie Schlafwandler umher. [We Americans realize now that we had been living for years like one who has a presentiment that something dreadful is hanging over him which will suddenly descend upon his head […]. We realize the situation now, because we know where we should have fixed our gaze and understand the task to the accomplishment of which we should have bent our energies, but we went about like sleep-walkers.] (Grautoff 1908, V. Transl.)

Of course, the narrator supports his message with a Goethe reference. What is quoted, however, is not the vision of tremendous American-Asian traffic, but Goethe's words to the dismayed German officers in

1792, after their loss at the Battle of Valmy: "Von hier und jetzt an beginnt eine neue Epoche der Weltgeschichte und Ihr könnt sagen, Ihr seid dabei gewesen" [At this spot and at this moment a new epoch in the world's history will begin, and you will all be able to say that you were present] (Grautoff 1908, VII. Transl.). By that, Grautoff compared the rise of Asia to the French Revolution and the white-supremacist conviction to the nobility's contempt for the third estate.

Visions of a declining Occident and a rising East culminated in two works by Oswald Spengler: his 1918/22 *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* [*The Decline of the West*], considered by Northrop Frye to be "one of the world's great Romantic poems" (Frye 1974, 6); and in its 1933 postscript, *Jahre der Entscheidung* [*The Hour of Decision*]. Frye also pointed out that Spengler's thought is rooted in the geographic imagination of German romanticism perceiving the phenomenal world as an essentially spatial world (cf. Frye 1974, 6). Spengler's intellectual fiction includes the prospect of near-future wars, although the temporal dimensions with which he operated were much longer than Grautoff's, roughly 50 to 100 years. Nevertheless, he stated: "Die Mächte beginnen sich zu bilden, der Form und der Lage nach, welche bestimmt sind, den Endkampf um die Herrschaft auf diesem Planeten zu führen" [The powers which are destined to wage the final war for supremacy on this planet are beginning to shape themselves into form and position] (Spengler 1933, 41. Transl. Atkinson). Unlike Grautoff, he remained ambiguous about who these final players could be but generalized: "einstweilen ist die Macht in die Randgebiete verlegt, nach Asien und Amerika" [the power has been transferred to the border areas of Asia and America] (Spengler 1933, 42. Transl. Atkinson); in other words, away from Europe (Spengler 1934, 59). He harkened to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931 when he postulated: "Der Kampf um den Stillen Ozean [tritt] eben in die entscheidende Phase" [the struggle for the Pacific is entering on its decisive phase] (Spengler 1933, 47. Transl. Atkinson).

A third German prophet of a Pacific war was the avant-garde writer Alfred Döblin. Like Thomas Mann, he would live in exile on the Pacific coast, although for a shorter period between 1940 and 1945. Back in Germany, he would start a magazine entitled *Das Goldene Tor*, referring to the Golden Gate of San Francisco Bay, which he visited in late 1945 and appreciated as a symbol of West-Eastern reconciliation

after World War II. The first issue of Döblin's magazine contains Heinrich Mann's account of his flight from Europe in 1940, entitled "Abschied von Europa" [Farewell to Europe], and translations of Chinese and American poetry. This specific selection reflects his scepticism about the Old World and his hope for a global renewal arising on the Pacific (cf. Keppler-Tasaki 2018, 263–267). Döblin's post-war vision is well founded in his earlier works. His career began with an award-winning 1916 novel about upheavals in eighteenth-century China, entitled *The Three Leaps of Wang Lun*. Another major work of his is the 1924 epic *Mountains Oceans Giants*, an amazing contribution to speculative fiction and a response to Spengler's "vielberufene[m] Buche vom sterbenden Abendland" [frequently invocated book of the dying Occident] (Döblin 1972, 110. Transl. StKT). *Mountains Oceans Giants*, published ten years after the Panama Canal's opening, is one of the first novels in world literature that goes into the details of terraforming. Its outset is marked by a colossal war and the reign of hypertech-supported overlords, as predicted by Spengler.

The "Ural War", as Döblin calls it, ends with the burning and ensuing flooding of the Russian Plain, leaving Russia as a seascape. A world war follows "zwischen dem westlichen Völkerkreis und den Asiaten" [between the western peoples and the Asians] (Döblin 2006, 121. Transl. Godwin). Döblin uses expressionist word cascades to indicate the geographical outlines of Asia: "Bombay Lhassa Peking Tokio Kasan Tobolsk" [Bombay Lhasa Peking Toyko Kazan Tobolsk] (Döblin 2006, 102. Transl. Godwin). In Döblin's projection of a future world, nations no longer exist. Instead, metropolises, described as town zone regions (Stadtschaften), have grown to the size of countries and cover extensive parts of the former states. The Eastern peoples have already freed themselves from Western rule and, in turn, the Western powers fear an attack, which they want to forestall with a preventive strike from the Pacific. The deployment happens as follows:

> Gasschiffe Riesenboote Luftschiffe […] breiteten sich, die Durchfahrt von Panama verlassend, an der weiten Westküste des amerikanischen Kontinents im Süden und Norden aus, um dem asiatischen Angriff von Westen zuvorzukommen. […] Unterwasserboote Gasboote, in breiter Front die plumpen Arbeitsschiffe zwischen sich fassend, von Abwehr- und Kundschafterbooten umschwärmt, durchschnitten das große westliche Gewässer, dröhnten an Hawai

> Paumotu Tubuai vorüber, zogen bei Neuseeland die südliche Front ein, verdichteten sich im Norden, von Neuguinea bis Kamtschatka. [gas-ships giant ships airships [...] passing through the Panama Canal spread out along the west coast of the American continents to forestall any Asiatic assault from the west. […] Submarines gas-ships, among them a long line of ponderous construction vessels surrounded by swarms of defense and scout ships, cut through the vast western waters, past Hawaii Tuamotu Tuvalu, formed a southern front near New Zealand, clustered more densely further north, from New Guinea to Kamchatka.] (Döblin 2006, 112. Transl. Godwin)

The narrator refers to this formation as "the White fleet", reminiscent of Roosevelt's Great White Fleet. For defence, terraforming engineers from the Asian metropolises disrupt the very fabric of the ocean:

> Das Wasser wurde unter den Schiffen weggerissen. Das Fahrzeug sank in die Wasserspalte. Die Spalte, ein Trichter, weitete sich rechts und links kugelförmig. Das Schiff, stürzend torkelnd, am Boden der Wasserschlucht von den herabschießenden Wellen umgeschlagen, wurde begraben, während das Wasser über ihm sich zusammentat, stürmisch aufhob und glättete. [Water was torn away from under the ships. They dropped into the hole. The sinkhole widened left and right, an inverted dome. Ships plunging twisting, on the bottom of the watery gorge overwhelmed by onrushing waves, buried by water closing over them swirling growing calm.] (Döblin 2006, 114. Transl. Godwin)

The episode ends with a battle for the Panama Canal at the seaport of Colón. Asian aircrafts irradiate the area with "nervenlähmenden Strahlen" [nerve-paralyzing rays] (Döblin 2006, 116. Transl. Godwin), so that the crews lose control and ships pile up at the Eastern end of the canal. The White fleet activates a power plant in Cartagena producing "elektrisches Feuer" [electrical fire] (Döblin 2006, 119. Transl. Godwin), which changes the fabric of the air to that of the sea and gets the aircrafts stuck. Thus, this Pacific war ends with a stalemate. The Western and Eastern peoples separate without as much as a peace treaty. What has changed though is that humankind no longer accepts physical geography as a given fact but as something that can be engineered. The later chapters of *Mountains Oceans Giants* deal predominantly with the enterprise to melt the ice of Greenland and make the northern island more habitable.

An essential part of the modern geographic imagination, as it emerged around 1800, was to consider temporality and conceive how the world was shaped and is still changing (cf. Tang 2008, 3–4). This change may occur as part of natural history or human interventions such as landscape engineering. Goethe conceived the human effort to shape physical geography in the fifth act of *Faust II* (verse 11559–11570), in which Faust's last vision concerns the construction of a canal through a coastal area until it reaches the sea. This endeavour has been frequently associated with the construction of the Panama Canal and other such canals (cf. Koopmann 1996), about which Goethe reasoned in the last years of his life. In its particular treatment of space, *Mountains Oceans Giants* is a novel of exemplary modernity. Döblin's Pacific war is not a Spenglerian "final war for supremacy *on* this planet", but sets out for a world of terraforming that, on a grander scale than the Panama Canal, changes the planet itself.

Döblin was a fierce anti-bourgeois who would never have referenced Goethe openly as Carus, Francke, and Mann did to support their notions of the global or as Spengler did to present Western culture as a "faustische Kultur" [Faustian culture] defined by strength of will, eagerness to pursue science and technology, and strive towards the infinite (cf. Spengler 1934, 3, 44, 189). Nevertheless, Döblin had become more interested in Goethe and particularly in Goethe's understanding of nature since 1919 (cf. Althen 2019). In the fall of 1920, he confronted what he called Spengler's confusing ingenuity and mystical obscurity (cf. Döblin 1972, 110). One year later, he got to work on *Mountains Oceans Giants*. Not unlike Spengler's inventive time-lapse narrative of world history, the novel tells humanity's history up to the twenty-seventh century including the twenty-sixth-century "Ural War" and its naval campaign at the Panama Canal. It then dwells in the deeds and the troubled mind of an overlord by the name of Marduk who started out as a biochemist, recalling the alchemist Faust who became a dubious political leader. Marduk sets a course for changing the face of the earth through geo-engineering, but the results are catastrophic, and at the end, a female redeemer figure named Venaska opens the somewhat melodramatic prospect towards a reconciliation between humanity and nature. Döblin used an abundance of specific source materials for his enterprise, for example a textbook of geophysics and physical geography as well as several works on oceanography (cf. Sander 1988). All in

all, however, *Mountains Oceans Giants* might well be considered Döblin's approach to an updated *Faust*, provoked not least by Spengler's take on 'Faustian culture'.

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Chunije Zhang

Meditating with Hermann Hesse: *Siddhartha*, Spirituality, and World

In his essay "Mein Glaube" [My faith] (1931), the German Nobel laureate Hermann Hesse explicitly refers to his novella *Siddhartha* (1922) as a testimony to his faith. In this bestselling book with over three million copies sold in the US in the 1960s, the narrator thoroughly describes the eponymous protagonist's exploration of his interiority and his pursuit of spiritual enlightenment. Indeed, for many readers, "Hesse's stories were not fiction in the ordinary sense but texts for instruction and meditation" (Freedman 1979, 11). Hesse's own path of spiritual pursuit, meticulously registered in his works, sustains a lasting impact on Western culture until today.

Growing up in a household of Protestant missionaries, Hesse reveals his childhood scepticism toward Protestant rituals, prayers, and life practices of his parents as well as his lack of spiritual awakening within the confines of Protestantism. Indian religion and poetry provide him much freedom for fantasy and imagination. He absorbs Indian culture without much inner resistance throughout his life. Later, Hesse also came across classical Chinese philosophy; Taoism's "mystische Dynamik" [mystic dynamism] unprecedentedly impressed him and occupied his mind (Hesse 2018, 347). In "Über mein Verhältnis zum geistigen Indien und China" [On My Relationship to Spiritual India and China] (1922), written right after the completion of *Siddhartha*, Hesse confesses his commitment to the Indian and Chinese spiritual traditions. While his missionary parents and maternal grandfather spent decades in India and spoke multiple Indian languages including Malayalam, Kannada, and Hindustani languages, and his grandfather even read Sanskrit, all three of them kept inner distance to India and recognized Christianity as the only divine religion. Hesse, however, embraced India with less reservation, even though he only understood Buddhism as a religion of resignation, ascetism, and escapism. His

encounter with classical Chinese philosophy through Richard Wilhelm's translations enriched his thinking and brought him to new insights. Laozi (Lao Tse)'s *Daodejing* (or *Tao Te Ching*, 道德经) became one of the most important revelation for Hesse. Other books including the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads, the German Indologist Hermann Oldenberg's study of Buddhism, *Zhuangzi* (or *Dschuang Dsi*, 庄子) and the Confucian classic *Analects* remained his favourites for a long time (Hesse 2017, 146). Despite the increasing difficulties in his life, Hesse turned even further away from ascetic resignation and became more inclined toward the Chinese philosophy that emphasizes social engagement and a positive attitude to life. Hesse claims in a letter that "die Wahrheit wird gelebt und nicht doziert" [the truth is to be experienced but not taught] (Hsia 1981, 239). It is thus not surprising that, in *Siddhartha*, the eponymous protagonist refuses to follow any dogmas and is determined to choose his own path toward a holistic spirituality.

Despite Hesse's rebellion against Protestantism in his youth, in his late years, Hesse recognized the shaping influence of Christianity on his own religiosity. Through his friendship with the writer Hugo Ball, Hesse underwent another wave of Christian influence and learned to appreciate Catholicism and its sense of community. Yet he also saw the politically opportunistic sides of the Catholic Church and its involvement in violent political missions such as colonialism and imperialism. Hesse thus arrived at the conclusion that he also made about Protestantism, namely, spirituality could and should be separated from politics and could only be pursued in seclusion and privacy. He confesses:

> In meinem religiösen Leben spielt also das Christentum zwar nicht die einzige, aber doch eine beherrschende Rolle, mehr ein mystisches Christentum als ein kirchliches, und es lebt nicht ohne Konflikte, aber doch ohne Krieg neben einer mehr indisch-asiatisch gefärbten Gläubigkeit, deren einziges Dogma der Gedanke der Einheit ist. [In my religious life, Christianity still plays a dominant role, if not the only one. It is more a mystic Christianity than a church Christianity, which lives, not without conflict, but without war, closer to a faith in a more Indian-Asian manner, whose only dogma is the idea of unity.] (Hesse 2018, 348)

The idea of unity, the oneness in which all humans, animals, plants, and beings are connected with each other, signifies Hesse's world spirituality. Finally, Hesse's involvement with psychoanalysis, both as a

personal therapeutic treatment and an intellectual engagement with C.G. Jung's idea of the collective unconscious, further inspired him to develop his own understanding of wisdom – a dialectic, non-partisan, and synthetic form of thinking. The confluence of Christianity, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and Jung's psychoanalysis finds voice and *Gestalt* in *Siddhartha*, the book of Hesse's personal confession.

Hesse's idea of a spiritual unity is characteristic for his generation (Max Weber, Thomas Mann, Alfred Döblin, and Richard Wilhelm), which vehemently turned away from Protestantism, embraced other religious and spiritual orientations, especially those of South and East Asia such as Buddhism, Daoism, and Hinduism, and innovatively developed a holistic world spirituality that remains influential and visible in world literature and cultural practice until today; for example in J.M. Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K*. *Siddhartha* registers the yearning for spiritual liberation as mental healing during and after warfare, economic downturn, and political crisis in the early twentieth century. Spirituality, mental health, and literary imagination are inextricably entangled and nurture each other's growth. Psychic healing, as Hesse's work has shown, could be achieved through an open-minded exploration in and negotiation with various spiritual traditions. Literary arts played an indispensable role in documenting and elaborating individual as well as collective healing processes. The discussion about world literature today would benefit from exploring the relationship between spirituality and literature in a global context in addition to other more conventional theoretical approaches.

Hesse scholarship has often read *Siddhartha* as a book of Hesse's exoticism and orientalism. Mark Boulby claims that "Siddhartha is the pinnacle of Hesse's orientalism; perhaps it is the high point of his art in the novel as well" (1967, 124). Adrian Hsia concentrates on the influence of Daoism and the metaphor of river and water in *Siddhartha* (Hsia 1981, 237–248). Certainly, Hesse himself also confirmed the decisive influence of Daoism, as noted above. The works' significance in articulating a universal spirituality, however, could not be adequately recognized if we merely focus on an orientalist reading of the work and Hesse's possibly erroneous appropriation of Eastern religions. In a short note to the Persian readers of *Siddhartha* from 1958, Hesse points out that, despite the obvious influence of Indian and Chinese religious traditions, he has aimed to explore and discover the common-

ality among all human confessions and forms of piety, which rests above national and cultural differences and can be trusted and respected by all individuals and communities (Hesse 2003, 213).

The scarcity of research on *Siddhartha*, in comparison to Hesse's more popular works such as *Demian* (1919), *Steppenwolf* (1927), or *Glass Beads Game* (1943), is probably because the work is less tangible for the more common positivist, rationalist, and theory-oriented approaches in literary studies. I thus consider it meaningful to read this novel with spiritual psychology, which could be counted toward the efforts of cognitive literary studies. Lisa Miller's research in the science and neuroscience of spirituality provides the material foundation for the less tangible area of human spirituality. Hesse's *Siddhartha* is a key literary text that reveals the healing power of spirituality and the positive confirmation of life in a time of personal crisis as well as broader political, social, and cultural crises after World War I.

Hesse's biographer Heimo Schwilk sees parallels between the story of Siddhartha and Hesse's own life. "Der erste Teil des Siddhartha schöpft ganz aus eigenem Erleben" [The first part of Siddhartha is created completely from his own experience] (Schwilk 2023, 244). Hesse's rebellion against the will of his father, his distance to Protestantism, and his experience of asceticism in Ascona are all reflected in Siddhartha's coming-of-age development in the first part of the novella. After the completion of the first part of the novel, Hesse, however, encountered difficulties and could not continue writing. Conversations with his cousin the Japanologist Wilhelm Gundert and psychoanalytic consultations with C.G. Jung (February–May 1921) inspired Hesse, and he finished the second part of the book within weeks in 1922. The break between the first and second part lasted almost a year and a half. In the background of the composition of the novel was Hesse's separation from his first wife and the mother of his three sons, Mia Bernoulli. Her severe mental illness depressed Hesse so that he was constantly playing with suicidal thoughts and swallowed opium after Mia's hospitalization in September 1919. Yet he survived. While Hesse wrote other works that are more closely related to his therapeutic treatment with psychoanalysis with Dr. Josef Lang, a student of C.G. Jung, such as *Demian*, *Klein und Wagner*, *Klingsors letzter Sommer*, Siddhartha carries the weight of his spiritual confession. It is a text through which Hesse

articulates his vision of a wisdom toward which he always approaches. He wrote to Bruno Randssus in 1922:

> Ich bin nicht Siddhartha, ich bin nur immer wieder auf dem Wege zu ihm […] Man darf sich nie auf eine gefundene Wahrheit versteifen, auch nicht auf die eines Buches, denn das Suchen kann wohl gelernt werden, das Finden nicht. [I am not Siddhartha, I am only on my path toward him again and again […] One should insist neither on a found truth nor on that of a book, because one can well learn to search but not to find.] (Unseld 1974, 88).

Unlike many other of Hesse's works, *Siddhartha* was not a commercial success. Otto Doderer for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, however, recognized it as "ein ungemein weises Buch" [an extremely wise book] (Unseld 1974, 91). Doderer saw the book's philosophical strength in its literary quality: only a poet could transform ideas in such metaphorical configurations and create such a form out of the raw material of life (Unseld 1974, 91). The composition of *Siddhartha* was thus Hesse's attempt at healing his own psyche by an inward turn toward peace and strength. In addition to his psychological crisis, in July 1919, Hesse wrote to his friend Alice Leuthold that Europe was in period of decadence. It was thus high time for the "europäische Geist" [European spirit] to return home to its Asian sources for rejuvenation (Hesse 1978, 409).

Siddhartha is also Hesse's proposal to solve the world historical crisis after World War I from the perspective of spiritual healing, care, and repair. Ralph Freedman comments: "Begun in December 1919 shortly after the end of the First World War, and published in 1922 near the height of Germany's devastating inflation, this novel reflects a yearning for wholeness outside and within the self as an historical and psychological response to the aftermath of war, to economic hardship, and to social unrest" (1999, vii). *Siddhartha* thus has its social relevance and offers a psychological insight in collective distress and its wounds. A spiritual psychological reading of Hesse's work enriches the repertoire of literary and cultural studies. It also makes visible why a society needs to teach literature and the humanities so that younger people will learn from their previous generations' psychological struggles and their efforts to alleviate pain through spiritual faith. Reading and teaching Hesse's *Siddhartha* not only promises a literary experience but also

provides an opportunity for students and readers to explore their own spiritual path in our post-Covid personal and global crises.

1 The Affinity between Depression and Spirituality

The clinical psychologist Lisa Miller and her colleagues have conducted long-term epidemiological research in the correlations between spirituality and substance abuse and depression. Her data analysis, based on self-reports from young people from their sixteen years of age to twenty-six years, reveals that strong personal spirituality is associated with lower rates of substance abuse and less severe depression. Spirituality and depression are linked in two more complex ways.

> First, those who had strong personal spirituality at age twenty-six were two and a half times more likely to have been depressed in the past. In other words, spiritual formation doesn't seem to be an alternative to depression so much as a way of being that emerges alongside or through struggle. Second, those who had strong spirituality by age twenty-six were 75 percent protected against a recurrence of major depression for the next ten years. And for those who were highly spiritual and had gone through major depression in the past, the protective benefit of spirituality against a recurrence of depression was even higher: a striking 90 percent. […] It was as though their sensitivity to and familiarity with mental suffering enhanced their capacity to marshal a deeper spiritual response to life challenges. High-risk people who built a spiritual muscle to respond to suffering were protected against the downward spiral the next time sorrow or disappointment came around, because they had cultivated a spiritual response. (Miller 2021, 141–142)

Spirituality hence does not completely defy depressive moods, but rather it is something that emerges out of life's sufferings and could be cultivated to protect the psyche from severe attacks caused by life's adverse situations such as times of trauma, loss, or separation. In other words, if we adopt a spiritual perspective or learn to recognize and respond to spiritual awakening, then we are more or less prepared for the next stage in life and can approach it with a more positive and relaxed attitude. "If we don't, we're more likely to be depressed – to have an ongoing hunger for love, connection, and transcendence that we don't know how to marshal" (Miller 2021, 143). With a spiritual awareness, we "can open the door to a reshuffling of meaning, to the

foundational, felt awareness that we are loved and held and part of it all" (Miller 2021, 143).

Miller has also explored and confirmed the material basis for spirituality and brain health through neuroscientific MRIs. She and her colleagues examined the occipital (visual perception), parietal (orientation), and precuneus (reflection) regions of the brain, which are typically associated with depression. They found out that the high-spiritual brain has evidently larger areas of cortical thickness than low-spiritual brains. Cortical thickening is protective "against here-and-now more subtle levels of depressive symptoms, not just against periodic episodes of diagnostic depression" (Miller 2021, 152). At the same time, people with a high risk toward depression also have a greater sensitivity toward spirituality – "that a sensitivity to depression existed alongside a sensitivity to spirituality, resulting in greater neuroanatomic strengthening. […] Perhaps these are our artists, writers, faith leaders, shamans, and musicians, particularly sensitive to experience" (Miller 2021, 152).

Spirituality is not reserved to some people or some religions or faiths, Miller observes. According to fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) scans, evolution has given humanity equal potential of spiritual awareness. "We all use the same spiritual part of our brain. People of all different religions, people who are nonreligious and spiritual, engage the same neural correlates of spiritual perception" (Miller 2021, 162–163). It is, however, our choice whether or not we engage that part of our brains to guide us through difficult times and steer us clear off depressive moods. Miller calls the spiritual capacity our "awakened awareness." With this awareness, we become seekers and receivers on our path.

> In awakened awareness, we don't lose or forsake our goals. But we take off the blinders. We surrender our tight grip on a goal. We understand that life is a dynamic force that we can attune to and interact with. It's no longer me against the world, or me treading upon the world, but me hearing what life has to say, aware that life is meeting me where I am. I still have wishes and desires and goals, I still experience disappointment and hurt – but I lean into the flow of life, paying attention to where doors open and close. (Miller 2021, 165)

In *Siddhartha*, the protagonist experiences four times of impasse, or depression, in his life until he has found his ultimate spiritual salvation.

Each time, Siddhartha has sought to solve his problem with a new spiritual pursuit; and each time, he adopts a new religious direction and a new practice of life, leaving the older one behind. He wanders from Hinduism to asceticism, to Buddhism, to the world of sensual and material pleasures, and finally to the stream of life symbolised by the river. He has learned to lean into the flow of life and listen to the river's messages.

When Siddhartha grows up in his parents' house, everyone celebrates the Brahmin's son: "They all loved Siddhartha. He brought joy to all, he delighted them all" (Hesse 2003, 4). Siddhartha himself, however, is not happy with his life's prospect as a respected Hindu priest. His subconsciousness feels another calling:

> Dreams came to him and fretful thoughts flowing from the water of the river, twinkling from the stars of the night, from the sun's melting rays – dreams came to him and restlessness of his soul, smoked from the offerings, breathed from the verses of the Rig-Veda, dripped from the teachings of the old Brahmins. (Hesse 2003, 4–5)

The metaphor of the river already appears here at the beginning of the story to illustrate the unconsciousness – a common literary metaphor in German and European literary tradition. Goethe (*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, 1795-1796; *Elective Affinities*, 1809), Eduard Mörike (*Um Mittenacht*, 1828), Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué (*Undine*, 1811), and Hans Christian Andersen (*The Little Mermaid*, 1837) all evoked river and water to symbolise the unconscious mind as an unstable and powerful force. "Siddhartha had started nursing discontent within himself. He had started feeling that his father's love, and his mother's love, and also his friend Govinda's love would not make him happy forever and always, not please him, gratify him, satisfy him" (Hesse 2003, 5). The dissatisfaction of Siddhartha with Hinduism resembles Hesse's own growing distance to Protestantism in his youth. Siddhartha realises that his father, the most venerable priest whom he knows, does not live in bliss and is not at peace – he still searches for greater purification everyday in the outside. Siddhartha, however, wants to find the peace and truth in his soul, through an introvert search for the meaning of selfhood and innermost calling. "One had to find it, the primal source in one's own self, one had to make it one's own! Everything else was seeking, was detour, was confusion. Those were Siddhartha's

thoughts, that was his thirst, that was his suffering" (Hesse 2003, 7). Siddhartha has resolved to follow his own path toward spiritual salvation.

Siddhartha's first suffering leads him to join a group of monks practicing asceticism in the forest, the samanas, because he considers it necessary to eliminate his physical desires, to go through a pitiless unselfing, in order to reach enlightenment. Siddhartha firmly asks his father's permission to become a samana and receives the Brahman's reluctant acceptance and blessing. From the perspective of spiritual psychology, Siddhartha seeks a different spiritual practice, asceticism, to cure the depression in his youth. He aims to "become empty – empty of thirst, empty of desire, empty of dreams, empty of joy and sorrow. To die away from himself, no longer be self, to find peace with an emptied heart, to be open to miracles in unselfed thinking" (Hesse 2003, 13). Siddhartha imagines that, through the voluntary pain and suffering of his body, he may free his mind from all preconceived notions and ideas and to flee his ego. Yet Siddhartha soon realises that he can't reach his goal through fasting and meditation because his ego always returns in an onerous cycle of suffering. He tells his friend Govinda that they could have learned this insight not only through asceticism but also through sensual indulgence: "in any tavern of a red-light district, my friend, among the draymen and dicers" (Hesse 2003, 16). Alcohol functions just as well as asceticism in terms of killing the senses and feeling numb in his body for a certain period of time. Siddhartha thus decides to abandon his existence as a samana and seek wisdom and redemption elsewhere. He sees a new prospect in Buddhism to escape the wheel of rebirth and reach *Nirvana*.

Siddhartha now experiences the second time of spiritual awakening after his first turn from Hinduism to asceticism has failed. Siddhartha bids farewell to the ascetics and searches for the Buddha with Govinda. Siddhartha, however, encounters difficulties to follow the Buddha's path, which for him is another kind of ascetic renunciation of worldly life. In his conversation with Gautama, Siddhartha raises the question that, even if one can follow the illuminating teaching of the Sublime One, one does not have the real experience that has once enabled the Buddha to arrive at these insights. Siddhartha summarizes Buddha's teaching as the unity of the world, "the coherent togetherness of all events, the enfolding of everything, big or little, in the same river,

in the same law of cause and effect, of becoming and dying" (Hesse 2003, 31). Gautama has come to understand the unity of all events as a deliverance from suffering and death, Siddhartha points out, not through a teaching but through his own experience.

> No one is granted deliverance through a teaching! You cannot, O Venerable One, impart to anyone, tell anyone in words and through teachings what happened to you in the hour of your illumination. The Teaching of the illuminated Buddha contains a great deal, it teaches many how to live righteously, avoid evil. But there is one thing that the so clear, so venerable Teaching does not contain: it does not contain the secret of what the Sublime One himself has experienced, he alone among the hundreds of thousands. (Hesse 2003, 32–33)

Hence Siddhartha decides to continue his pilgrimage, to resume his walking, until he finds the ultimate spiritual enlightenment.

The Buddha meets this challenge from Siddhartha with equanimity: "With a half smile, with an unperturbable brightness and friendliness, Gautama gazed into the stranger's eyes and bade him good-bye with a barely visible gesture" (Hesse 2003, 33–34). This reaction of Gautama is starkly contrasted to that of the eldest samana to whom Siddhartha imparts his decision to leave. The samana "was furious that the two youths wanted to leave him, and he railed and ranted" (Hesse 2003, 22). The dissimilarity between the samana and the Buddha reveals the superiority of the Sublime One. Siddhartha's spiritual journey has progressed to a higher level: the Buddha personally practices his own teaching of the accepting composure toward everything that happens while the samana cannot disown his ego, which contradicts the teaching and practice of asceticism. Siddhartha's judgment about the insufficiency of asceticism is thus affirmed. The Buddha, however, impresses Siddhartha with the personification of his doctrine. "Away walked the Buddha, and his gaze and his half smile were etched forever in Siddhartha's memory" (Hesse 2003, 34). Siddhartha's third turning in his spiritual pursuit does not repudiate the Buddha's teaching; rather he wishes to prove and testify to the teaching with his own experience.

Historically speaking, the full name of the Buddha is Gautama Siddhartha. Hence Siddhartha was part of the Buddha himself. Hesse deliberately separates the name into two parts and only uses the family name Gautama to refer to the Buddha. The name Siddhartha is set free

to pursue further enlightenment. I argue that, by doing so, Hesse wants to show the insufficiency of Buddhist teaching and its asceticism; and he reveals his solution of social engagement as an experienced and lived Buddhist enlightenment. In the chapter *Among the Samanas*, the ascetics know that Buddha "had once been an ascetic and had lived in the forest, but then had turned back to luxury and worldly pleasure" (Hesse 2003, 20). This information adumbrates Siddhartha's future path in the novel: he also leaves asceticism and indulges himself in a pleasurable and luxurious life as a businessman with the courtesan Kamala in a big town. Siddhartha, however, does not come back to Buddhism. Rather he finds the proof of Buddhism in the combination of Confucian social engagement and Daoist teaching of moving balance. Hesse splits the figure of the Buddha to show the shortcoming of Buddhism and his understanding of the spiritual unity of the world in social engagement. Ultimately, Hesse believes in an active life as the pathway toward a more balanced and insightful spirituality.

The third turning of Siddhartha, this time from Buddhism to the material world of love and wealth: Shortly before Siddhartha enters the material world, the chapter *Awakening* depicts a severe depression in the process from a youth to a man. The narrator compares this coming-of-age transformation as the peeling of a serpent's old skin. Realizing that he can't overcome his ego with ascetic efforts, he now willingly accepts his desires and sees himself as a separated and unique being isolated from all others in the world. He decides to learn about himself and the world.

> For the first time, all this, all this yellow and blue, river and forest, passed into Siddhartha through his eyes, was no longer the magic of Mara, was no longer the veil of Maya, was no longer senseless and random diversity of the world of appearance, despised by the deep-thinking Brahmin, who disdains the diversity, who seeks the unity. […] Meaning and reality were not somewhere beyond things, they were in them, in everything. (Hesse 2003, 37)

Siddhartha's senses, which he has tried to eliminate during his long-term ascetic practice, have reawakened.

His awakening makes him aware of his sexual desire. His lover, the courtesan Kamala, leads him to his employer, the businessman Kamaswami. The Sanskrit word, *kama*, means love, desire, passion; *svamin* means owner and master. Kamaswami thus represents the mas-

ter of money, wealth, and materialism while Kamala, sharing the same linguistic root with Kamaswami, symbolises the sensual world of desire and wealth. Siddhartha enjoys love and prosperity in the city for a certain period in his life. Yet soon after he has achieved pleasure, lust, property, and power, he starts to feel the emptiness of such an existence:

> At times he heard, deep in his breast, a soft and dying voice that admonished softly, lamented softly, barely audible. Then for an hour he was aware that he was leading a strange life, that he was doing all sorts of things that were merely a game, that he was cheerful, granted, and sometimes felt joy, but that real life was flowing past him and not touching him. (Hesse 2003, 63)

Siddhartha has now reached another phase of depression. Yet again, depressive moments are coupled with spiritual awakening.

One night, he receives a dream as spiritual guidance: a songbird in Kamala's possession has become mute and died. Birds often symbolise the human soul and spirit in Hesse's works. Realizing that he has been leading a meaningless life in the material world that turns in endless cycles, Siddhartha decides to abandon it and leaves Kamala and Kamaswami for good. He returns to the river, which he has once crossed to reach the town and the material world after he has matured to a man. His re-turn to the great river in the forest eventually leads Siddhartha to his final spiritual enlightenment. Yet before that, Siddhartha reaches the deepest point in his life. He attempts suicide at the river:

> Gazing down, he felt entirely filled with the wish to let go and go under in this water. In the water a dreadful emptiness mirrored a fearful emptiness in his soul. Yes, he was at the end. Nothing was left for him to snuff him out, but to shatter the failed formation of his life, toss it at the feet of snickering gods. This was the great vomiting he had longed for: death, the shattering of the form he hated! Let the fish eat him, this dog Siddhartha, this madman, this foul and fetid body, this exhausted and misused soul! Let the fish and the crocodiles eat him, let the demons dismember him! (Hesse 2003, 78)

At this darkest moment in Siddhartha's life, he suddenly understands the messages of his past trainings in Hinduism, asceticism, and Buddhism. He finally integrates the Buddha's teaching with his per-

sonal experience and remembers all the divinities he has forgotten. He recognizes life's indestructibility and sinks into a deep sleep. When he wakes up, Siddhartha sees the river running downhill. Comparing that movement to his own life, he notices that the river is always "singing and remaining cheerful. He liked that, he gave the river a friendly smile. Was this not the river in which he had wanted to drown, once […]?" (Hesse 2003, 84). Depression and spiritual awakening are once again inextricably entangled with each other and serve as each other's cause and effect. Siddhartha reflects: "I had to experience despair, I had to sink down to the most foolish of all thoughts, to the thought of suicide, in order to experience grace, to hear om again, to sleep properly again and to awaken properly again" (Hesse 2003, 85).

The connection between mental distress and spiritual pursuit is not only illuminating for a reading of Hesse's *Siddhartha*. In turn, this work registers one of the twentieth-century's most memorable writers' therapeutic self-treatment and documents the healing power of faith and religiosity. Teaching and reading of such works of art in a community such as a classroom could also achieve therapeutic effects or spiritual awakening among participants. Miller's observation is revealing:

> [D]epression and spirituality appeared to be two sides of the same coin, vastly different experiences that in fact share some significant physiology. […] Suddenly depression didn't look like an illness, at least not all the time. It looked like a sensitivity or perceptual capacity – a knock at the door for the opportunity of an awakened brain. (Miller 2023, 153)

Hesse used his writer's talent to demonstrate his personal method of transforming trauma to spiritual learning, mental distress to transcendent insight. Siddhartha now has learned to love everyone and everything in the world after his suidical attempt.

Indeed, Siddhartha's summary of the Buddha's teaching as the unity of the world re-emerges in the prominent metaphor of the river. At the bank of the river, Siddhartha attains a deeply personal experience of the world's unity. At the bank of the river, Siddhartha receives the deliverance from suffering and death. This also corresponds to the notion of spiritual awareness in Miller's spiritual psychology. "A new Siddhartha had awoken from sleep" (Hesse 2003, 88). He now looks at the world as a new person, with a new spiritual awareness.

2 Spiritual Awareness of One Mind

Miller defines three key features of spiritual awareness that are visible in the brain: "an involuntary reorientation of attention; a sense of love or embrace consistent with intimate attachment or bonding; a sense of self that is both distinct and part of the greater oneness" (2021, 161). Miller points out that these three areas of spiritual awareness reveal a sense of transcending oneself and becoming a part of a universal oneness. Selfhood becomes explicitly relational and connected to others. "We go from being a point to being a wave" (Miller 2021, 161). Miller explains: "The ventral attention network is where we see that the world is alive and talking to us; the frontotemporal network is where we feel the warm, loving embrace of others and of life itself; and the parietal lobe is where we know that we matter, belong, and are never alone" (2021, 162).

Miller describes three major areas of an awakened brain: awakened attention, awakened connection, and awakened heart. To achieve awakened attention, she suggests that one could use chanting, prayer, creative expression, or meditation. In fact, *Siddhartha* or other literary works with spiritual content in general could also qualify as a method to quiet the little me and achieve a more profound and comprehensive understanding of the universe – an awakened attention to life's guidance to insight, connection, path, and synchronicities. With the help of an awakened attention, we receive life's guidance more passively instead of pursuing it with our active effort. "When we engage in guided imaging, we can perceive information that is highly therapeutic, useful, or directive" (Miller 2021, 184).

More importantly, we realise the awakened connection between us and the world. Miller argues:

> We're not just a tiny, atomistic self alone in the unfathomable universe. We're not alone. Life is always reaching out to us. And through integrated awareness, we're available to see, feel, and know life's hand, and to reach back – to be in constant dialogue with the consciousness that runs in, through, and around us, at once a part of life and contributing to it. When we awaken this capacity, we grow and heal. (2021, 190)

Quantum physics provides a scientific basis for the awakened connection. Quantum entanglement describes "the relationship between par-

ticles so intimately linked that a change to one affects the other, even when they are separated at a distance" (Miller 2021, 195). Miller refers to a lecture that she heard by Dr. Larry Dossey, who explained the idea of the nonlocality of consciousness and the power of prayer and intuition in medicine. "The same thought or feeling or physical sensation seemed to happen simultaneously in two different brains or bodies. […] our consciousness is actually part of one field of consciousness that he calls One Mind" (Miller 2021, 196).

Miller moves further with her argument about the awakened connection: "Paired with what we understood about quantum entanglement, nonlocal consciousness suggested that just as tiny particles can become bonded and interconnected, so can minds or awareness" (2021, 196). She refers to neuropsychological experiments that testified to synchronization of brainwaves between people who were not at the same location but were bonded before. "It was as though the two brains were in some way one brain – simultaneously separate and united" (Miller 2021, 198). The synchronization between the oscillations of different brains is called entrainment or brain mirroring in neurobiology. Empathy for other people's pain will engage the same brain structures in us as those in the sufferers. Such brain coupling has been proved in multiple scientific experiments both on the effects of direct touching and remote compassionate wishes. A remarkable experiment was undertaken by Dr. Jeanne Achterberg about love's healing power at a great distance.

> At the North Hawaii Community Hospital in Waimea, Achterberg used fMRI technology to examine whether healing thoughts sent at a distance might correlate with activation of certain brain functions in the subjects receiving the healing intentions. Experienced indigenous Hawaiian healers each selected a person with whom they felt a compassionate bond, and these receivers were placed in a scanner and isolated from all forms of sensory contact from the healer. The healers entered a scanner in a different building and were monitored as they sent healing intentions to their subjects at randomly selected two-minute intervals. The receivers had no way to anticipate or discern with their senses when the healing messages were being sent. And yet, ten times out of eleven, at the exact time the healer sent the intention, specific areas of the patients' brains – precise locations in the anterior and middle cingulate, precuneus, and frontal regions – activated. The probability that this would happen by chance alone is

> less than one in ten thousand. Achterberg drew the conclusion that it's possible for compassionate healing intentions sent at a distance to have a direct physical effect on the recipient – that when we are bonded, we can influence one another's bodies and mental processes. (Miller 2021, 201)

Miller exclaims: "Who are we to each other? We are built to comfort each other" (2021, 200). When we realise and consciously engage with the awakened connection, we help each other toward profound healing. Miller wants her readers to understand that we are all connected in a network of loving kindness, and we are all held in a quasi-divine universe. Life shows and guides us on our paths which we shall follow with confidence and resilience. We are all receivers and senders of love to each other and to the world. This awareness of network, the awakened connection, is based on the alpha wave that connects us through our awakened hearts, as Miller has realised.

Indeed, alpha waves build the connection and construe the universal oneness among us. Alpha waves are detected in people recovering from depression through spirituality as well as in meditating monks. In brain mirroring, "oscillating brain waves synchronize to be in the same phase (the waves go up and down together), and this is particularly true for the wavelength called alpha (8-12 Hz). Remarkably, alpha synchronization is coming from the region of the parietal, the same posterior brain region where we saw cortical thickening in the Columbia MRI study of spiritual adults overcoming depression […]" (Miller 2021, 198–199). Empathy as interbrain synchrony is also manifested primarily in the alpha wavelength. Alpha was first detected in 1893 and called Schumann resonances, "a set of spectrum peaks in the extremely low frequencies in the Earth's electromagnetic field spectrum. Alpha is a resonance in the space between the Earth's crust to one mile up, set and reset by lightning and other activity in the ionosphere" (Miller 2021, 215). Miller further informs us that high-amplitude alpha waves exist everywhere, in the brains of prayers, meditators, healers, or people holding hands to alleviate pain and heal. Through alpha waves, we perceive the oneness with other beings, nature, divinity, and the universe. We transform from one point, one monad, one subjectivity to a connection, a wave, a line, and a network. We join the energy at alpha frequency. "When we awaken, we resonate at the same frequency as all of nature on earth. We rejoin life" (Miller 2021, 216).

Miller also mentions that these science-proved facts, corresponding to indigenous beliefs and various spiritual faiths in the world, provide the insight that

> we are living, evolving creatures within the context of a living, evolving planet and universe. For example, the new field of biosemiotics investigates how forests think and communicate. Whether we're looking at river or forest systems, individual cells, or the birth of the cosmos, we see a portrait of the world and all living things that is fundamentally relational, reciprocal, and interconnected. (2021, 230–231)

These science-based psychiatric findings correspond to Siddhartha's spiritual experience at the river. After his sleep, Siddhartha is enchanted: "[He] now loved everything and everyone, he was full of cheerful love for anything he saw. And it seemed to him now that he had been so ill earlier because he had been able to love nothing and no one" (Hesse 2003, 83). Siddhartha decides to stay at the river and not to leave it again so soon. The river symbolises the spiritual connection of all beings or the One Mind in Miller's book. The ferryman Vasudeva functions as Siddhartha's guide on this water path toward spiritual enlightenment. The term *vasudeva* means "eternal reality" or "the earth" in Sanskrit and is often used in the phrase *vasudeva kutumbakam*, denoting that the world, the universe or reality is one family ("What" 2023). Siddhartha becomes an apprentice of the ferryman and becomes aware of the oneness of all life:

> It was nothing but a readiness of the soul, an ability, a secret art, to think the thought of oneness, to feel and breathe the oneness at every moment, in the midst of life. Slowly this blossomed in him, brightly emanated to him from Vasudeva's old childlike face: harmony, knowledge of the eternal perfection of the world, smiling, oneness. (Hesse 2003, 114)

This passage echoes Miller's definition and description of spiritual awareness, as discussed above. The shared energy of the world is reflected in everyone's individual consciousness and impregnates all beings with love and harmony only if one is able to perceive its existence.

When Vasudeva hears Siddhartha's narration about his attempt of suicide by the river, the ferryman thoughtfully comments: "It is as I thought. The river spoke to you. It is your friend too, it speaks to you

too. That is good, that is very good" (Hesse 2003, 92). Vasudeva suggests here that Siddhartha now has received the river's message about the universal connection and will learn more. When Siddhartha inquires what he will learn, the ferryman responds: "You will learn it, perhaps you know it already. Look, I am no scholar, I do not know how to speak, nor do I understand how to think. I know only how to listen and to be pious; that is all I have ever learned" (Hesse 2003, 93). Vasudeva's message resembles Miller's notion of the "awakened attention," the first of three areas of an awakened brain. With the awakened attention, one learns to passively receive and attentively read signs from life and the universe. Indeed, the narrator tells us that Siddhartha learns from the river "how to listen, how to listen with a silent heart, with a waiting, open soul, without passion, without desire, without judgment, without opinion" (Hesse 2003, 93–94). The river has taught Siddhartha "to wait, to listen, and to have patience" (Hesse 2003, 111). Listening becomes a shared activity between Vasudeva and Siddhartha – they sit together and listen to the water, "which was no water for them, but the voice of life, the voice of Being, the voice of eternal Becoming" (Hesse 2003, 95).

This shared aural experience transcends the individuality of the two ferrymen and infuse them in the medium of water.

> And there were moments when both, while hearing the river, thought of the same things, of a conversation from two days ago, of one of their passengers whose face and fate occupied their minds, of death, of their childhoods, and both of them in the same moment, when the river had said something good to them, looked at each other, both thinking the exact same thoughts, both blissful at this same answer to the same question. (Hesse 2003, 95)

This entanglement between Siddhartha and Vasudeva is similar to Miller's notion of "awakened connection," the second of the three areas of an awakened brain. This connection extends from the two ferrymen to other travellers, who tell Siddhartha and Vasudeva their life stories, sufferings, and worries and seek their advice. After the death of Kamala and the loss of their son, Siddhartha has reached a deeper level of the awakened connection. His rather abstract awareness of the oneness of the world does not alleviate his pains. His concrete experience of hearing and seeing the oneness reflected in the river,

however, heals his wound and comforts his anxieties. When he hears the river laughing at him

> Siddhartha halted, he leaned over the water the better to hear, and in the silently flowing water he saw his own face reflected, and in this reflected face there was something that reminded him, something forgotten, and by pondering it, he found it. This face resembled another face, that he had once known and loved and also feared. It resembled the face of his father, the Brahmin. And he remembered that ages ago, he, a youth, had forced his father to let him join the penitents, he remembered saying good-bye to him, going away, and never returning. Had not his father suffered the same sorrow that Siddhartha was now suffering for his own son? […] The river laughed. Yes, it was so. Everything not fully suffered, not fully resolved came again: the same sorrows were suffered over and over. (Hesse 2003, 115)

After gaining insights into the unresolved wounds and sufferings from the past, Siddhartha can now adopt his father's perspective and empathize with his sorrow and struggle. The river's laugh reveals to Siddhartha that sorrow and joy are one and the same thing. Yet he still can't fully let go of his pain of losing his son. There Vasudeva asks Siddhartha to listen to the river yet again because he hasn't heard everything:

> They listened. The many-voiced song of the river resounded softly. Siddhartha stared into the water, and images appeared to him in the flow: his father appeared, lonely, mourning his son; he himself, Siddhartha, appeared, lonely, he too bound with the bonds of yearning for his faraway son; his son appeared, lonely he too, the boy, greedily charging along on the burning path of his young wishes: each person focusing on his goal, each one obsessed with his goal, each one suffering. The river sang with a sorrowful voice, sang ardently, flowed ardently toward its goal, its voice lamenting. […] Kamala's image also appeared and dissolved, and Govinda's image and other images flowed into one another. They all merged into the flow, they all flowed as a river toward the goal, ardent, desiring, suffering; and the river's voice was full of yearning, full of burning distress, full of insatiable longing. […] But the ardent voice had changed. It still resounded, sorrowful, seeking, but other voices joined in, voices of joy and sorrow, good and evil voices, laughing and grieving, a hundred voices, a thousand voices. (Hesse 2003, 117–118)

Siddhartha is all ears. He sees and hears that all images, voices, sufferings, desires, pleasures, goals, actions, all good and evil are merged together in "the river of events," in "the music of life" (Hesse 2003, 119). Now he understands life's eternal holism: to not only focus on the sorrows but also perceive the joys and pleasures at the same time. They are all parts of life in their unique appearances. As Miller puts it, "when we engage our awakened awareness, the hard things in our lives don't go away. But we have the capacity to perceive our sorrow and struggle in a new way. Knit into the fabric of life, there is a felt knowledge that we are never really alone" (2021, 165). A spiritual brain is a healthier brain.

Finally, Siddhartha has reached enlightenment. He stops fighting his destiny; his suffering and his wounds transform and heal; his ego knowingly immerses itself in the flow of the world. He is "full of compassion, full of shared pleasure, devoted to the flowing, belonging to the oneness" (Hesse 2003, 119). Siddhartha has not only acquired the knowledge of the awakened connection, in Miller's terminology, he also has an awakened heart of boundless compassion and love. All his struggles have culminated in a moment of serene equanimity, a quality that the Buddha has once personified for Siddhartha. The connectedness between all things described in Hesse's novel resembles the experiments of the synchronization of brainwaves and the neurobiological entrainment based on empathy in Miller's book. The river in Hesse's rich depiction symbolises the ubiquitous alpha wave that is being received and sent by all human beings. The ecological metaphor of the river also echoes the biosemiotics that all beings, plants, animals, humans, communicate with each other and belong to the all-encompassing family in a transcendent state. With his spiritual awareness, Siddhartha no longer considers himself a separated individual. He has come to see himself as part of the wave and network of universal love.

By way of conclusion, I want to use a scene in the final chapter of the novel to point out why reading *Siddhartha* from the perspective of spiritual psychology matters for us today. When Govinda encounters Siddhartha for the last time, he is not convinced by Siddhartha's statement about his enlightenment. The friend asks Govinda to lean over to him. Kissing Siddhartha's forehead, Govinda suddenly enters the river and sees himself in a stream of faces, images, voices, emotions, and

intentions. He feels the simultaneity and eternity of thousands and thousands of births and deaths in Siddhartha's consciousness. He realises that Siddhartha is now like the Buddha, the Sublime One. Govinda is convinced of his friend's enlightenment. Siddhartha has proved the teaching of the Buddha through his own experience and action in the society, yet not by following the prescribed ascetic practice of Buddhism. Govinda bows low in love and reverence. Yet again, the narrator shows that words have their limits in conveying the essence of faith; only through personal engagement with the world can one receive enlightenment in the most profound way. Like spiritual psychology as a medical and social practice, *Siddhartha*, through fictional storytelling, encourages active engagement with the world as the pathway toward understanding the One Mind and universal love. It exemplifies for others how to overcome one's depressions and maintain faith and confidence in life's turns. A reading of Hesse's *Siddhartha* with spiritual psychology reveals literature's irreplaceable relevance in individual and social healing during and after global crises in the 1920s as well as today.

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Susanne Frank

Competing Claims to World Literature as Heritage (The Mid-1930s and Beyond)

In the current international debate, "world literature" (in the singular) and "heritage", individually or, all the more, in combination are difficult because they automatically raise questions like "Whose world?" and "Whose heritage?". A sentence like "In most of the cases 'world literature' refers to the cultural heritage of a world literary canon whose range is individually developing" is an exception, and, symptomatically, its author, Peter Goßens, is an expert in nineteenth-century theory of world literature in Germany and an expert in GDR concepts of world literature (2011, 12).

For those scholars who in the current discussion on world literature/s (or, for some of them, global literature/s) continue to deal with literatures as national units – and they are in the majority – literature as national heritage seems less problematic. Some of the most debated approaches that try to define the correlation between national literature and world literature – like Pascale Casanova – see the struggle for national heritage as an important factor of interaction between the national and the global scale. Pascale Casanova reserved the notion of heritage for national literature as opposed to world literature: "[…] as a symbol of identity – literary heritage is foremost a matter of national interest. Because language is at once an affair of state and the material out of which literature is made, literary resources are inevitably concentrated, at least initially, within the boundaries of the nation itself" (2004, 32). From this point of view, national literary heritage is the point of departure for every author. But, according to Casanova, the aim of every author is to transcend the boundaries of the national, and by subverting its heritage to become a member of the world republic of letters (2005, 84). The "world" as Casanova understood it is a cosmopolitan republic of letters, a centred and, hence, unequal space of competitive literary dialogue. David Damrosch's liberal approach avoids

the notion of heritage even more consistently although his concept of *world literature* claims to follow Goethe's when he juxtaposes it with the global circulation of mere bestsellers.

As in theory, heritage also matters on the national level in the practical sphere of literary/cultural policy. Since Herder and Goethe, literature is an instrument of nation-building, the national canon constitutes an important part of the cultural heritage of a nation. And even when it comes to world heritage the national factor is of prior importance. Take, for example, the Nobel Prize for Literature. Since the very beginning in 1901, authors have been awarded the prize not least as representatives of a nation. Another example is the "UNESCO Collection of Representative Works", which is a huge project to collect and translate major works of literature from all parts of the world and especially the smaller nations into major languages in order to make them accessible to as large a readership as possible. Active from 1948 until 2005, this project consisted of a collection of national lists that jointly represent "world literature/s" while also targeting the increase of the heritage (and prestige) of each single nation.

The very few who use the terms "world" and "heritage" affirmatively today are either representatives of the conservative Goethean understanding of "world literature" – again, like Peter Goßens – or new leftist theorists like Pheng Cheah who considers himself a leftist follower of Heidegger's concept of *worlding*. In his book *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*, which the author understands as a direct answer to David Damrosch's book *What is World Literature?*, Cheah defends literature that thematises globalisation and discusses internationally dominant practices of heritage protection in a critical way: "Literary narratives concerned with the world-destroying consequences of various modalities of capitalist globalization […] as e.g. the incapacitation of an aid-receiving people by humanitarianism or the destruction of subaltern worlds by world-heritage preservation" have to be taken into account when "world literature in the normative sense" is at stake (2016, 16). Cheah claims an alternative, explicitly normative notion of literary world heritage when he counters his opponent David Damrosch in a recently published discussion:

> […] if you think about the formation of world literature, the simple question is: who is it for, or what is it for? I think it's for people now to make sense of what the world is, and what world literature as part of – to use an old-fashioned term – the "human heritage" is, for existence in the present and the future. So that's why the writings of classical antiquity, represented by, say, Plato, Euripides and so on would always be included in world literature. (Cheah/Damrosch 2019, 312)

To talk about literary/cultural heritage always implies a set of questions, including: Who are the heirs? Who can lay claim to the inheritance? Whose property is it? This is the reason why no liberal approach would use it in a universalist sense anymore. Postcolonial critique brought to the fore that the notion of world literature has emerged and has been used as an instrument of colonial dominance, that it implies the point of view and the claim of an illegitimate colonial heir. But this is also the reason why a theorist like Pheng Cheah comes back to "old-fashioned" humanity. After Goethe, humankind as the only legitimate heir of world literature – and at the same time its object of education – was at the centre of the Marxist debate.

What has been lacking in the current discussion so far is a closer look at the history of this debate within a Soviet context – a debate that was instigated by Maksim Gor'kii right before and in the context of the October Revolution and reached the first culmination point in the 1930s when the proletarians were declared to be the only legitimate heir(s) of world literature.

This article will outline what can be called the "Soviet project of World literature" and put it in a comparative perspective with two contemporary positions of the early 1930s that were formulated in response to German fascism.

1

Let me start with the Soviet concept of world literature as *heritage*. Lenin and Gor'kii may be called its co-founders, but in fact this concept of *heritage* has its roots in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Julie Deschepper calls it "a symptom that the Russian Revolution and the French Revolution have in common" that "both heritage revolutions led to similar behaviors: vandalism, iconoclasm, semioclasm[s],

confiscation, as well as a desire to preserve the heritage" (Deschepper 2018, IV).[1]

When Lenin made explicit use of the term "heritage", what he had in mind was culture in general. Gor'kii focussed on literature – world literature – as a gateway to world culture for the Soviet people, but without using the term "heritage". Both Lenin and Gor'kii first formulated their programmatic statements right after the October Revolution. At the 8th Party-Congress in 1919, Lenin would emphatically underline the importance of "critically appropriating bourgeois culture": "Socialism cannot be built unless we utilise the heritage of capitalist culture. The only material we have to build communism with is what has been left us by capitalism".

In his preface to the publishing-project "Всемирная литература" – "world literature, soviet style", as Maria Khotimsky (2013) calls it – Gor'kii would develop the vision of world literature in (Russian) translation as the tool for bringing humankind together, for making peace between the peoples, for bridging all gaps and contrasts between cultures, nations and classes, for ending all conflicts and discriminations, for empathy and sharing all human emotions – because literature is "the heart of the world" and "the all-seeing eye of the world" and "the greatest wonder ever"; in short "literature is the International of the Spirit" (Gor'kii 1941, 280).[2] The rather short-lived project can be seen as quite successful in laying the ground for a new Soviet library of world literature. Between 1918 and 1924 (when the publishing house was closed), 220 books and 11 issues of the quite influential journals *Современный запад* [*The Modern West*] and *Vostok* [*The East*] were published.

1 Cf. also Deschepper (2019).

2 Katerina Clark hints at the correspondence of this idea to the concept of *Gelehrtenrepublik* (2011, 141–142). Gor'kii is also instructive here: "Literature, both prose and poetry, is saturated with sentiments, thoughts, ideas, which belong to the whole human race, and express the one sacred longing of Man for the joys of spiritual freedom […] The domain of the literary creation is in the International of the spirit, and now, when the idea of the brotherhood of nations, the idea of a social International, is evidently becoming a reality, […] all efforts must be made in order that the assimilation of the saving idea of the fraternity of all mankind should develop as quickly as possible […]" (Gor'kii 1941, 275, 280).

On the one hand, the conceptualisation of world literature in this project is evidently future bound. World literature is understood as a key tool of cultural education. On the other hand, however, appropriating the heritage is at the core of this project: Gor'kii calls literature the "сердце мира" [heart of the world] (274) and world literature a "сокровища" [treasury] (209) that the publishing house should open to the Soviet people, because it is "a common property" – available for everybody regardless of their descent and social position (literature will "смыть навсегда все различия рас, наций, классов и, освободив людей от тяжкого гнета борьбы друг с другом" [wash away forever all disparities of race, nation, class, and, freeing people from the heavy oppression of fighting against each other] (Gor'kii 1941, 279)). Like Lenin and, even before him, Abbé Grégoire in the context of the French Revolution,[3] Gor'kii makes use of the motif of "the barbarian" or "the vandal" in order to delimit the Russian Revolution and his educational project from a "бунт варваров" [barbarian rebellion] (Gor'kii 1941, 281). Gor'kii describes in detail strategies of assimilation starting from the criteria of choice: from masterpieces of literature from "diverse" (in general European) countries that came out "from the time of the Great French Revolution to the Great Russian Revolution" (1941, 281) to all sorts of framing paratexts, such as prefaces, biographical essays, outlines of the history of literature of a given epoch, footnotes, explanatory notes, and bibliographies. First of all, however, appropriation here means translation: translation into Russian, the lingua franca of the Soviet Union and not only one of the leading languages of world literature, but THE language of "world literature Soviet style" (Khotimsky 2013).

When the Soviet literary mega-event of 1934, the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, takes place, Lenin is not present anymore, Stalinism is approaching its peak and, likewise, literary politics are close to reaching the aim of complete, ideological, and institutional alignment. Even though the focus of the Congress with its nearly 600 (exactly 582) participants from more than 50 (exactly 52)[4] nations was on Soviet literature as multinational literature, the concept of *world*

3 Cf. Henri Grégoire (1794) and, on that issue, Sax (1990, 1142–1170).

4 The minutes of the event, which are astonishingly precise, concede the possibility of inaccuracies. Cf. also Maisuradze and Thun-Hohenstein (2015, 138).

literature as world literary heritage gave it the decisive frame.[5] It takes just one glance at the opening speech of the secretary of the "Central Committee of the VKP", Andrei A. Zhdanov, and at the "Устав", the statute of the Writers' Union that the Congress adopted, to understand not only how crucial the notion of heritage was for the concept of Soviet literature as announced at the Congress, but also how special.

Opening the first meeting, secretary of the Central Committee of the VKP [Allunion Communist Party] Andrei A. Zhdanov links Stalin's formula "the writer as engineer of the human soul" directly to "heritage", or rather to its "critical appropriation/assimilation":

> […] овладение техникой дела, критическое усвоение литературного наследства всех эпох представляет собою задачу, без решения которой вы не станете инженерами человеческих душ. [[…] mastering the techniques of [literary writing], critically assimilating the literary heritage of all eras is a task without which you will not become engineers of human souls.] (Zhdanov 1990, 5)

The "Устав" (Charter) reads:

> За годы пролетарской диктатуры советская художественная литература и советская литературная критика […] выработали свои, новые творческие принципы. […] с одной стороны, критического овладения литературным наследством прошлого и, с другой стороны, […] социалистического реализма. [During the years of the proletarian dictatorship, Soviet fiction and Soviet literary criticism, […] have developed their own, new creative principles. […] on the one hand, critical mastery of the literary heritage of the past and, on the other hand, […] socialist realism.] (Первый Всесюзный 1990, 713)

"Critical appropriation/assimilation/takeover of heritage" here functions as a quasi-magic formula throughout the Congress (and beyond, later in the Soviet theory of the specificity of Soviet art/literature until the late 1980s). Its significance can be measured by the high frequency of its use.

In his opening speech on "Soviet literature", Gor'kii again does not use the formula of "critical appropriation" explicitly. However, his

5 For the Stalinist 1930s, Evgeny Dobrenko observes a "consciousness of heritage and synthesis, which does not discard anything, but connects everything, being the 'heir' that removes all the contradictions of previous epochs" (2000, 877).

argument fundamentally touches on the question of heritage and its "critical appropriation". Gor'kii widens the scope decisively from literature in the modern European sense of the word to "literature" as an anthropological factum and as such – once again – as a tool to unite mankind as a whole.[6] With regard to the function of literature in human culture in general, Gor'kii removes cultural borders that he defines as a symptom of bourgeois capitalism, as an instrument of classification on a scale of cultural values, e.g. between European literatures (including Russian literature) and the literatures of Soviet national minorities or between highbrow literature and folklore, and therefore as the origin of colonial oppression or conflict. On the one hand, Gor'kii by means of this argument paves the way for including folklore and folk epics into the literary heritage of nations (who cannot yet build on their own literary heritage in the modern European sense of the word):

> Я снова обращаю ваше внимание, товарищи, на тот факт, что наиболее глубокие и яркие, художественно совершенные типы героев созданы фольклором, устным творчеством трудового народа. [I again call your attention, comrades, to the fact that folklore, i.e., the unwritten compositions of tolling man, has created the most profound, vivid, and artistically perfect types of heroes.] (Gor'kii 1934, 8)

And further:

> Но тот же фольклор в наши дни возвел Владимира Ленина на высоту мифического героя древности, равного Прометею. Миф – это вымысел. Вымыслить – значит извлечь из суммы реально данного основной его смысл и воплотить в образ, – так мы получили реализм. Но если к смыслу извлечений из реально данного добавить – домыслить, по логике гипотезы, – желаемое, возможное и этим еще дополнить образ, – получим тот романтизм, который лежит в основе мифа и высоко полезен тем, что способствует возбуждению революционного отношения к действительности, – отношения, практически изменяющего мир.

6 Cf. "Культура капитализма – не что иное, как система приемов физического и морального расширения и укрепления власти буржуазии над миром, […] [The bourgeoisie has never had any proclivity towards the creation of culture […] The culture of capitalism is nothing but a system of methods aimed at the physical and moral expansion and consolidation of the power of the bourgeoisie over the world […]] (Gor'kii 1934, 7).

> Буржуазное общество, как мы видим, совершенно утратило способность вымысла в искусстве. [But […] folklore in our days has raised Vladimir Lenin to the level of a mythical hero of ancient times, equal to Prometheus. Myth is invention. To invent means to extract from the sum of a given reality its cardinal idea and embody it in imagery – that is how we got realism. But if to the idea extracted from the given reality we add – completing the idea, by the logic of hypothesis – the desired, the possible, and thus supplement the image, we obtain that romanticism which is at the basis of myth and is highly beneficial in that it tends to provoke a revolutionary attitude to reality, an attitude that changes the world in a practical way.] (Gor'kii 1934, 10)

On the other hand, Gor'kii never dismisses the temporal, historical, and teleological implications of his point of view. Replacing the "international of the spirit" with the notion of "mankind as a single family", and abolishing the borders between the literatures of different nations, small and large, dominant and minor, and declaring Soviet literature to be "not only literature in the Russian language, but All-Union literature", Gor'kii obviously maintains a temporal/historical perspective that, in accordance with the European romanticist model of literature, implicates teleology and therefore hierarchy:

> […] советская литература не является только литературой русского языка, это – всесоюзная литература. Так как литераторы братских нам республик, отличаясь от нас только языком, живут и работают при свете и под благотворным влиянием той же идеи, объединяющей весь раздробленный капитализмом мир трудящихся, – ясно, что мы не имеем права игнорировать литературное творчество нацменьшинств только потому, что нас больше. Ценность искусства измеряется не количеством, а качеством. Если у нас в прошлом – гигант Пушкин, отсюда еще не значит, что армяне, грузины, татары, украинцы и прочие племена не способны дать величайших мастеров литературы, музыки, живописи, зодчества. Не следует забывать, что на всем пространстве Союза Социалистических Республик быстро развивается процесс возрождения всей массы трудового народа "к жизни честной – человеческой", к свободному творчеству новой истории, к творчеству социалистической культуры. [Soviet literature is not merely a literature of the Russian language. It is an All-Union literature. Since the literatures of our fraternal republics, distinguished

> from ours only by language, live and work in the light and under the wholesome influence of the same ideas which unite the whole world of the working people that capitalism has torn asunder, we obviously have no right to ignore the literary creation of the national minorities simply because there are more of us than of them. The value of art is gauged not by quantity but by quality. If we can point to such a giant as Pushkin in our past history, it does not follow from this that the Armenians, Georgians, Tatars, Ukrainians, and other peoples are incapable of producing great masters of literature, music, painting and architecture. It should be remembered that the process by which the entire mass of the toiling people is being re-born to "honest human life", to the free creation of a new history, to the creation of a socialist culture, is developing rapidly throughout the length and breadth of the Union of Socialist Republics.] (Gor'kii 1934, 15)

Moreover, Gor'kii, in a rhetorically quite sophisticated way, removes the border between himself, the speaker and the Russian authority among the writers at the Congress, and the writers from national minorities. Gor'kii only pretends to give a voice to the representative of a minority, as if he lets the "subaltern speak" and lets them make a plea for cultural recognition in the reading community of the Union. In fact, he makes use of the most paternalistic rhetorical device ever:

> Я нахожу нужным сообщить вам, товарищи, письмо, полученное мною от одного татарского литератора: […] советско-пролетарская художественная литература на русском языке уже перестает быть литературой исключительно людей, говорящих на русском языке и имеющих русское происхождение, а постепенно приобретает интернациональный характер и по своей форме. Этот важный исторический процесс выдвигает на первый план совершенно неожиданные новые задачи и новые требования. К величайшему сожалению, это понимают не все писатели, критики и редакторы. Поэтому так называемая апробированная литературная общественность в центре продолжает смотреть на нас как на "этнографический экспонат". Не все издательства принимают нас к изданию с охотой. Некоторые частенько дают понять при приеме рукописи, что мы являемся для них "накладным расходом" или "принудительным ассортиментом", что они "сознательно делают скидку национальной политике партии". Эти "мины благородства" вполне справедливо оскорбляют в нас чувство интернационального единства и сознание полноценного человека. […] Нам же весьма

> естественно хотелось бы услышать о своих достижениях, если таковые имеются, о недочетах и ошибках (которых у нас больше, чем у других), чтобы их изжить их дальнейшем, хотелось бы стать доступными массовому читателю. [I deem it needful, comrades, to communicate to you a letter I have received from a Tatar writer: […] Soviet proletarian literature in the Russian language is already ceasing to be the exclusive literature of Russian speaking people and people of Russian origin and is gradually acquiring an international character even in its form. This important historical process advances new and unexpected problems and new demands. It is highly regrettable that not all writers, critics and editors understand this. That is why so-called approved literary opinion in the great centres continues to regard us as an "ethnographical exhibit". Not all publishing houses like to print us. Some of them often make us feel, when taking our manuscripts, that we are "overhead charges" or a "compulsory quota" for them, that they are "deliberately allowing a rebate on the Party's national policy". These "noble gestures" quite justly offend our sense of international unity and feeling of human dignity […]. We very naturally would like to hear about our achievements, if any, about our shortcomings and errors (of which we have more than others), so as to be able to avoid them in future and we should like to become accessible to the mass reader.] (Gor'kii 1934, 15)

Indirectly, the question of heritage is also touched upon when Gor'kii discusses realism. Again, his argumentation switches from an anthropological perspective (which corresponds to the above mentioned spatial/global perspective) to a dialectical-materialist one. In accordance with Lenin's concept of critical assimilation of heritage, Gor'kii explains that, on the one hand, Soviet writers should appreciate the achievements of bourgeois critical realism, and, on the other hand, they should make use of them for different – socialist – purposes. Therefore, instead of dismissing them as worthless, they should build up on them by exemplifying the new socialist life through socialist heroes:

> Отнюдь не отрицая широкой огромной работы критического реализма, высоко оценивая его формальные достижения в искусстве живописи, словом, мы должны понять, что этот реализм необходим нам только для освещения пережитков прошлого, для борьбы с ними, вытравливания их. Но эта форма реализма не послужила и не может служить воспитанию социалистической индивидуальности, ибо – все критикуя – ничего не утверждала или же – в худших

> случаях – возвращалась к утверждению того, что ею же отрицалось. Социалистическая индивидуальность, как мы видим на примере наших героев труда, которые являются цветением рабочей массы, – социалистическая индивидуальность может развиваться только в условиях коллективного труда, поставившего перед собою высочайшую и мудрую цель освобождения трудящихся всего мира из-под искажающей людей власти капитализма. Социалистический реализм утверждает бытие как деяние, как творчество, цель которого – непрерывное развитие ценнейших индивидуальных способностей человека. [Without in any way denying the broad, immense work of critical realism, and while highly appreciating its formal achievements in the art of word painting, we should understand that this realism is necessary to us only for throwing light on the survivals of the past, for fighting them, and extirpating them. But this form of realism did not and cannot serve to educate socialist individuality, for in criticising everything, it asserted nothing, or else, at the worst, reverted to an assertion of what it had itself repudiated. Socialist individuality, as exemplified by our heroes of labour, who represent the flower of the working class, can develop only under conditions of collective labour, which has set itself the supreme and wise aim of liberating the workers of the whole world from the man-deforming power of capitalism. Life, as asserted by socialist realism, is deeds, creativeness, the aim of which is the uninterrupted development of the priceless individual faculties of man […].] (Gor'kii 1934, 17)

When once in the whole speech the word "inherit" is used explicitly, it relates to an idea that encompasses all of humankind:

> […] впервые за всю жизнь человечества дети являются наследниками не денег, домов и мебели родителей, а наследниками действительной и могущественной ценности – социалистического государства, созданного трудом отцов и матерей. [Children for the first time in the whole life of mankind are now not the inheritors of their parents' money, houses, and furniture, but of a real and mighty fortune – a socialist state created by the labour of their fathers and mothers.] (Gor'kii 1934, 15)

In fact, "mankind" – figuring seven times in the speech – is the range of Gor'kii's perspective. The implications of Soviet literature as *world* literature resonate thrice: First, in a spatial, global perspective when Gor'kii underlines its "international dimension" (cf. above); second, in

the temporal perspective mentioned above; and, third, when he defines the aim of socialist realism as "обработать всю [землю] как прекрасное жилище человечества, объединенного в одну семью" [transforming the earth into a home for the whole mankind that will be united into one family] (Gor'kii 1934, 15).

During the following week, Gor'kii's speech was followed by a huge number of contributions to the All-unions writers Congress delivered by representatives – writers as well as critics, "apparatchiks", editors, and translators – of Russian literature and of most of "national" Soviet literatures, not only representatives of every single republic of the Soviet Union, but also from many autonomous regions. Furthermore, most of the 40 international participants of the Congress gave speeches as well. In general, one can observe that "heritage" and the question of how to deal with it was a key issue in nearly every single speech; nearly every single speech attempted to legitimate literature from the pre-revolutionary period as valuable heritage and underlined the importance of "critical appropriation" in order to make use of the inheritance as "treasure" and transform it into an instrument to build a bright future. In contrast to Russian speakers and speakers from abroad whose focus was mostly on "world literature", the representatives of Soviet national minorities first of all aimed at defining national literary heritage.[7] Many of them made use of Gor'kii's elimination of the border between highbrow literature and folklore when they referred to folk epics and folklore as an important part of national literary heritage. Most of them refer to yet another point of Gor'kii's speech directly or indirectly and develop it further: the romanticist ideal of the national poet modelled after Pushkin in Russian literature.[8] Accordingly, each Soviet national literature should find its very own Pushkin in order to give the modern national literature a founding father, and its canon a centre. In every single speech of the representatives of national minorities we can observe the attempt to underline the functional equivalence of one author of the (first half of the) nineteenth

7 Regardless of their position in the new institutional apparatus, almost none of them survived Stalin's purges between 1937–1940.

8 See above again: "If we can point to such a giant as Pushkin in our past history, it does not follow from this that the Armenians, Georgians, Tatars, Ukrainians, and other peoples are incapable of producing great masters of literature, music, painting and architecture" (Gor'kii 1934, 15).

century and to emphasise his significance as founding father of modern national literature. In the case of Georgian literature, this is Ilya Chavchavadze. In the case of Armenian literature, it is Khachatur Abovyan; and in the case of Azerbaijani literature, Mirza Fatali Akhundov, to give only a few examples.

What can be observed here is the nucleus of the model after which the textbook-canons of Soviet national literatures were built: each national literature with its own Pushkin-equivalent as founding father. And if possible, a direct connection in the sense of a personal relation between the national founding father and Pushkin as his model would be elaborated. Interestingly, this Soviet invention of Soviet national literary history did not grow from zero, because each of these founding figures of the nineteenth century had already pursued a national project during their lifetime. In fact, each of them attempted to realise the project of founding a modern European style national literature, and each of them had been canonised before as a national founding father in the context of the Russian Empire. However, the Soviet project of multinational literature now brought them together, started to homogenise them as much as possible under one institutional umbrella, and – as we can see today – succeeded in implementing the programme with impressive sustainability.

2

In the mid 1930s, Paris would be the second place where world literature was conceptualised as world heritage. Less than a year after the Soviet Congress the Association for the Defence of Culture (*Association internationale des écrivains pour la défense de la culture*), which was founded as a successor of AEAR (*Association des écrivain et artistes révolutionnaires*), organised its "First International Congress in Defence of Culture" (in June 1935) with 320 participants from 38 countries in response to the threat to world culture presented by fascism. As Katerina Clark put it: "The mantra at the Congress in Paris was 'world literature'" (2011, 178). However, judging by the list of preferred topics of choice, *héritage culturel* [cultural heritage] comes first.

André Malraux, who at the Moscow Congress had received the most attention among the international speakers, was one of the main

organisers of this Congress (together with his friend Ilya Ėrenburg).[9] From the annotation of the congress "Pour la défense de la culture" ("Pour la culture" 1935, 1201) and Malraux's frequent speeches at the congress, it becomes obvious that Malraux was one of the leading voices in this context. In his point of view, literature as heritage gains a different meaning. Malraux states:

> Un œuvre d'art, c'est un objet. Mais c'est aussi une rencontre avec le temps. […] il y a un sens à se grand mouvement. Art, pensées, poèmes, tous les vieux rêves humains, si nous avons besoin d'eux pour vivre, ils ont besoins de nous pour revivre. [It is all a question of time – if art, ideas, poems – if the human being still really needs all these ancient dreams – then it is our duty to revive them. […] creating us, we create them. Ronsard revives Ancient Greece, Racine – Rome, Hugo – Rabelais, Corot – Vermeer.] (Malraux 1935, 1265)[10]

And he continues: "Un œuvre d'art, c'est une possibilité de réincarnation" [A work of art is the possibility of reincarnation] (Malraux 1935, 1266 or 1996, 124) and "L'homme n'est pas soumis à son heritage, c'est son heritage qui lui est soumis: Ce n'est pas l'Antiquité qui a fait la Renaissance, c'est la Renaissance qui a fait l'Antiquité" [man is not the slave of heritage, he is its master. It was not antiquity that brought forth Renaissance, but Renaissance that created ancient art] (Malraux 1996, 141).[11] Malraux uses the metaphor of conquest that already fig-

9 The co-organisers were Jean-Richard Bloch (another participant of the Moscow Congress), Paul Nizan, and, from the Soviet side, Mikhail Kol'tsov, whom Ėrenburg and Malraux chose as the leader of the Russian delegation. However, judging from the ideas and the concept in the form of texts, the leading role of Malraux cannot be overlooked. Boris Frezinskii suggested that it was Ėrenburg who had the idea for the Congress in Paris (1998, 166–239).

10 "[…] il y a un sens à se grand mouvement. Art, pensées, poèmes, tous les vieux rêves humains, si nous avons besoin d'eux pour vivre, ils ont besoins de nous pour revivre" (Malraux 1996, 123).

11 Today, this sounds rather like an anticipation of reception theory. Interestingly, though, Hans-Robert Jauss (1970) referred to Malraux only once and among others in his *Literary History as a Challenge* in footnote no. 6 : "This view of the dialogue-like nature of a literary work of art is found in Malraux (Les vois du silence) as well as in Picon, Nisin, and Guiette – a tradition of literary aesthetics which is still alive in France and to which I am especially indebted; it finally goes back to a famous sentence in Valery's poetics, "C'est l'execution du poeme qui est le poeme".

ured in his speech at the Moscow Congress of 1934, when he now states: "L'héritage ne se transmet pas, il se conquiert" [You don't receive heritage, it has to be conquered] (Malraux 1935, 1265)[12] – a sentence, Malraux repeated time and again in his subsequent statements and essays.

In Paris in 1935, Malraux resumes:

> […] il s'agit pour chacun de nous de recréer dans son domaine propre […] pour tous ceux qui cherches eux-mêmes, l'héritage de fantômes qui nous environne – d'ouvrir les yeux de toutes les statues aveugles – et de faire, d'éspoirs en volonté et de jacqueries en révolutions, la conscience humaine avec la douleur millénaire des hommes. [[…] it's a matter of each of us recreating in our own domain [...] for all those who seek themselves, the heritage of ghosts that surrounds us – of opening the eyes of all blind statues – and of making, from hopes to will and from jacqueries to revolutions, human consciousness with the millennial pain of men.] (Malraux 1935, 1266 or 1996, 124)

When Malraux uses the word "conquer" it may seem a metaphorical equivalent for "critical appropriation" – and that's how the Soviet colleagues understood him, but in Malraux' Paris speech it becomes clear that "to conquer the heritage" is meant in a much broader sense: It refers to art and literature of all periods of cultural history and to the practice of reception in general, a creative practice that some decades afterwards has been described by the so-called reception or reader response theory (e.g. Hans-Robert Jauss), and even later by the theory of intertextuality (e.g. Renate Lachmann).

In 1935, the Soviet colleagues appreciated Malraux's statements.[13] Intending to forward the agenda of the "Defence of Culture", Malraux

12 And he continues: "Soviet comrades […] we do not only expect from you to worship the classics whom you managed to rescue through blood, typhus and hunger, but to urge them to show us their faces in new transfiguration" (Malraux 1935, 1265–1266). This speech has been reprinted in the Gallimard edition of Malraux's critical essays (Malraux 1996).

13 In terms of institutions, the Association for the Defence of Culture (*Association Internationale des Écrivains pour la Défense de la Culture*) – following Koltsov's suggestion – superseded MORP (International Union of Revolutionary Writers) and lead to the foundation of the Foreign Commission of the Writers Union, headed by Koltsov, which at the time became an "extremely powerful organization on the cultural horizon and in status above VOKS" (Clark 2011, 179). Mal-

travelled to Moscow for the second time in March 1936. Together with Isaak Babel' and Mikhail Kol'tsov – both of them participants of the Paris Congress – Malraux visited Gor'kii on the Crimea to introduce his ideas on "heritage". Even then it turned out to be a huge and international encyclopaedic project – the idea Malraux later on named "Musée imaginaire" [Imaginary Museum]. Malraux wanted Bukharin to be the coordinator for the Russian participation, and – as we can see from a letter to Romain Rolland (cf. Frezinskii 2013) – Gor'kii agreed.[14] Ėrenburg was more sceptical about Malraux's project, but appreciated it as well.[15] After Malraux's return to Paris, the international office of the Soviet Writers Association kept in close touch with him and forwarded him the collected newspaper articles and reviews about his visit to Moscow.[16] Three months later, Malraux called members of the Association of Writers "For the Defence of Culture" to a further meeting in London. The speech he gave there on 21 June 1936 was titled programmatically "Sur l'héritage culturel" [On the cultural heritage] (Malraux 1996, 136):

> La tradition artistique d'une nation est un fait. Mais la soumission des œuvres à l'idée d'une tradition repose sur un malentendu. La force convaincante d'une œuvre n'est nullement dans la totalité, elle est dans la différence entre elle et les œuvres qui l'ont précédée. […] Juger d'une œuvre par rapport à une tradition est donc toujours ju-

raux's novel *Le temps du mépris* [*Days of Wrath*] came out in Ėrenburg's translation in the journal *Znamia* (Vol. 8, 1935).

14 Frezinskij quotes from a letter by Gor'kii to Romain Rolland: "Был у меня Мальро. Человек, видимо, умный, талантливый. Мы с ним договорились до некоторых практических затей, которые должны будут послужить делу объединения европейской интеллигенции для борьбы против фашизма" [Recently, Malraux came by. Apparently a clever, talented man. We agreed with him on some practical ideas that would serve the cause of uniting the European intelligentsia to fight against fascism] (2008, 420).

15 „Эренбург Кольцову 5 апреля 1936: 'Мальро вернулся в хорошей форме и взялся за работу. Я не очень-то верю в предприятие с энциклопедией — боюсь, что трудно будет преодолеть марксистскофобию англичан и двух третей наших французов. Но посмотрим, как развернется дело'" [Ėrenburg wrote to Koltsov on April 5, 1936: "Malraux has returned in good shape and has taken up his work. I don't have much faith in the enterprise with the encyclopedia – I'm afraid it will be difficult to overcome the Marxist phobia of the English and two-thirds of our French. But we'll see how things unfold"] (Frezinskii 2008, 420).

16 Frezinskii reports about 46 articles (2013, 449).

> ger d'une différence par rapport à une suite de totalités ; et que cette suite de totalités existe ne laisse en rien préjuger de la façon dont les conquêtes qui font la vie de l'art contemporain qui nous entoure s'ordonneront par rapport à elles. [A nation's artistic tradition is a fact. But the submission of works to the idea of tradition is based on a misunderstanding. The convincing force of a work lies not in its totality, but in the difference between it and the works that preceded it. […] To judge a work in relation to a tradition is therefore always to judge a difference in relation to a series of totalities; and the fact that this series of totalities exists in no way prejudges the way in which the conquests that make up the life of contemporary art around us will be ordered in relation to them.] (Malraux 1996, 133)

> […] les idéologies fascistes, par leur nature même, sont des idéologies permanentes et particulières. Libéralisme et communisme s'opposent […] Notre première ligne de démarcation, […] me parait celle-ci : dans le mouvement qui porte vers un nombre de plus en plus grand d'hommes les œuvres d'art et les connaissances, nous entendons maintenir ou recréer, non des valeurs permanentes et particulières, mais de valeurs dialectiques et humanistes. Humanistes parce que universalistes. Parce que, mythe pour mythe, nous ne voulons ni l'Allemagne, ni le Germain, ni l'Italien, ni le Romain, mais l'homme. [[…] fascist ideologies, by their very nature, are permanent and particular ideologies. Liberalism and communism are opposed. […] Our first line of demarcation [...] seems to me to be this: in the movement that brings works of art and knowledge to an ever-increasing number of people, we intend to maintain or recreate, not permanent and particular values, but dialectical and humanist values. Humanist because universalist. Because, myth for myth, we want neither the German, nor the Germanic, nor the Italian, nor the Roman, but the human.] (Malraux 1996, 139)

While translatability is the premise for the implementation of the Soviet programme as an instrument of transregional education and community-building, the premise of Malraux's encyclopaedic project of an "Imaginary museum" – whose aim is education as well – is another type of translatability: technical reproduction and photographical representation of artworks. In contrast to Walter Benjamin whose famous

article he read right from the printing press, Malraux does not care about "aura", but appreciates reproducibility instead.[17]

In 1946, Malraux was one of the first among the French intellectuals who engaged in the activities of the newly founded United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In 1946, he organised a UNESCO conference in Paris on the topic "L'homme et la culture artistique" [Man and artistic culture]. The same year, he took the position of a "directeur" responsible for matters of documentation, translation, and publication.[18] It is certain that Malraux was again one of the initiators when the UNESCO project "Collection UNESCO d'œuvres représentatives" [UNESCO collection of representative works] started in 1948, aiming to reflect the varied pattern of the world literary heritage, including modern literature, by offering works of different kinds and genres ranging from sagas, legends, epic poems and epics to modern poetry, drama, novels, and so on.[19] The aim of the project was to encourage and provide financial support for "the translation, publication and distribution in the major languages – English, French, Spanish and Arabic – of works of literary and cultural importance that are not well known outside their original national boundaries or linguistic communities"; however, this cannot be seen but as a Western counterpart of what Gor'kii had aimed at because the UNESCO project would not contain the ideologically based aim to arrange everything along a teleologically vectored historical axis.

17 George Didi-Huberman writes: "Unlike for Walter Benjamin, for André Malraux the issue is not some general 'decline of the aura' in art but, rather, a matter of using photography to return the aura to all of men's other creations, so that Gallic coins might compete with a medieval tympanum and a terra cotta statue with a bronze Colossus" (2015, 17; cf. also Kaschuba 2008.

18 Cf. Maurel on the history of the UNESCO from 1945 to 1974 (2006, 49).

19 Torsten Andreasen states in this context: "Malraux had a profound influence on UNESCO, e.g. via numerous speeches from 1936 even until twenty years after his death where UNESCO played a recording of a 1960 speech of his in his honour" (2015, 89). He goes on to quote a document from UNESCO: "Mr Malraux, who praised the 'act by which man snatches something from death,' formulated for the first time the concept of the universality of cultural heritage, which thereafter would stand at the heart of UNESCO's actions in the field of culture" (2015, 79).

3

It was in the same years that another think tank of world literature emerged in Istanbul, at the edge of Europe, where the same programmatic concepts of *world literature* and *the world* in terms of universalist *humanism* and *heritage* – albeit implicitly in the concept of *translatio* – were used as tools to confront Nazi ideology and nationalism. However, compared to the Soviet approach and Malraux's take who both took translatability as a precondition for appropriating world heritage, the German expatriates Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach problematised translation fundamentally. As scholars in Roman literatures including Latin, Spitzer and Auerbach diagnosed language unification as a strategy of *translatio imperii*. In his *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, Auerbach argues that after imperial decline, written Latin endured as a language of law and religion because "there was no other written language and because it had long served, with the same homogeneity and the same conservatism as the specialized language of the various branches of public life" (Auerbach 1965, 252).[20]

Several years later, another expert in Romanic philology, Hugo Friedrich – following Spitzer and Auerbach – described the translation practice in the Roman Empire (especially from the Greek) that Saint Jerome defined as "conquest" and at the same time as "the liberation of the imprisoned thought content"[21] as "one of the most rigorous manifestations of Latin cultural and linguistic imperialism, which despises the foreign Word as something alien but appropriates the foreign meaning in order to dominate it through the translator's own language" (Apter 2003, 273). This perspective corresponds to Sheldon Pollock's juxtaposition of Latin and Sanskrit "cosmopolis", where Pollock likewise diagnoses the Roman strategy to build up the Latin

20 Emily Apter speculates that Turkey's self-colonising policy of *translatio imperii* and the brutal standardisation of modern Turkish afforded Auerbach compelling parallels to imperial Rome and inspired his article.

21 Hugo Friedrich continues: "[…] the translator considers thought content a prisoner (*quasi captivossensus*) which he transplants into his own language with the prerogative of a conqueror (*iurevictoris*)" (1992, 13).

cosmopolis as imperial "conquest" and "obliteration of all languages it found" (2006, 260).[22]

Delineating their own perspective on literature as a tool of intercultural communication and cultural heritage from the language politics and cultural politics of the Roman Empire, Spitzer and Auerbach would develop an approach that – as Emily Apter put it – was based on the notion of untranslatability. At the University of Istanbul,[23] they laid the groundwork for leading disciplinary developments in comparative literatures and – as Edward Said argued some decades later – postcolonial studies alike.[24] Insisting on a position of universalist humanism – as the Soviets and the Paris conference did too – Spitzer with regard to language and translation and Auerbach with regard to modes of forging homogenised national literatures developed an approach of "transnational humanism" that did not dismiss translation in general, but that instead of "appropriation", which they rejected, understood it as a tool of coming closer and making the untranslatable visible at the same time.[25]

22 Sheldon Pollock further writes: "Latin traveled where it did as the language of a conquest state, and wherever it traveled—Iberia, North Africa, the Near East—it obliterated the languages it found" (2006, 260).

23 After being dismissed from his chair in Marburg, Leo Spitzer came to Istanbul in 1930. Erich Auerbach who had replaced him in Marburg followed and joined him in 1936 until Spitzer left Turkey for the US in 1937. He became a professor at Johns Hopkins. Auerbach stayed in Istanbul where he wrote his famous book on realism, *Mimesis*, and migrated to the US after the war.

24 Cf. Emily Apter on "Global Translatio" as "the 'Invention' of Comparative Literature" (2003).

25 Ernst Müller suggests a direct reference of Auerbach's concept of realism – which he developed during the years in Istanbul – to Görgy Lukacs and the Soviet concept of socialist realism (2007, 268–280.) Auerbach and Lukacs, both Jewish intellectuals who prior to becoming philologists were urged by their families to study law. Both would later develop a thesis on century-long developments of realism. Symptomatically, Auerbach wrote an article on the difficulty of drawing a fine line between romanticism and realism in 1933, whereas Gor'kii in 1934 conceptualised socialist realism as incorporating moments of romanticism. Cf. Auerbach 1933.

In Conclusion

By juxtaposing Gorkii's and the Soviet, Malraux's and Spitzer/Auerbach's approaches – an attempt that, strangely enough, has never been made before – I have tried to demonstrate some common features as well as some crucial differences between their competing approaches to world literature – common features and differences that became all the more important since all three approaches have laid the ground for three different and very sustainable traditions of dealing with world literature as cultural heritage of global reach.

First of all, the task to protect world culture against the threat of fascism was their common point of departure. Secondly, all three of them understood world literature (as well as world culture) as humankind's common heritage that has to be cultivated and kept alive and open for everybody by ways of appropriating and communicating it. Thirdly and accordingly, all three of them claimed for themselves a position of universalist humanism for which world literature is estimated as one of the most important symbols and tools to propagate it. However, in the way they forged the canon of world literature and then in the way they dealt with translation as the most important instrument of dissemination the significant differences emerge that in the end make them not partners but competitors in their claim on the heritage of world literature.

As we have seen from Gor'kii's approach (in two steps, 1918 and 1934) and the operative formula "critical appropriation/assimilation" as used extensively in the context of the All-union Writers Congress in 1934, the notion of "heritage" in the Soviet context of the 1930s was ideologically of the same range as "(socialist) realism" and the understanding of the writer as "the engineer of human souls". "Heritage" was the instrument at hand to lay claim to the canon of world literature and – under the umbrella of Russian literature and through translation into Russian – to expand the canons of (Soviet) literatures alike. The Soviet concept of *appropriation of world heritage* can be understood in accordance with the old imperial notion of "translatio" – the idea of inheriting domination over the world by transferring its centre from one place to another and legitimising the claim ideologically. Through its claim to humanism, Soviet culture/literature – that will potentially be able to include all emerging socialist literatures, as well as those be-

yond the borders of the Soviet Union – is conceived as the only legitimate heir of world literature.

As we have seen, Malraux elaborated on all main aspects of the Soviet approach in a way that could be understood as aligned with the Soviet concept, but in fact his words and terms pointed in a somewhat different direction. His metaphors of "conquest" certainly correspond to "appropriation of heritage", but Malraux accentuates the creative and inventive aspect of appropriation rather than the notion of the political. In contrast to the Soviet programme, Malraux shifts the emphasis away from literature and concentrates on art in general. From his point of view, therefore, translation, which forms the basis for access to world literature and culture for everyone, thus takes on a further media aspect: Malraux's idea/project for the "Musée imaginaire" that should provide open access to world art heritage to everybody, wherever on the globe they may be, was based on technical reproduction. Therefore, despite all metaphors of combat and conquest, Malraux's approach cannot be considered imperial in the sense of *translatio imperii*. Shortly after WW II, Malraux, who was Minister of Culture under president de Gaulle, became one of the initiators of UNESCO and its concept of *World Heritage*. However, after the UNESCO World Heritage Convention of 1972, the notion of heritage completely changed; instead, creative "conquest" would be based on protection of "authenticity" and "diversity" from now on. However, Malraux's idea of the "Musée imaginaire", which is based on the premise of intermedial translatability, somehow survived. In current research, it is considered a forerunner of the idea of the digital cultural heritage (Andreasen 2015).

Finally, opposing the Latin imperial take that they analysed, Auerbach and Spitzer "established an ethics of textual autonomy" (Apter 2003, 281) and an "ethics for the language of the original" that should "find each other freely […] even at the risk of failure and shock [and] should not be surrendered to translations" (Apter 2003, 281). But both Auerbach and Spitzer alike strove to maintain universalist humanism. As Emily Apter puts it: "The practice of global *translatio* as Spitzer defined it is patterned after untranslatable affective gaps, the nub of intractable semantic difference, episodes of violent cultural transference and countertransference, and unexpected love affairs. In retrospect, Spitzer's invention of comparative literature in Istanbul transformed

philology into something recognizable today as the psychic life of transnational humanism" (2003, 281).

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Susanne Klengel

Latin American Literature and the UNESCO: Towards a Humanist Inclusive Concept of World Literature after 1945

> L'Europe des villes-spectres n'est pas plus ravagée que l'idée qu'elle s'était faite de l'homme. [The Europe of ghost towns is no more devastated than the idea it had built up of man.]
>
> André Malraux (1947, 128/131)

> Para el mundo que va naciendo, entre ruinas, sollozos y bombardeos, metralla y muerte, miseria y sangre, estamos todos, todos los escritores, todos los artistas, todos los pensadores, obligados a imaginar un vivir mejor. [For the world that is emerging, amidst ruins, weeping and bombardment, amidst shrapnel and death, misery and blood, all of us, writers, artists, thinkers, are obliged to imagine a better living.]
>
> Jaime Torres Bodet ([1945] 1977, 50)

1 Matters of Concern After the Disaster – Towards a New Humanism

Looking back at the process of cultural reconstruction of devastated worlds after the two World Wars of the twentieth century is perhaps a useful task and lesson in 2024, in view of the new and terrible battlefields in Eastern Europe and the Near East. We come across agendas, projects and concepts whose 'healing' and community-building function often seems forgotten today or is considered something so self-evident that only a conscientious re-examination reveals the great energy that individuals, collectives and institutions had invested in their

commitment for a 'better world' after the catastrophe.[1] The following article focuses on the cultural reconstruction after the Second World War and, above all, on the power to unite peoples and nations that from many sides and especially within the framework of UNESCO was attributed to Literature, or rather *the* literatures of the world.

In the years right after the end of the war, individuals from diverse backgrounds agreed on the urgency of rebuilding the world, after the abysses of barbarism, not only in material and political terms, but also culturally, in order to contribute to its 'healing' and moral restoration. They worked collectively across national borders, often with great personal dedication, to achieve these goals; people and institutions regarded this as an indispensable 'humanist commitment'. In the face of massive death on the battlefields and in civilian areas, in the face of genocide and of the atomic bombs, there was intense reflection on 'man', on mankind and humanity. An appeal from all quarters for a 'new humanism' as well as many philanthropic and educational initiatives give evidence of this deep shock. To use Bruno Latour's words, the cultural reconstruction motivated by humanism was undeniably a 'matter of concern' – it was of *existential* relevance.[2]

The multi-voiced humanist appeal expresses a *collective* knowledge and united commitment to similar aspirations, even if prominent positions, such as that of Jean Paul Sartre, understand humanism from the perspective of the single, self-constituting subject thrown back on

1 Such a thought-provoking approach is offered, for example, by the comprehensive, multi-faceted catalogue of the exhibition *Postwar: Art between the Pacific and the Atlantic 1945–1965* (Enwezor et al. 2016), which took place at the Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2016/2017. The exhibition stood out in particular for its consistent look at the global interconnections of the post-war period, thus overcoming the conventional Europe-centred viewpoints. In my study (Klengel 2011), I pursued a similar goal in the field of intellectual history with a focus on Latin American perspectives.

2 In Bruno Latour's account, this formulation is admittedly used in a different context, namely in his critique of the 'bellicose' forms of academic criticism that focus only on the 'matters of fact' instead of the 'matters of concern', i.e. the matters that are actually deeply relevant for the world and the planet (Latour 2004a). However, Latour's article, for its part, is notable for its latently bellicose or aggressive discourse, a type of discourse he criticises for being 'divisive'. In my following remarks, I will consider the fragile situation of the post-war world as a 'matter of concern' in Latour's sense.

itself (cf. [1946] 1970). The multiplicity of *new actors*, who had no visible position in traditional European thought, is particularly responsible for the polyphony of this post-catastrophic humanist discourse; they will be intensively discussed in what follows.

The effort for cultural reconstruction and the attempt to orient humanist thinking as an enlargement of the classical humanist discourse of European tradition is still visible today in the self-image and activities of UNESCO, founded in 1946. It is therefore no surprise that around the year 2010, in view of the growing postcolonial awareness, these founding discourses were explicitly taken up again in order to rethink the concept of classical humanism, which was already under scrutiny in the 1940s. The *UNESCO Courier* wrote about a conference that had taken place sixty years earlier in Delhi:

> In 1951 […] UNESCO endorsed the idea of a *new holistic humanism*. The world was recovering from a terrible war that had sullied the myth of technological progress dominating Western culture. […] [The participants at the meeting] advocated a 'spiritual revolution' and 'common spiritual progress' calling for greater exchange between East and West. ("UNESCO in 2011" 2011, 2. Emphasis mine)

A meeting is then quoted which takes up the 'holistic' humanism. Again, the cosmopolitan dimension stands out, now especially with regard to relations between the "North" and the "South"[3]:

> "In the context of globalization […] this concept has to concentrate on cultural diversity, dialogue in the age of the Internet, and *reconciliation between the North and the South* […] The new humanism has to be an *authentically pluralist cosmopolitanism,* inspiring reflections and expressing aspirations *from everyone everywhere*." […] [T]he purpose of the new humanism is to "create a climate of empathy, belonging and understanding, along with the idea that progress with respect to human rights is never definitive and requires a constant effort of adaptation to the challenges of modernity. Those challenges cannot be met without ethical principles, which should be at the foundation of what was aptly coined 'a public realm of values'". ("UNESCO in 2011" 2011, 2. Emphasis mine)

3 My article will show that the Delhi Meeting 1951 is not only to be understood as a new constellation of Eastern and Western thinking, but also as a sign of new North-South or South-South constellations in cultural politics.

New specific publications underline this return to UNESCO's founding discourses. In the same year, for example, the objective of 'reconciling the North and the South' led to a remarkable publication entitled *Rabindrânâth Tagore, Pablo Neruda, Aimé Césaire: For a Reconciled Universal* (UNESCO 2011). It appeared open access in English, French and Spanish and declared three highly prominent poets and intellectuals of the Global South as models for representatives, mediators and ambassadors of a cosmopolitan, 'reconciling' thought. In her introduction, the Director General emphasises the urgency of tolerant coexistence under the banner of humanism in the face of persistent ethnocentrisms, social injustice, inequality and the threat to the planet caused by global warming:

> […] society has also made notable errors of judgment, especially those related to ethno-centricity and social injustice, which constitute the origins of intolerance and inequality. These tensions appear at the very moment when global development issues and global warming require us to reinforce our sense of unity and strengthen the *reconciliation of all the world's peoples*. Among so many diverse cultures, *how can we coordinate a 'living-together' ideal* that is both tolerant and humanist? On what basis *can we build a united human community* that is able to develop common responses to *global issues that concern us all*? (Bokowa 2011, 14. Emphasis mine)

According to Irina Bokova, Tagore, Neruda and Césaire, each in their own way as representatives of the Global South, had contributed by their intellectual vigilance to deepen the reflection on this new humanism and to promote a collective understanding of a 'united human community': "Their united struggle against rationales of dehumanization and oppression thrives on the understanding that no geographic area, no cultural sphere can grant itself the exclusive right to define what is common for all of us" (2011, 14).

This almost consensual humanist discourse from the founding years of UNESCO may today – after the years of the Cold War and in the face of violent dictatorships, new wars, numerous economic, nationalist and religious conflicts, in the face of expanding liberalism and capitalism, religious fundamentalisms, immense social inequalities and an increasingly worsening climate catastrophe – sometimes sound like the well-meaning rhetoric of unworldly philanthropists. This is precisely what Bruno Latour criticised his colleague and friend Ulrich

Beck for in 2004, when the latter spoke about peace perspectives in the face of the new wars after the terrorist attacks of 9 September 2001:

> [Ulrich] Beck appears to believe in a UNESCO koine, a sociological Esperanto, that lies hidden behind stubborn defects, whether social or psychological, in our representations. Men of good will, he would say, must agree that gods are no more than representations. […] "Humanity" was a great and welcome discovery and has been a great and welcome rediscovery each time that (after World War II, notably) it has come to prominence. And yet, if all the United Nations members were satisfied to be "just humans," if the UNESCO lingua franca was enough to define all inhabitants of the planet, peace would already reign. Since there is no peace, there must be something wrong with this humanistic definition of an emancipated human as the only acceptable member of the Club. (Latour 2004b, 456)

Instead, Latour urged a truly comprehensive 'cosmopolitics' beyond the rather 'inefficient' humanism. Without being able at this point to go deeper into Latour's thinking, one can confirm in the first place that, from his perspective, the anthropocentrism, the belief in reason and in goodwill that inform UNESCO's humanist discourse could indeed seem somewhat naïve and inadequate. Nevertheless, his post-anthropocentric critique fails, in my view, to recognise the historical complexity in which the world found itself after the Second World War. Concepts such as 'humanity' or 'humanism' were not only 'rediscovered' in the tradition of conventional humanist concepts but were examined and worked through from the perspective of a much wider world beyond Europe. Evidence of this can be found, for example, in the texts of the three poets in the above-mentioned UNESCO volume. But these very prominent voices[4] were not alone; rather, an impressive transnational community had come together to reflect on and participate in the cultural reconstruction, including countless participants

4 It should be noted that none of the three intellectuals were close to UNESCO in its founding years: Tagore had died in 1940; Neruda and Césaire, as communists, were rather distant from UNESCO. Nevertheless, the volume does seem plausible today in the line of thought advocated by UNESCO. The chapters focus on five themes: 1) poetry and art: a life force, 2) for a new pact of meaning between humanity and nature, 3) emancipation from oppression, in reciprocity and rights 4) knowledge, science and ethics 5) the educational issues (UNESCO 2011).

from the non-European world of the 'South'. It is therefore worthwhile to re-examine the founding discourses of UNESCO and to take a closer look at the ramifications of the much-invoked 'humanist' thinking. Instead of an abstract return to classical philosophical and philanthropic concepts and positions, one finds above all concrete and tangible reflections in response to the catastrophe of war, to the current situation of the world and with regard to the possibilities and conditions of survival in the various regions on earth. This new thinking was concerned with the possibilities of 'repairing' (or 'healing') a very fragile and endangered world in its entirety.[5]

Perhaps it is useful to imagine these diffuse post-war years as a 'hidden object picture', since the many historical pictures and constellations known today also include less visible scenarios that indicate drastic changes precisely in the relationship between the North and the South, between the (old European) centre and the (supposed) periphery, for which however no convincing descriptive criteria existed yet. One was confronted with a new kind of *community*, a transnational group of intellectuals who felt responsible for the cultural reconstruction of the world, and they did so as a matter of course. These persons had encountered, while visiting Europe, ruined landscapes, violence, hunger and misery and great moral disruption; they were aware of the question of racism after the genocide and of human rights and were thinking about forms of reconciliation and compensation. Their long-held images of Europe (and especially of a country like France with a traditional role model function, particularly for Latin America) were broken. Travelers and visitors translated their experiences, impressions,

5 With the terminology used here, I am intentionally alluding to positions of 'postcritique', which aims to supplement harsh academic 'analysis' (i.e. scholarly 'dissection' in a quite literal sense) with other type of 'critical reading' that is more 'reparative' (Sedgwick 2003) or more affective and generous (Felski 2015). Latour's plea (2004a) to take 'matters of concern' seriously plays an important role here. In the context of this article, the debates on this 'critique of critique' are helpful in order to consider the humanist discourses of the post-war period in all their complexity. They are sometimes judged all too quickly as 'idealistic' or 'ideological' (also by Latour himself!), but should be taken seriously (also emotionally) in order to counteract an oversimplified classification. At this point I also want to refer to the indigenous philosophical thinking that has recently received much attention, which goes in a similar direction of holistic critique and healing-oriented proposal (Krenak 2020).

reflections into diaries, letters, memoirs, reports and accounts, essays, photographs and other private or official documents. They reflected again and again on the possibilities of a future human coexistence in a palpably smaller, vulnerable world, in which the danger of a third World War began to loom with the smouldering Korean question. The new humanist discourse thus emerged from a huge multiplicity of perspectives, world views, cultural backgrounds and concepts, experiences and emotions, international institutions and resolutions against the powerful backdrop of an everyday life still palpably marked by the past World War.

2 Jaime Torres Bodet, UNESCO Director-General and Humanist: Towards a 'Pacified and Peaceful Community'

The humanist founding discourse of UNESCO was significantly shaped and promoted by a Mexican intellectual and representative of the non-European world of the *South*. The poet and politician Jaime Torres Bodet (1902–1974) had already been noticed with his committed speech at the preparatory conference in London in November 1945; in 1948 he was elected the second Director-General of UNESCO after the British biologist Julian Huxley. His central concern, to which he repeatedly referred, was the revision of the classical concept of humanism as a new basis for the UNESCO agenda. In his inaugural speech on 10 December 1948 in Beirut, his critique was directed at the European self-image built essentially on the basis of rationality: rationality, however, had advanced all the possibilities of technology, had appropriated and subjugated nature, but in so doing had in no way solved the problems of occidental civilisation. It could not prevent the backsliding into irrationalism, totalitarianism and cruelty. According to Torres Bodet, it was therefore absolutely urgent to rethink humanism by including other cultures and civilisations, to learn from them and to overcome classical humanism.

> Lo que debe hacerse, por tanto, sin sacrificar a la inteligencia, es integrarla armoniosamente con otras virtudes humanas que acaso de otras culturas extrañas a la nuestra podamos aprender. El humanismo clásico se encerró en otros tiempos en el Mediterráneo; el humanismo moderno no puede tener términos ni fronteras. [What must be done, therefore, without sacrificing human intelligence, is to

> integrate it harmoniously with other human virtues that we can perhaps learn from other cultures foreign to our own. Classical humanism was once confined to the Mediterranean; modern humanism must not have terms or frontiers.] (Torres Bodet [1948] 2005, 457–458)

Torres Bodet made similar remarks at the Delhi conference in 1951 mentioned at the beginning of this article, emphasising UNESCO's contribution to a "united pacified and peaceful community":

> La Unesco no es el órgano de una civilización particular, oriental ni occidental. […] [La Unesco] no tenderá nunca a aplicar un modo singular de civilización [...]; lo único que se propone es ayudar a que cada grupo se realice en su forma propia, intensificando, al mismo tiempo, su participación en una *comunidad humana pacificada y pacífica.* [UNESCO is not the body of a particular civilisation, Eastern or Western. [...] [UNESCO] will never seek to implement a particular mode of civilisation [...]; its only purpose is to help each group to realise itself in its own way, and at the same time to intensify their participation in *a pacified and peaceful human community.*] (Torres Bodet [1951] 1965, 270. Emphasis mine)

His speech was particularly well received in Latin America, where almost all states had joined UNESCO in its early years. This unanimity, Torres Bodet said at a Latin American cultural event in 1949, reflected the idea of the unity of the continent since the end of the colonial era, despite certain conflicts.[6] He emphasised a 'Latin American humanism' that respected people with their will to freedom and in their particularity, a humanism that was certainly aware of the classical European heritage but always open to other perspectives:

> [L]'Amérique latine n'entend pas en faire un monopole. Elle lui attribue un caractère universaliste et, l'établissant solidement sur l'axe de la primauté des valeurs humaines, elle l'offre à tous les peuples comme un instrument de communion sociale et d'élévation personnelle. [Latin America does not intend to make it a monopoly. It attributes to it a universalist character and, establishing it firmly on the

6 The relatively peaceful coexistence of Latin American nations with each other since the nineteenth century is also confirmed in more recent research, cf. Birle 2009.

> axis of the primacy of human values, offers it to all the peoples as an instrument of social communion and personal elevation.][7]

Latin American cultures do not dream of hegemony, says Torres Bodet; as freedom loving, independent nations they rather rely on solidarity and an international way of thinking, which is not least promoted by the idea of *latinité*. But this is only one aspect among others: "[L]e privilège de la culture latine est conçu, non comme l'unique ni comme la plus belle forme de la culture, mais comme l'une des harmoniques de l'humanisme" [The privilege of *latinité* is conceived, not as the only or the most beautiful form of culture, but as one of the harmonics of humanism].[8] According to Torres Bodet, the appeal of the Latin American members within the framework of UNESCO is primarily directed towards international cooperation to realise human rights and to strengthen the right to education and culture all over the world.

3 The Power of Literature to Reconcile Peoples: UNESCO's Translation Project

In this humanist UNESCO agenda, literature was emphatically given great significance. The notion here meant literary works of global origin whose reading, one could say, was considered to be a 'healing force' in the deeply troubled post-war world. A broad and inclusive concept of world literature was seen as an important instrument for establishing a 'united pacified and peaceful community' and it was based on the trust in the possibilities of literary and cultural translation and translatability.

In 1946, UNESCO launched a major project under the title 'Translation of the Classics'. However, the supposedly neutral term 'classic' was to lead to major conflicts in the following years, because it was used to refer involuntarily to the exemplary nature of Greco-Roman culture and its reception in European literatures. Little by little,

7 Séance de Clôture d'une décade sur l'Amérique Latine, 4 December 1949, UNESCO, Discours et allocutions du Directeur Général de l'Unesco (DG Jaime Torres Bodet) DG/52, 3.

8 Séance de Clôture d'une décade sur l'Amérique Latine, 4 December 1949, UNESCO, Discours et allocutions du Directeur Général de l'Unesco (DG Jaime Torres Bodet) DG/52, 5.

the term began to lose its normative meaning with regard to European antiquity's paradigmatic position as well as its claim to universality and eternal validity, and was replaced after a few years by less Eurocentric concepts. This conceptual revision was not self-evident – it was based on endless committed debates about the status of literary works from all over the world. Innumerable meetings of international experts, reports, resolutions and decisions show the deep complexity of this translation project, which had to constantly mediate not only between idealistic and pragmatic positions, but also with regard to the precarious cultural recognition of literatures in postcolonial contexts. In this important conceptual revision, which in fact had an epistemological dimension, the experts from Latin America played a central role.

In the following, these disputes will be described in more detail to visualise not only the abstract humanist discourse in the post-war period, on which everyone could quickly agree, but, more importantly, also the arduous march through the complex negotiation processes between numerous actors: government officials, international experts, UNESCO employees, translators, publishers, the general public and other institutions.

At their first General Assembly on 14 December 1946, the United Nations decided to carry out a comprehensive translation project of world literary classics and delegated this task to UNESCO. The project was international in scope and intended to contribute to the cultural development of nations and cultures. The term 'classic' did not refer to a culture or specific works, but rather to works of heterogeneous origin: "[Œ]uvres de toutes les nations ou de toutes les cultures que les autorités les plus qualifiées considèrent comme ayant une signification universelle et une valeur permanente." [Works of all nations or cultures which the most qualified authorities consider to be of universal significance and permanent value].[9] These works were believed to contribute effectively to peace and understanding between peoples and to establish a worldwide cultural community:

> [L]a traduction des classiques du monde entier dans les différentes langues des États Membres des Nations Unies favorisera la compré-

9 From the history of the project in the preparatory paper for the meeting of the "Comité international d'experts" of 21–25 November 1949, compiled on 15 November 1949, UNESCO, Documents PHS/ Conf.5/2, 1.

> hension mutuelle et la paix parmi les nations en créant une communauté de culture à laquelle pourront participer les peuples de tous les pays. [The translation of the classics of the world into the different languages of the Member States of the United Nations will promote mutual understanding and peace among nations by creating a community of culture in which the peoples of all countries can participate.][10]

As a result, UNESCO set up an office for the translation of the classics. In a first letter, the governments of the member states were asked for support. A questionnaire needed to be prepared with the help of qualified institutions and personalities.[11] Bolivia, Venezuela, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia were the first to respond receptively. The second General Conference of UNESCO in December 1947 in Mexico City decided to continue the project and provided the necessary budget. In May 1948, twenty experts from Latin America, China, France, Great Britain, India, Italy, the United States and Egypt gathered in Paris. The Latin American countries were represented by the poet and critic Roberto Ibáñez from Uruguay, the historian Jesús Silva Herzog from Mexico and the Brazilian diplomat and poet Antonio Dias Tavares Bastos.[12] The group intended to draw up two translation lists: Firstly, the 100 'best books' were to be made available to interested readers of all member states in a wide range of languages; secondly, works that were considered 'classics' in their countries of origin were to be translated into English and French in order to reach a very broad international audience. Furthermore,

10 From the history of the project in the preparatory paper for the meeting of the "Comité international d'experts" of 21–25 November 1949, compiled on 15 November 1949, UNESCO, Documents PHS/ Conf.5/2, 1.

11 Exposé "Translation of the World Classics", 1 July 1947 (Phil/7/1947), UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946-1956, 803 A 52 ("Translation of Literature – Surveys"). The questionnaire was finally sent out in 1948, probably in the version of 5 July 1948, UNESCO, Documents PHS/5.

12 Cf. Rapport de la Réunion du Comité d'Experts sur la Traduction des Classiques (18–22 May 1948), elaborated on 27 May 1948, UNESCO, Documents, PHS/Conf. 1/3, 1.

quality management, the choice of translators and questions of coordination, funding and international cooperation were discussed.[13]

The third General Conference of UNESCO in 1948, at which the former Minister of Education and Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Jaime Torres Bodet, was elected Director-General, proposed a groundbreaking concretisation of the project: In a first step, the Translation Project should concentrate on two cultural and linguistic regions in the sense of pilot projects and promote the visibility of both Arabic-language and Latin American literatures. In the case of Latin America, special reference was made to its marginal status in world literature: "Le Directeur Général a décidé d'accorder dans le plan général de traduction des classiques une priorité aux œuvres latino-américaines, trop peu connues en général dans le monde." [The Director General has decided to give priority in the general translation plan for the classics to Latin American works, which are generally not well known throughout the world].[14]

A first list of relevant Latin American works was compiled by the translation agency, after which experts in the respective countries were asked to review and add to it. The list included not only literary but also other texts in the humanities, as well as proposals for poetry anthologies.[15]

From 1949 onwards, it can be observed that the reports and protocols of the general project refer less and less to 'classics', but rather to 'grandes œuvres' / 'great books' or even 'masterpieces'. The translated works finally appeared from 1952 onwards as 'Œuvres Représentatives'. This terminological confusion is, as already mentioned, neither

13 Cf. preparatory paper for the meeting of the "Comité international d'Experts" of 21–25 November 1949, prepared on 15 November 1949, UNESCO, Documents PHS/ Conf.5/2, 4–5.

14 Supposedly, the Mexican Director-General followed the project of translating Latin American works in an appropriate framework with particular interest. Torres Bodet was a poet himself and a member of the poetry group *Los Contemporáneos* in the Mexican 1920s; he also stood out as a literary critic and through other activities in the educational and cultural field.

15 In the *Serie Iberoamericana*, eight works were published in French and three in English until 1950. They were compiled, translated and presented by internationally renowned intellectuals such as Samuel Beckett, Paul Claudel, Roger Bastide, Marcel Bataillon, Federico de Onís or Octavio Paz. See further details in Klengel (2011, 259, footnote 14).

coincidence nor carelessness, but rather a symptom of a deep intercultural conflict that has to do with the symbolic and Eurocentric weight of the term 'classics'.

4 From the Exclusivist 'Classics' to the World Community of 'Representative Works' – The Role of Latin American Literature

All the terms used in the UNESCO project do indeed have a normative force; they claim authority and assert exemplarity. This is undisputed in the case of the term 'classics', which was used at the beginning of the project as an appropriate designation for the historical cultural heritage of individual nations and at the same time for supra-temporal property of all humankind. Accordingly, each nation possesses classic texts that are believed to contribute to understanding among nations.

A document from April 1947 specifies the presumed power of the classics to unite nations:

> [I]f politicians, businessmen, etc. who have to deal with nationals of a country remote from their own, realize that it has produced works which command their interest and respect, any negotiations they undertake will go forward in a much better atmosphere.[16]

The concept of the 'classic' clearly underpinned the discourse of the humanist consensus propagated by the United Nations and UNESCO. Elsewhere, too, a 'need for the classics' was diagnosed in the face of the catastrophe of the World War: The aim was to draw lessons from the spiritual values of the these great works and use them to create an ethical basis for promoting humane action.[17] Another UNESCO document from 1947 calls a work a 'classic' "if it is considered truly representative of a culture or a nation, and if it remains as a landmark in the

16 Letter of 22 April 1947 from the Committee on Translations, presumably addressed to Director-General Julian Huxley, UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946–1956, 803 A 064 "-56" ("Translation of the Classics. Meeting of Experts") I.

17 Here, for example, one might think of T.S. Eliot's lecture *What is a Classic?* given to the Virgil Society in London on 16 October 1944, in which a strongly normative, traditional image of the classics based on Greco-Roman antiquity was advocated. We might also recall Ernst Robert Curtius *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* [European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages] (1948) and Ernst Auerbach: *Mimesis. Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur* [Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature] (1946).

history of human genius and in the evolution of Man towards civilization".[18] Such a work is by definition an authentic expression of a particular culture, but it must also display aesthetic and moral qualities on a universal level. It has passed the 'test of time' over generations and is characterised by its enduring qualities. Such classics are found not only in literature, but also in philosophy, theology, political theory, the social and natural sciences, even in geography and travel literature.[19] With their power to unite peoples, they should be accessible and understandable in translation to all interested individuals of different cultural backgrounds.

But the notion of the 'classical' became increasingly problematic. The controversies emerge in the official reports, minutes, letters and questionnaires. At its core, it was the structural asymmetry between the 'old' (European) and the 'younger' nations, especially from what is now called the Global South or postcolonial societies, as will be explained later.

On 5 June 1947, UNESCO Director-General Julian Huxley had already relativised the above-mentioned criteria at the meeting of experts to some extent:

> Aucun livre [...] n'est absolument universel ni permanent [...] en effet, le comité reconnaît avec le Dr. Huxley qu'un classique est avant tout national, régional; or s'il n'est pas qualifiable d'universel de fait, il l'est en quelque sorte de droit: représentatif d'une certaine culture il porte néanmoins en lui un message accessible à tous. [No book [...] is absolutely universal or enduring [...] in fact, the committee recognises with Dr. Huxley that a classic is above all national, regional; and if it cannot be described as universal in fact, it is in a way universal by right: representative of a certain culture, it nonetheless carries within it a message accessible to all.][20]

18 "Translation of the World Classics", 1 of July 1947 (Phil/7/1947), UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1. Series 1946–1956, 803 A 52 ("Translation of Literature – Surveys").

19 Letter of 22 April 1947 from the Committee on Translations, presumably addressed to Director-General Julian Huxley, UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946–1956, 803 A 064 "-56" ("Translation of the Classics. Meeting of Experts") I.

20 Minutes of the meeting of the "Comité des Traductions des Classiques" of 5 June 1947, UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946–1956, 803 A 064 "-56" ("Translation of the Classic. Meeting of Experts") II.

But only when it was implemented the real problem came to light. Any attempt to define a specific year to distinguish 'classical' from 'modern' or 'contemporary' works threatened to fail because of the divergent opinions of the international experts. Initially, the year 1900 was proposed because UNESCO wanted to avoid legal difficulties with living authors and furthermore discreetly prevent revolutionary works by Soviet writers from finding their way into the list of classics.[21] However, this arbitrary date led to permanent disputes and finally to a split among the experts involved. The representatives of the 'young nations' – along with the Brazilian Tavares Bastos and his Australian colleagues – triggered a veritable *querelle* between the old and the young nations, which led to the conclusion that the term 'classic' was simply not appropriate. The minutes of the May 1948 meeting state:

> Mr. Bastos wondered what authors were considered as classical ones. Brazil, as a young country, experienced the same difficulty [i.e. like Australia] [...] that is to say that the choice of the year 1900 as the border-line between classics and non-classics bore too hardly on the younger countries, whose literature had flowered after that date. In Brazil, some 20th-century authors were considered as classics.[22]

The Mexican Jesús Silva Herzog also problematised the idea of 'universality' associated with the concept of classics:

> There were some very great writers who were not 'universal' because they wrote in a language of a country without power or money to give them publicity: for example, certain Latin American works which were not known in Europe or the United States because they had not been translated. UNESCO should help to make them known. He quoted the following names as examples: Montalbo [i.e. Montalvo] (Ecuador), Saimiento [i.e. Sarmiento] (Argentina), Martí (Cuba), Justo Sierra (Mexico), Rodó (Uruguay).[23]

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21 These kinds of caveats, which have their reasons in the political tensions of the post-war period and the beginning of the Cold War, can only be found in the minutes of the first meetings, but not in the official reports.

22 Minutes of the afternoon meeting of the "Réunion d'Experts sur la traduction des Classiques" of 18 May 1948, p. 7, UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946–1956, 803 A 064 "-56" ("Translation of the Classic, Meeting of Experts") IV.

23 Minutes of the afternoon meeting of the "Réunion d'Experts sur la traduction des Classiques" of 18 May 1948, p. 7, UNESCO, Reg. Files, 1st Series 1946–1956, 803 A 064 "-56" ("Translation of the Classic, Meeting of Experts") IV.

Silva Herzog mentions important Latin American authors whose authority and influence, however, remained limited to the national or continental context because there had been no reception beyond Spanish. The attributes 'classic' and 'universal' thus depended on the cultural context and historical contingencies; in case of Latin America on its geo-cultural and linguistic position at the edge of the world literary system. At the same time, this also demonstrates the different dynamics pertaining to the formation of tradition in the 'old world' and in the 'young nations'. According to Ernst Robert Curtius' book *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* [*European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*], published in 1948, classical writers are "always the old ones" (1973, 256). Yet in the literatures of (post)colonial nations, not only a large number of nineteenth-century but also of twentieth-century literary works are considered to be 'classic', such as José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), the first of a whole series of important early twentieth-century works with great reach and impact in Latin America.

Confronted with these not only formal but also content-related difficulties, and often touching on the problem of cultural recognition, experts began to speak simply of 'great books' in the case of the literatures of Latin America. The incipient terminological (and epistemological) upheaval soon became apparent in all the other areas of the general translation project. The 'classical' connotations of uniqueness, universality and indispensability were dismissed, while exemplariness, authority and enduring value were still considered relevant criteria.

The Latin America project took shape under the banner of this paradigm shift. In November 1949, the experts would discuss the topic at length one more time. The Brazilian historian Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Antonio Castro Leal, at that time Mexico's ambassador to UNESCO, took part in the debate. As already mentioned, in the case of Latin American literature, the Commission drew up a provisional list which was submitted to the governments.[24] The list showed how absurd the year 1900 would have been as a dividing line between classics and non-classics, since numerous works from the beginning of the

24 "Provisional List of Latin American Books to be translated into English and French", 6 pages, UNESCO Archives, Documents XR/NC/Conf.reg.1/12, Annex II, supplemented by a "List of suggestions by Mr. Ventura García Calderón", Annex III.

twentieth century belong to the Latin American national founding literatures. It would suffice to mention authors such as José Carlos Mariátegui, Ricardo Palma, Ricardo Güiraldes, Euclides da Cunha, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Antonio Caso, José Enrique Rodó or Teresa de la Parra, whose main works were all published after 1900. As a result, the commission opted for a single pragmatic rule: that actually only works by still-living persons should remain excluded.

It is therefore basically thanks to the debate on the translation of Latin American literary works, which received special attention through the aforementioned UNESCO resolution, that an awareness of the artificiality of literary epochs, of the differing historical dynamics of tradition-building and their concomitant asymmetries began to emerge among international experts.

However, these debates are also interesting for other reasons. For the first time, literary specialists from the 'periphery' were not only responsible as experts for their own culture but they were also involved as experts in a cultural project of global scope. Through the apparently utopian universalist claim of the UNESCO translation project, it became possible at a high institutional level to question the horizon of the European-Occidental literary tradition programmatically in order to provide access and visibility for other traditions and cultures (initially through the example of Arabic and Latin American literatures). This was not achieved by talking *about* these literatures, but *in dialogue with* them and with their international experts. These fundamental shifts in the long-standing geo-cultural order of discourse resulted from the complex reconstruction processes after the catastrophe of the war and would not have been possible without the expanded humanist ethic.

Terms such as 'classic', but also 'great book' or 'representative work' are related to questions of literary tradition and canon formation. The UNESCO translation project can also be understood, not least, as an ambitious attempt to provide a corpus of exemplary texts by means of translation and to form from it a *world-literary* humanist canon for a universal reading community that was aware of the wartime past. However, despite the experts' efforts and growing knowledge of the various cultural and historical backgrounds, positions and perspectives, and despite the great reputation of the international commissions and UNESCO itself, which spent relevant funds

on the project, it was not possible to establish such a canon of authoritative works in a plausible way. No doubt, the reasons were on the one hand the utopian dimension and the extreme multilingualism of the project, and on the other hand the dynamic with which a canon normally emerges. It develops over time and as a result of certain reception processes, depending on structures and traditions in the respective cultural context.

A canon can also be postulated programmatically, as UNESCO attempted to do by resorting to structures and traditions for legitimization in a similar way. But in this case, the central point of reference was mainly UNESCO's humanist principles, which led to a great cultural heterogeneity in the selection of translated works that could hardly fit together into a binding canon. As a result, however, this is precisely what led to a truly *inclusive* corpus. By 2005, when the translation project ended, an impressive world-literary and *diverse* corpus of over a thousand works had been published – mostly beyond the usual considerations of the translation dynamics of the literary market – under the title of *UNESCO Collection of Representative Works*.[25]

The fierce tension between the 'universal' literature of the occidental tradition and the other, supposedly 'marginal' literatures undoubtedly contributed to this development. By insisting on their own 'great books' and literary traditions, representatives of these literatures demanded recognition and the right to representation in the international or universal context. Interestingly, the particularly controversial temporality of the 'classic' status of Latin American works became the touchstone for these early debates between the (mostly postcolonial) countries of the South and those of the North. UNESCO's translation project bore out very early the dilemma of reconciling universality and particularity, one of the fundamental challenges of UNESCO itself. In this context, the long-term success of the translation project owed much to the recognition that the traditional humanist concept of the 'classical', with its implicit claim to timeless universality, was inappropriate and had to be abandoned because of its inherent eurocentrism.

25 The now historical portal is accessible under the title *Literature & Translation* at http://www.unesco.org/culture/lit/rep/ (access date 16 April 2023). In the UNESCO digital archive, the document collections on the "Representative Works" are accessible at the following link: https://atom.archives.unesco.org/representative-works (access date 16 April 2023).

The over one thousand titles of 'representative works' that had been translated from more than 80 languages into a multitude of other languages by 2005, did not form the originally envisaged world canon of humanist texts (by means of translation); but they are compelling evidence of a radical expansion of the world literary field after 1945. In their diversity, they indeed convey an idea of the expanded concept of humanism that UNESCO advocated and promoted from the very beginning.[26]

In this way, the arduous debates became pioneers of today's cartographies of the 'new world literatures', in which, as Carlos Fuentes said, there is neither centre nor periphery of literary production.[27] As a whole, the persistent and peaceful negotiations in those serious 'battles of the books', which attempted to balance and build bridges in the asymmetrical relations between 'centre' and 'periphery', North and South, were an important, (world)community-building part of the cultural reconstruction after the catastrophe.

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26 Cf. footnote 25.

27 „La literatura nos vuelve […] excéntricos a todos. Vivimos en el círculo de Pascal, donde la circunferencia está en todas partes, y el centro en ninguna. Pero si todos somos excéntricos, entonces todos somos centrales." [Literature makes us all [...] eccentric. We live in Pascal's circle, in which the circumference is everywhere, and the centre nowhere. But if we are all eccentric, then we are all central.] (Fuentes 1993, 173).

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Jutta Müller-Tamm

Literary Worlds and World Literatures in 1960s Berlin (East and West)

1 *Festwochen* and *Festtage*

After the building of the Wall, Berlin was a doubly isolated city. For the people in East Berlin, the so called 'anti-fascist protective wall' meant confinement and cultural isolation. On the other hand, the Western sectors of Berlin were completely enclosed by the GDR. This part of the city was faced with emigration and threatened by declining economic power and cultural marginalisation. On both sides of the Wall, this situation brought about an increased effort to gain cultural recognition. An important means in this effort was the promotion of international contacts. 1961 therefore saw an intensified cultural-political 'rearmament' with the promotion of international literary and artistic contacts in both parts of the city. These international activities in the East and the West created competing communities, pursued divergent goals, and negotiated different concepts of world literature, as will be shown below.

My starting point are comparative reviews of the *Berliner Festwochen* and the *Berliner Festtage* in 1964. Both festivals were founded in the fifties, West Berlin's *Festwochen* in 1951, and, as a reaction to this, East Berlin's *Festtage* in 1957. Indeed, the setting of parallel international festivals in both parts of the divided city gives a striking example of the cultural competition in post-war Berlin: "One heritage; one future; one city. Two sectors. Both celebrate an annual festival of music, the theatre, and art", as *The American-German Review* introduces the articles. The journal had asked two critics to discuss the offerings. Without further commentary, their texts were juxtaposed: "The reader can draw his own comparisons and conclusions" (Lindtner 1964, 7).

Reading the reviews, one gets a vivid impression of the hierarchies that were involved in this cultural Cold War. Right at the beginning of

the first of the two reviews – dealing with the Eastern Festival – the critic Maria Lindtner makes sure that the reader does not just draw *their own* comparisons and conclusions, but above all the *right* ones:

> Even for the experienced critic it becomes more difficult from year to year to find suitable yardsticks for judging East Berlin's festival programs: the artistic offerings appear haphazard, checkered, lacking a recognizable over-all concept, and devoid of personality. (Lindtner 1964, 7)

Maria Lindtner suspects that the organisers were mainly anxious to avoid running any risks, so the result is "not of festival caliber", "a weak item", "a dull, schoolboy performance", just to mention a few assessments concerning Belgian, West-German and Soviet performances. Even if some of the East Berlin events are criticised less harshly, the overall tone remains patronising, as in Lindtner's comment on a performance of "Kathengold, […] the dramatic version of a miner's tale, authored by Horst Salomon, the latest winner of the National Prize":

> For the Western observer it is beyond comprehension how such a play could be touted as the theater of the future, though admittedly it gives evidence of sincere effort and some talent. Its educational and didactic value for the producers cannot be denied. (Lindtner 1964, 9)

Only when speaking about the premiere of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* at the widely acclaimed Berlin Ensemble, founded by Brecht, is the critic less arrogant. Actually, this was the only performance that attracted the attention of critics from West Berlin, as Dieter Hildebrandt, author of the second part of the review article, does not fail to mention. Many international journalists went to the Eastern sector to see the play; and according to Hildebrandt on the following evening, *Coriolanus* was the main topic of conversation in West Berlin.

Turning to West Berlin's *Festwochen*, it becomes clear that the 1964 programme was particularly ambitious. The Jazz Festival as well as the Theatre competition took place for the first time – two successful series of events that still exist today. More than once Hildebrandt emphasises the "urban" character of the *Festwochen* and the importance of the international guests. The West Berlin festival of 1964 was organised by Nicholas Nabokov, since 1951 Secretary General of the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), a Paris-based post-war organisation to support anti-communist ventures in literary, artistic, and intellectual

culture. The CCF was part of the US American strategy to gently push the leftist European intelligentsia in a pro-Western direction and to immunise it against Soviet totalitarianism. The CCF maintained a network of artists and intellectuals, magazines and publications, conferences, and art exhibitions and was associated with philanthropic institutions like the Ford Foundation. In fact, the CCF as well as the Ford Foundation were managed by the Central Intelligence Agency which spent enormous sums to support the covert programme of cultural propaganda. These secret plots came to light in the later 1960s. Yet in the first years after the building of the Wall, the CCF as well as the Ford Foundation were welcome as helpful allies in the struggle to keep Berlin as a cultural centre.[1]

In 1963, CCF Secretary General Nabokov, a close friend of Berlin's mayor Willy Brandt, became *Berater des Senats für internationale Kulturbegegnungen* [International Cultural Relations Advisor for the Berlin Senate], the same year he was appointed artistic director of the *Berliner Festwochen*. Often acting on his own authority, Nabokov's powerful role and presence in Berlin was controversial (Niedfeldt 2021, 60–68). His decision to build the 1964 festival around a single objective was also widely criticised. Nabokov had justified this move by saying that after the erection of the Wall, the festival could no longer function in its role as a Western artistic fair and as a show window to the East. Now, he emphasised, a new idea that went beyond tourist ambitions had to give the festival its own profile; his choice was Africa as thematic focus, as shown by his comments and proposals in the minutes of a 1964 advisory board meeting of the *Festwochen* ("Protokoll"). In his review of the *Festwochen*, Dieter Hildebrandt comments on this point as follows:

> There were critics who protested against the circus, as they called it, and I must admit that Nicholas Nabokov's idea of presenting the artistic achievements of black Africa and colored America at first seemed odd and very remote to me. Berlin certainly has other worries – namely, its own. We would wish that perhaps some time the extension of the East–West ideological conflict beyond the political

1 Saunders (1999) laid the groundwork for the substantial research on the role of the CIA in the cultural Cold War during the last two decades; see also Niedfeldt (2021, 5–28).

> chasm and into the world of art would be dealt with in Berlin, where it is so firmly entrenched. But such mental reservations were completely swept away by the splendid primitiveness of the Negro ensembles – primitiveness not completely free of aggressiveness, and therefore, filled with tension. The aggressiveness did not project animosity, but rather emancipation. It gave the 1964 festival a slight political undercurrent which was not inappropriate in West Berlin. (Hildebrandt 1964, 10)

Not all of the critics were as easy to convince of the African focus of the festival. In a final discussion with journalists, broadcast by Sender *Freies Berlin*, one participant admitted that he had attended the festival not because but "despite of the motto"; African art, goes the argument, is only of ethnological or academic interest and not suitable for a wider public ("Diskussion" 2023).

Part of the 1964 *Festwochen* was the *Internationales Dichtertreffen* [International Poets' Meeting], held from September 22–27. It was organised and financed by the abovementioned Congress for Cultural Freedom under the leadership of its Deputy Secretary General Pierre Emmanuel; and it was also supported by the African Cultural Society, the magazine *Der Monat*, which was also bankrolled by the CIA, and the literary magazine *Akzente*, edited by Hans Bender and Walter Höllerer, the latter being a central figure of the Berlin cultural scene at the time. Some 60 poets and writers from more than two dozen countries met in Berlin: among others Jorge Luis Borges, Maria Esther Vazques (Argentina), Felix Tchicaya (Congo), Paulin Joachim (Dahomey/Benin), Herbert Read (England), René Depestre (Haiti), Giuseppe Ungaretti (Italy), Ephraim Kishon (Israel), Bernard Dadie, Ake Loba (Ivory Coast), Michel Butor, Roger Caillois (France), Georges Schehadé (Lebanon), Aimé Césaire (Martinique), Edouard Maunick (Mauritius), Wole Soyinka (Nigeria), Lanime Diakhate, Ousmane Sembene (Senegal), Derek Walcott (Trinidad), Benito Milla (Uruguay), W.H. Auden, Langston Hughes (USA), Vasko Popa (Yugoslavia).[2] This high-profile meeting was closed to the public, which demonstrated the fact that the CCF primarily addressed left-leaning intellectuals and cultural leaders.

2 Other participants came from South Africa, Algeria, West Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Spain, and Portugal ("Recontre").

With the public excluded there were hardly any reactions in the press. Among the few, however, there were significant differences: Whereas the French newspaper *Le Monde* emphasised the distinguished line-up of the event[3], it was treated with remarkable ignorance in the German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* which labelled it as the poets' meeting "in dem unter Ausschluß der Öffentlichkeit gelaufenen Dichtertreffen, wo man sich mit mehr oder weniger Sachkenntnis über etwas ereiferte, das es noch gar nicht gibt und geben kann, nämlich afrikanische Literatur [held in private, where people with more or less expertise got excited about something that does not and cannot yet exist, namely African literature] (Pfeideler 1964).

The highlight of the *Festwochen* was the visit of Martin Luther King, Jr., who opened the event with a speech in honour of John F. Kennedy. After a sermon in front of 20,000 people in West Berlin's *Waldbühne*, he surprisingly also travelled to the Eastern part of the city where he preached in two churches. Although he was not supposed to do so – the US authorities had confiscated his passport to prevent him from visiting East Berlin –, he crossed the border in the divided city, thus reinforcing the political significance of his visit. In his East-Berlin sermon, King compared the civil rights movement in the US with the political situation in Berlin:

> Here in Berlin, one cannot help being aware that you are the hub around which turns the wheel of history. For just as we are proving to be the testing ground of races living together in spite of their differences, you are testing the possibility of co-existence for the two ideologies which now compete for world dominance. If ever there were a people who should be constantly sensitive to their destiny, the people of Berlin, East and West, should be they. (King 1964)

In fact, people in Berlin – East and West – could not help but be sensitive to their destiny. And here, more than in any other place, the ideological battle for world dominance was fought in the cultural sphere.

3 "La présence d'écrivains comme Michel Butor, Roger Caillois, Aimé Césaire, Georges Schehadé, Gunther Grass, Jorge Luis Borges, pour n'en citer que quelques-uns, prouve l'importance que poètes et créateurs ont attaché à cette rencontre" [The presence of writers such as Michel Butor, Roger Caillois, Aimé Césaire, Georges Schehadé, Gunther Grass and Jorge Luis Borges, to name but a few, proves the importance that poets and cultural figures attached to this meeting] (Rawicz 1964).

2 Cosmopolitanism in West Berlin

In the enclosed Western sectors, the official political strategy to escape the insignificance and provinciality of an insular city was to proclaim West Berlin an international cultural centre. A first venture in this direction was the *Berlin Stiftung für Literatur und Sprache* [Berlin Foundation for Literature and Language], which the *Kulturkreis im Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie* [Cultural Circle in the Federation of German Industry] established in November 1961. Its goal was to provide a literary forum for leading Europeans to express their views on contemporary problems. Poets, philosophers, and critics of international standing were invited to stay in Berlin for a longer period of time. However, the plans for the cultural metropolis Berlin only took off with what the contemporaries called "the Ford transfusion" (Rey 1967, 22): In the following years, the international activities were supported by the Ford Foundation, at that time the financially most powerful philanthropic foundation in the world. As stated above, the foundation pursued a political agenda with its anti-communist line. In the early 1960s, however, it was perceived as and, in a way, it also acted as a benevolent institution facilitating a forward-looking cultural programme.

The Ford Foundation Annual Report 1963 presents the investment in Berlin's culture:

> A three-year program to expand the artistic, educational, and cultural resources of Berlin was inaugurated with a $2 million appropriation. […] (Initial grants included $300,000 to the Free University of Berlin for American Studies and $350,000 for an International Institute for Comparative Music Studies, where musical traditions of Asia and Africa as well as the West will be studied.) A total of $590,000 was committed to enable artists, writers, educators, scientists, and composers to visit and work in Berlin for extensive periods. Included was support for a Literary Colloquium, part of whose program will be concerned with the increased use of literature on radio, television, and film. (Ford Foundation 1963, 49)

All these measures were designed to bring leading representatives of international modernism and the avantgarde as well as promising young artists to the city. The Artists in Residence Program started with some problems; it turned out that the communication didn't work very

well: neither among the guests themselves nor between the guests and the Berlin artistic community and the public.

With the Literary Colloquium Berlin (the LCB), it was a different story. The Foundation of the LCB goes back to Walter Höllerer's initiative. Höllerer, a writer, professor of literature, and highly gifted manager and communicator of literature, was the one who convinced the American donor that it was important to strengthen literature in Berlin: "Durch Einladungen kommen Publikum und Autoren aus aller Welt mit Berlin in Kontakt; *politische Wirkung literarischer Ereignisse!*" [Through invitations, audiences and authors from all over the world come into contact with Berlin; *political impact of literary events*!] (Höllerer 1962) – that was the programmatic slogan under which Höllerer presented his LCB plans to Shepard Stone, director of the Ford Foundation and key figure in the development of the Berlin cultural programmes (Berghahn 2001).

In the following years, Höllerer initiated reading series, creative writing classes with national and international participants, and event series concerning theatre, film, or poetry, all of them major events with great public success. Most of them were shown on television: *Sender Freies Berlin* recorded the events and broadcast them on its evening programme. Not the only but an important reason for the constant link to the mass media was that they reached out to the East: "Television and radio are the only methods of breaking down the Wall", as Höllerer said in an interview published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1963 (113).

Asking which communities were involved and aimed at in these processes, it is possible to detect the idea of literary cosmopolitanism in Höllerer's activities. With respect to the reading series "Ein Gedicht und sein Autor" [A poem and his author] that he organised in Winter 1966/67, Höllerer spoke of the "nomadische Intelligentsia als eine Möglichkeit, Vorurteile abzubauen" [nomadic intelligentsia as a way to overcome prejudices] (Höllerer 1969a, 269). He invited 21 poets from more than ten countries, East and West, USSR, USA, Poland, France, Sweden, a "World's Fair of Poetry and Poets", as a critic in the magazine *Die Zeit* put it (Zimmer 1967); a "summit meeting of poets", as a critic in *The American-German Review* said (Rey 1967, 22). For Höllerer, the guests were the representatives of progressive literature and modern "nomads", working on the shape and role of language in

the technical age and united in their struggle against dogmatism. Höllerer understands cultural "nomadism" in various ways: as movement, geopolitical detachment, intellectual emancipation, and aesthetic liberation. In a situation in which the "Iron Curtain" made mobility difficult if not impossible, his idea of international literature focused not only on the circulation of works but above all on the mobility of the authors. As Berlin was an exclave in which periphery and centre came together, it was a privileged site for "intellectual nomads" to meet. Höllerer thus promoted an intellectual nomadism that meant free exchange among the practitioners of literature (and arts and sciences) across national boundaries:

> Die Autoren waren nicht zu katalogisieren nach ihrer nationalen oder ideologischen Herkunft. Woher die Autoren der progressiven Literatur auch kamen: überall hatten sie sich, in ihren Herkunftsbereichen, zunächst gegen Dogmen durchzusetzen. Das ist es, was sie auf Anhieb verband, – und sollten sie wirklich eine weltweite Verbindung finden, wie sie das anstreben, sollten sie sich, und das erscheint schwierig genug, weithin verständlich machen können, dann allerdings wird es kaum eine Zukunft für Dogmen geben. [The authors could not be catalogued according to their national or ideological origins. Wherever the authors of progressive literature came from, they initially had to assert themselves against dogmas in their areas of origin. That is what united them right away – and should they really find a worldwide connection, as they are striving to do, should they be able to make themselves widely understood, and that seems difficult enough, then there will hardly be a future for dogmas.] (Höllerer 1969b: 317)

For Höllerer, the guests from East and West belonged "zu der Gruppe von Poeten, Artisten, Wissenschaftlern, die gegenwärtig den nomadischen Austausch zwischen den Nationen befürworten und, soweit es an ihnen selbst liegt, ihn zustandebringen. Zugegeben, das ist zunächst, aufs Ganze gesehen, nur eine kleine Gruppe von Personen [...]" [to the group of poets, artists, scientists who at present advocate nomadic exchange between nations and, as far as it is up to them, make this possible. Admittedly, this is, generally speaking, initially only a small group of persons] (Höllerer 1969a, 288–289).

Indeed, the fact that there was "only a small group of persons" involved in this cosmopolitan cultural play soon turned into the reproach

of elitism: The "Höllerer group" was accused of being a privileged minority with good connections to politicians, business circles, and financially strong donors. "Detractors of the *Colloquium* object to its cliquishness and love of publicity", as Marta Rey stated in an article entitled "Berlin's Literary Mafia", quoting a nasty term that had been circulating in public for more than a year when Rey's article was published in summer 1967 (24). It is worth noting that the "Berlin literary mafia" had been criticised by far-left intellectuals – "Die Ford Foundation bezahlt" [The Ford Foundation is paying] and "Für welche Bank dichten Sie?" [For which bank do you write poetry?] (Neumann 1966, 36–37) were the headings of leftist criticism – as well as from conservative positions. In her article in the *American-German Review*, Rey refers to the traditionalist critique when she remarks that "this kind of union of creative people is regarded with suspicion by many Germans who like to picture their writers and poets isolated in quiet little rooms, communing with their muse and no one else" (1967, 23). By contrast, Rey emphasises that "the *Colloquium* brought a fresh wind to Berlin, hundreds of authors, critics, TV and film people" (1967, 24–25) and that "the flow of literary creativity toward Berlin doesn't seem to be ebbing" (1967, 24). Indeed, Höllerer sought new, transnational artistic alliances across system boundaries, suggesting a worldwide community of progressive, democratic, young authors, a community that also included experimental or dissident writers from the East.[4]

These activities served the declared purpose to catch up with international literary modernism – to bring to Berlin everything that had been banished and repressed by the Nazis –, to internationalise the German literary community, to re-establish West Berlin as a cultural metropolis, and thus to increase the importance of the insular city. In combination with the various festivals and exchange programs, "Berlin had a globally diverse art scene in the early 1960s due primarily to its

4 In a letter to Shepard Stone dated December 20, 1962, in which Höllerer sums up his plans, he emphasises: "Das Programm soll in Berlin wirken und von Berlin ausstrahlen, es soll auch die Verbindung zwischen den Ländern jenseits des Eisernen Vorhangs herstellen, z.B. mit Polen und Jugoslawien" [The programme is supposed to have an effect in Berlin and to radiate from Berlin; it is also to establish links between the countries on the other side of the Iron Curtain, e.g., with Poland and Yugoslavia] (*Nachlass Walter Höllerer*, Literaturarchiv Sulzbach-Rosenberg, Signatur: 03WH/DJ/A/4,12a).

Cold War position as a symbolic battleground and its able cultural managers" (Niedfeldt 2021, 71).

3 Socialist Internationalism in East Berlin

On the other side of the Wall, the project of literary cosmopolitanism was perceived as cultural imperialism, as subversive activities emanating from the 'troublemaker', the "Störzentrum Westberlin" (Schubbe 1972, 823), and as cultural propaganda against the socialist camp carried out from West Berlin (Iwanow 1962, 3). In return, East Berlin authorities actively sought to create an international literary community mirroring and surpassing that of the West. The Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as non-governmental organisations like the GDR writers' union made serious efforts to intensify international contacts, friendship agreements with writers' unions in socialist sister states were concluded, and international writers' meetings with participants from socialist and non-socialist countries were organised as well as meetings of translators from abroad. However, bringing international writers or translators to East Berlin answered different purposes: It mainly aimed at enhancing the world-wide prestige of socialist German literature and at building a literary community of the socialist world as opposed to western capitalist communities (Müller-Tamm 2021, 14–37).

In the GDR, the basic assumption (or rather: the official doctrine) was that there were two German Literatures strictly separated from each other: On the one hand, the so called "socialist German national literature" as the advanced literature that helped build socialist society; on the other hand, the decadent literature of the West, divided into formalist modernist literature and mass production, trash, pornography, etc. The doctrine of the two German literatures was an important part not only of East Germany's identity politics, but also of its foreign cultural policy. In general, foreign cultural policy had a special significance in the GDR in the 1950s and 1960s, for, until 1972, the GDR was not recognised under international law, so foreign cultural policy had to compensate for the lack of international acceptance. This is also the reason why such great importance was attached to literary translation in the GDR. "For a nation state," as Gisèle Sapiro states, "exporting its literature in translation is a sign of its symbolic recognition on the in-

ternational scene" (2016, 84). This was even more true for the GDR: the authorities emphatically supported literary translations because exporting its literature was part of a broader political strategy in the effort to receive recognition under international law.

The GDR writers' union also organised larger events, such as the International Colloquium of the Writers' Union in Berlin in 1964, which brought together participants from six socialist countries, or the International Writers' Meeting in Berlin and Weimar in 1965, which assembled participants from socialist and non-socialist countries. In particular, the 1964 colloquium is an example of how the cultural-political front lines in the international encounter did not only run against the West, but that frictions and distortions also took place within the socialist camp. From the host's perspective, the meeting aimed at effectively demonstrating the national and international relevance and impact of East German literature and the problematic and overestimated status of its West German counterpart. However, the claim of two strictly separate literatures – East German and West German, socialist and bourgeois – and the blanket condemnation of West Germany's literary production had the effect of putting the issue of world literature on the agenda. The debates revolved around this topic in various respects: the question of literary heritage, the publishing practice of the GDR with regard to modernist world literature, the standards for contemporary production of world literature, and the significance of the reception of world literature for contemporary literary production.

Instead of a united, transnational advocacy of socialist literature under realistic auspices, which the East Berlin organisers had expected from this meeting, the demand was made to allow modern, avantgarde, and experimental literature in the GDR. Especially the Polish, Hungarian and Czechoslovak participants accused their East German colleagues of dogmatism. For example, Polish writer Egon Naganowski pointed out, that "in West Germany the tradition of world literature was taken up again after the Nazi period"[5], whereas cultural politics in

5 "[Während] in Westdeutschland nach der Nazizeit diese Tradition des Anschlusses an die Weltliteratur wieder aufgenommen wurde, so hat das, glaube ich, hier gewissermaßen gefehlt" [While this tradition of connecting with world literature was resumed in West Germany after the Nazi era, I think it was missing here to a certain extent] (Naganowski in Scherstjanoi 2008, 74). György Mihaly Vajda (Hungary) and Juraij Spitzer (Czechoslovakia) also agreed with this judgement (Scherstjanoi

the GDR excluded East German writers from modern world literature – he referred to the fact that neither Joyce or Proust nor Kafka or Musil had been published in the GDR, a fact that, in Naganowski's view, prevented contemporary East German literature from achieving world literary standards.

But East Berlin was not interested in Western modernist world literature. Instead, it promoted a new socialist world literature for which the Soviet literature was the model: "Von der sowjetischen Literatur sind seit über einem halben Jahrhundert entscheidende Impulse zur Erneuerung der Weltliteratur ausgegangen" [For more than half a century, decisive impulses for the renewal of world literature have emanated from Soviet literature] (Ziegengeist et al. 1975, 5), as was stated in an edited volume on *Multinational Soviet Literature* published by Aufbau-Verlag:

> Gegenüberstellungen mit bürgerlichen Menschenbildkonzeptionen und immanente Auseinandersetzungen mit der fortschreitenden Entmenschlichung in der Kunst der bürgerlichen „Moderne" unterstreichen die Bedeutung der sowjetischen Literatur als Alternative zum imperialistischen Kulturverfall und als Wesensmerkmal der sich entwickelnden sozialistischen Weltliteratur. [Comparisons with bourgeois conceptions of man and immanent confrontations with the increasing dehumanization in the art of bourgeois "modernity" underscore the significance of Soviet literature as an alternative to imperialist cultural decay and as a characteristic feature of the developing socialist world literature.] (Ziegengeist et al. 1975, 7)

The decisive criterion and the ultimate measure of this new world literary canon (past and present) was the "Menschenbild", the image or conception of man; this was the criterion that defined the place of a work in world history: "Pionierrolle, weltliterarische Repräsentanz und Vorbildcharakter der Sowjetliteratur manifestieren sich in dem von der sowjetischen Wirklichkeit geprägten Menschenbild" [The pioneering role, world literary representativeness and exemplary character of Soviet literature are manifested in the image of man shaped by Soviet reality] (Ziegengeist et al. 1975, 6). Based on the assumption that literature fulfils a pedagogic function, world literature was understood as an

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2008, 100, 108). On the 1964 international writers' meeting, see also Grubner (2021).

active way of shaping the world: Works that effectively contributed to the creation of a new socialist world order belonged to world literature.[6]

So, there is a complex constellation that combines the attempt to gain recognition by asserting the specificity of socialist German national literature with both an internationalist attitude *and* a strong anti-cosmopolitanism. In the GDR (as well as in the Soviet Union), cosmopolitanism was used as a derogatory term strictly opposed to proletarian internationalism (Bühl et al. 1970, 246). It was associated with Western imperialism, colonialism, and rootlessness. The idea of "rootless" cosmopolitans, of course, has a long history, including antisemitic implications. Here, cosmopolitanism was defined as a position that rejects any attachment to a nation or to a particular culture in favour of the capitalist longing for the global market, as the *Kulturpolitisches Wörterbuch* makes clear:

> In diesem Stadium kann es keine Weltkultur im Sinne der Gemeinsamkeit kultureller Bestrebungen aller Völker unabhängig von ihrer sozialökonomischen Grundlage geben. Es kommt lediglich zu einer internationalen Annäherung jener Richtungen in jeder nationalen Kultur, die eine einheitliche klassenmäßige und ideelle Grundlage besitzen. Die Vereinigung des Besten und Fortschrittlichsten der ganzen bisherigen Entwicklung der Menschheit erfolgt erst in dem Maße, wie durch den Befreiungskampf der Arbeiterklasse und ihrer Verbündeten, durch den Sturz des Imperialismus und Kolonialismus eine neue Blüte der nationalen kulturellen Entwicklung und der Zusammenschluß der sozialistischen nationalen Kulturen zu einer sozialistischen W[eltkultur] ermöglicht wird. [At this stage [of the fight between socialism and imperialism] there can be no world culture in the sense of common aspirations of all peoples regardless of their socio-economic basis. There can merely be an international convergence of those aspects of national cultures that are based on the same class and the same ideas. The merging of the best and most advanced in the whole development of mankind will depend on the success of the liberation struggle of the working class and its allies, on the overthrowing of imperialism and colonialism, leading to a

6 On the concept of world literature in the GDR and the question of how the world literary canon and editing practice changed, see Goßens and Schmitz-Emans (2015).

> new blooming of national cultural developments and thereby making the unification of socialist national cultures into one socialist World culture possible.] (Bühl et al. 1970, 578)

Thus, the "friendship of nations" that tied together socialist literatures was opposed to the type of community aimed at in West Berlin: the "nomadic exchange of nations" that Höllerer envisioned or the "vital brotherhood in art which links artists from many countries together" made possible by the artists-in-residence programme of the Ford Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service, respectively (Hansen 1975, 30).

After the building of the Wall, the divided city was the site of two competing projects of literary internationalism connected with two different concepts of contemporary world literature. In East Berlin, culture was seen as an important instrument of international enforcement and state self-assertion; in West Berlin, too, more than ever before and more than in any other place in the Federal Republic, the political significance of culture was reckoned with, and, in this sense, internationalisation was pushed forward. At the same time, the dominant goals went in opposite directions: While in West Berlin the primary goal was to bring international modernism and progressive literature into the city and thereby demonstrate participation, cosmopolitanism and Western ties, East Berlin's literary politics aimed primarily at the international promotion of "socialist German national literature". Studying these transactions, one can detect the mechanisms of literary internationalisation and the underlying ideological projects that informed them. Both projects developed in mutual awareness, simultaneously entangled with *and* in opposition to each other: In West Berlin, it was based on the cosmopolitan idea of world literature, a universalist vision that was criticised by East Berlin as a mere disguise to impose a Western bourgeois conception of literature across the globe. In the East, on the other hand, internationalism served the national project, including a strong cultural demarcation against West Germany and West Berlin. It was oriented toward the dogma of socialist realism and an alternative socialist world literature, which was, in turn, to be realised within a new world order and which was driven by direct political control over culture.

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