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SPECIAL ISSUE:

AMERICAN STUDIES AND THE DILEMMAS OF MULTILINGUALISM

EDITORIAL: ENGLISH AS A DEAD LANGUAGE?

The abolition, in the course of the nineteenth century, of the *scriptum latinum*—Latin composition as a condition for entry into the university—is impossible to separate from the pull towards the language of ‘the people’ during the nationalistic era in European politics. This revocation of Latin as a ‘language requirement’ for higher education entailed both its purification as a ‘classical’ language and the recursive monolingualization of the literary history of the emergent European nation-states, which at that point urgently needed to fortify their precarious political borders on the cultural level. This development has for a large part eclipsed the reality that, until far into the 16th and 17th centuries, Latin was not just a ‘Gelehrtensprache’ but served as a volatile medium of international expression—and of artistic creation for authors as far apart as Francesco Petrarca, Pierre de Ronsard, John Milton, and János Csezmicei—which effortlessly crossed the Atlantic to the New World.

Today, questions like ‘Do you speak American?’ seem to echo the motto that was for a long time inscribed in the statutes of the university of Paris: *latine loqui, pie vivere* (‘to speak Latin is to live piously’). In more than one respect, English has now taken up the functions that Latin filled for several centuries, until the growing importance of French led to Latin’s gradual demise as a vehicle of international communication. In many educational institutions all over the world, English language tests such as TOEFL can be seen as present-day equivalents of the *scriptum latinum*. We may well wonder whether and how English will in its turn be fractured into a multiplicity of vernaculars—each representing the voice of ‘the people’—and be declared ‘dead’. Obviously, contrary to the position of Latin since late Antiquity, English can fall back on a large body of first language speakers from Antigua to Zimbabwe. But is not the split between ‘first’ and ‘second’ language users—like that between ‘living’ and ‘dead’ cultures—itself a construct of a monolingual age now increasingly under pressure (although, obviously, we have always been more multilingual than is often supposed)?

The pioneers of American Studies may have ‘Englishized’ their discipline in order to break away from local European standards and to connect to the typically ‘American’ idiom that purportedly defined the US nation. In recent years, the internationalization of American Studies has led many organizations and editorial boards around the globe to adopt English as their preferred



language of communication. While this trend seems to have the obvious advantage of opening up the field to formerly inaccessible 'outside' perspectives, it cannot be denied that it also has its downside. Such a shift to an 'English Only' policy could reinforce the inherited monovocalism of American Studies and perpetuate the linguistic hegemony of English all over the world. The generalization of English as an international scholarly language, in itself no guarantee of a broader readership, may also serve to eclipse the reality of American multilingualism by cutting out of the object of research the many 'in-between' tongues and slanguages that clash and coalesce on the back alleys and street corners of the US.

However different their perspectives, all contributions collected in this special issue of *RIAS* deal in one way or another with the *dilemmas* of multilingualism in American Studies. To begin, we offer a digest of a topical and lively debate among the members of the IASA executive council about the language policy of *RIAS*. Most board members agree that IASA's hemispheric ambition requires some sort of recognition of American languages other than English. Some even suggested that we should open the door to submissions in the native languages of Americanists all over the globe. At the same time, there are very real practical constraints involving translation costs as well as broader ethical objections: Is not the inclusion of non-English languages in an American Studies journal, whose readership generally has a good command of English, a form of academic tokenism? Since this debate is by no means closed, we have reproduced some excerpts from it here to stimulate the broader IASA community to enter the fray.

A recurrent thread in this special issue is the idea that the global hegemony of English does not merely pose an obstacle to an adequate engagement with America, but at the same time entails the possibility of talking back to the center from the outside. Not just an emblem of McAmericanization, English has developed into a "proteiform" language (Patrick Imbert), absorbing the most diverse cultural registers and speech ways that come its way. These 'foreign' inflections serve to decentralize the language, but also underscore its *vitality* as 'an agile lingua franca' (Doris Sommer) and a 'bridge language' (Evelyn Ch'ien) connecting the various ethnolinguistic communities in the US and the Americas as a whole. It is now possible for a bilingual *Québécois* to win the Booker with an English language novel, more or less in the same way as a Renaissance author from the Low Countries could address a European audience in locally inflected Latin. Instead of juxtaposing different languages, therefore, why not embrace this linguistic cross-fertilization and organize a mixed language conference?

The other contributions collected in this issue tackle the ambivalent role of 'World English' in a less head-on fashion, but all of them stress the contingencies and even downright contradictions involved in its emergence. Thus, in his review article of Emily Apter's *The Translation Zone*, Armin Paul Frank notes how the 'alarmist mode' in which this book addresses the 'English only' perspective of American security forces in the war on terror at times results in an intensified preoccupation with translational 'adequacy', a model that Apter ascribes to the 'old' translation studies. Likewise, Jannika Bock's

report of the ASA conference in Oakland indicates how the generalized use of English in American Studies journal around the world has not necessarily made these journals more visible or attractive to US scholars. Finally, Patrick McGreevy and Melani McAlister's rejoinders to Gönül Pultar's report on CASAR's inaugural conference in the first issue of *RIAS* are more polemical in kind, but they too reflect on the two-way logic of Americanization and the life-in-death existence of English as a global language.

Michael Boyden



DEBATE ON THE MULTILINGUALITY OF *RIAS*

During the startup phase of RIAS in the summer of last year, an intense e-mail discussion took place among the members of IASA's executive board about which language(s) should be used in the journal. Many interesting and provocative suggestions were made, but in spite of this the issue of the multilinguality of RIAS has remained largely unresolved. The conflict between the need to be representative towards the Americas as a whole, and, on the other, the desire to internationalize the field of American Studies, thus demanding what Eugène Jolas would have called a 'super-tongue for intercontinental expression', continues to generate debate. And perhaps rightly so, since the tension between local representation and international communication constitutes one of the issues that have infused the IASA enterprise from the start. Practical concerns, about the economic implications of publishing academic journals in (how many?) different languages, are also a factor in these equations; the costs of translations, along with the complications created by multilingualism for markets and reception, have often been an inhibiting force in the minds of scholarly publishers. It is for this reason that we have decided to share some excerpts from that interesting and timely interchange on the executive list serve with the wider IASA community. It is our hope that these excerpts will generate further contributions to the ongoing discussion on language diversity in American Studies—in whatever language seems most appropriate for the occasion.

Manuel Broncano (Universidad de León)

'Coming from Spain, I definitely support publishing contributions in Spanish: after all, there are a number of journals that publish both in English and in Spanish. However, doing so may pose some technical difficulties that may require including some Spanish-speaking colleagues in the editorial board. As for Portuguese, I think it deserves the same treatment, for it is the language of millions of Americans.'

Theo D'haen (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)

'On Dutch no-one has yet pronounced; understandably so, as there are undoubtedly only few of you that master the language in question, even though it is the official language of at least three American countries or federations of states ... The Dutch feature prominently in the history of the Americas, all of the Americas ... So, should we offhand rule out Dutch as a "working language" for *RIAS*?'

Cyraina Johnson-Roullier (University of Notre Dame)

'So far, the discussion has been centered only on major languages in the hemisphere. But these languages are also usually the languages of imperialism and colonization, and as such they all can represent problematic histories of hegemony and oppression, despite their uneasy relationship to the hegemony of English. So to be true to the hemispheric emphasis of the project, I want also to raise the question of what

should be done with regard to native and minority languages, as these are part of the hemisphere as well. I'm not necessarily suggesting that there should also be translations into languages like Nahuatl or Quecha, but perhaps some kind of accommodation or recognition of the existence and significance of other such languages should be made, or some kind of regular notice offered that at least makes clear that the journal is aware of the existence of such languages, even though it doesn't publish anything specifically in these languages'.

Helmbrecht Breinig (Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg)

'I see IASA as an organization that not only takes both Americas as its subject matter but also sees the Americas in their global contexts, including the scholarly one. Thus, I would not limit the range of possible languages to those spoken or written in the Americas, although, undoubtedly, there will be a tendency to publish either in English or Spanish. If there is a good article on inter-American issues written in Japanese, why not publish it in Japanese and in an English translation?'

Jane Desmond (University of Iowa)

'While the Americas as a hemispheric entity is one of the main foci of our organization, it is not the location of all our membership, nor is it the focus of the scholarly work of all our members. Therefore we should be careful to give the same writing and publishing opportunities to scholars from anywhere who are most comfortable writing academically in a language other than English. Certainly for many of our members in Japan and China this may be the case. Since however English is the one language that most of us do have in common, at least as a reading competency, I would suggest that whatever we publish in whatever original language include as well an abstract in English. And, conversely, for those who choose to submit in English, perhaps thinking that it might yield a wider readership worldwide, I would also offer the opportunity to include an abstract in at least one other language if so desired, and not just the majority languages of the Americas. For example, colleagues in Turkey may choose to submit a piece in English but want their Turkish colleagues as well to be able to find the abstract of their ideas in Turkish on the web'.

Tatsushi Narita (Nagoya City University)

'Certainly, major languages of the Americas should play a pivotal role. But the problem we confront in the last analysis should be: in what sense is our organization international? Since the term internationalization historically means placing under international control, we may unconsciously tend to go in the direction of supervising our academic area from a monolithic Western point of view. However, this is exactly a tendency from which we have to endeavor to refrain ourselves. If we decide on the Western languages as IASA's virtual official languages, then I propose that we first define this explicitly in our bylaw. *RIAS* should also be an important organ in evincing IASA's own unique internationalism as to a variety of topics, including venues where we hold our World Congresses. For this reason, we should be fully prepared to create a historical moment of mutually equal two-way interactions between East and West in the true sense of the phrase long before any of the intrinsically national Americanist organizations attempt to do so. During these recent months



I participated in international conferences held in India, China, and Korea and feel that the time is ripe for Americanists in the Western hemisphere visiting India, China, and Japan to witness how flourishing American Studies is in Asia’.

Giorgio Mariani (Università di Roma 1, ‘La Sapienza’)

‘The idea of publishing what is after all a scholarly journal that is addressed only to scholars (unless we have something different in mind) in a variety of languages so as to remind people that we acknowledge the importance of all these languages in the Americas strikes me as a kind of academic populism ... It is one thing to have a journal that IS AWARE of the multilinguality of the Americas and will make of that multilinguality an object of study, and it’s a totally different story to have a journal with articles in Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and French, written for people who—as academics—are all quite capable of reading them in English ... If it were up to me I would limit the languages of the journal to these two [English and Spanish]—my understanding is that people with a professional interest in the field of Hemispheric American Studies know these languages, and they are sufficient to keep a global conversation going. This, obviously, does not mean that other languages are not important. If I do work on the Japanese literature of Hawaii, I obviously must know that language well, but to the extent that I want to share what I write about it with a potentially large readership, I must write it in a widely spoken language, even though the fine points I make will be understandable (and contestable) only by what will probably be a quite small group of specialists’.

Anders Olsson (Mittuniversitetet Sweden)

‘If Latin were still the lingua franca of academic discourse, it would have been the language in which to publish *RIAS*, because there would be no connection to countries and earthly powers. On the other hand, it would not have been a language spoken on the continents which are the objects of hemispheric American Studies. Nor would it have been a language for common discourse for other than Western participants, thus not representing the “international” in American Studies. ... more than one language should be used to make the point of multilinguality in *RIAS* and provide access to discourse; a minimum inclusion would be English and Spanish, but at the same time two is not “multi”, and the inclusion of the two would mean making an ideological statement. More languages would be needed, but it is difficult to draw the line, perhaps the four languages of the Ottawa conference [English, Spanish, French, Portuguese] and some more, among them Chinese and Japanese, to provide access and inclusion ... In initial practice, *RIAS* could start off with only one or two languages—more languages to be added later, to get the thing going. On the other hand, if the point is multilinguality, such a start would miss that point’.

LA REMISE EN CAUSE DE «L'EXCEPTIONNALISME ÉTATS-UNIEN»

Patrick Imbert

Université d'Ottawa

The ideology of manifest destiny has been linked historically to the promotion of democracy, to the valorization of the individual, and to freedom (from fear). It has infused the struggle against European countries wanting to keep their colonies in the Americas or to re-colonize certain parts of it. In recent times, manifest destiny has been re-contextualized through the dynamic of the valorization of economic and cultural transformations putting into question the limits imposed by the nation-state on the individual. It is now linked to globalization and the capacity of many countries and regions to disseminate their visions. Hence, manifest destiny has been displaced by the legitimacy of multiple perspectives, and by the necessity of connecting efficiently with different people and cultures. In this context, Canadian multiculturalism has the potential to represent a new and interesting model which societies that go through a difficult process of economic, political, and cultural transformations can refer to in order to promote a new vision of citizenship in a democratic and liberal framework (for instance in relation to language issues).

La mort a rejoint les États-Unis sur le territoire le 11 septembre 2001. Jusqu'à cette date, les citoyens des États-Unis avaient réussi à tenir leur territoire en dehors d'un certain type d'histoire violente qui est, au XX^e siècle, l'histoire des guerres et des génocides causés en bonne partie par une Europe finalement libérée des dictatures nazies et communistes grâce, entre autres, aux efforts conjugués des États-Unis et du Canada. Ces efforts qui se sont prolongés dans le Plan Marshall représentent une application particulière de la destinée manifeste aux défis de l'après guerre marquée par la menace soviétique. Ce nouveau contexte a brisé l'isolationnisme états-unien opérant jusqu'au début des années 1940 en attendant les nouveaux défis d'une mondialisation qui remet en cause la culture de l'*American Exceptionalism* et son optimisme étudiés par exemple par Seymour Martin Lipset (1989).

Les États-Unis sont maintenant devenus transnationaux et doivent tenir compte de plus en plus des rapports de force mondiaux. Cela signifie que la démocratie définie en partie comme épanouissement d'une liberté échappant à la peur (*freedom from fear*), une situation qu'apprécie nombre d'immigrants et de réfugiés, doit prendre certaines précautions au niveau de la sécurité et de ses rapports à la diffusion efficace des idéaux démocratiques. «L'exceptionnalisme américain» lié à la destinée manifeste rejoint alors une forme d'idéalisme couplé au réalisme comme l'a souligné le Président Bush durant sa visite en Europe de février 2005 lorsqu'il commentait les rapports



moins tendus entre Israël et la Palestine dans un discours reproduit entre autres dans le *Ottawa Citizen*: «Seizing this moment requires idealism ... We must see in every person the right and the capacity to live in freedom. Seizing this moment requires realism. We must act wisely and deliberately in the face of complex challenges».

AMÉRIQUES ET LÉGITIMITÉ DU DÉPLACEMENT

Dans ce nouveau contexte, le concept de *frontier* générant une culture qui peut parfois encore se vivre dans certains espaces géo-imaginaires comme l'Alaska ou le Yukon, passe du territorial au spatial au sens de l'exploration de l'univers par la science et la technologie. Ce passage du territorial à la société du savoir se couple au passage de la guerre froide au libéralisme puis à la transition permanente apportée par la capitalisation démocratisée du savoir comme le soulignent Nestor García Canclini dans *La globalización imaginada* (1999) ou Patrick Imbert dans *Trajectoires culturelles transaméricaines* (2004). De nouveau une course à l'expansion tournée vers l'avenir dans un 'espace augmenté', au sens établi par Lev Manovich (2004: 34), a lieu. 'L'espace augmenté' représente une technologisation hypermobile et rapide de la circulation d'un individu dans un réseau hypersémiotisé et en transition économique rapide. Il combine information, banques de données, communication et temps réel. Ce nouvel espace évoque donc plus une urbanité mondialisée fondée sur le déplacement et la haute vitesse que le village global et la société de la communication liant des communautés séparées dont parlait Marshall McLuhan dans *Understanding Media*. Il s'agit, comme le prédisait F.J. Turner de la concentration du pouvoir culturel, financier et scientifique des villes qui se réseautent pour enserrer la planète dans leur logique. Alors, se manifestent de plus en plus des rencontres autour d'objets mondialement démocratisés évoqués par exemple par Andy Warhol: «What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. ... A Coke is a Coke, and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one that the bum on the corner is drinking» (citée par Fong 2004: 3).

Dès lors, les rapports se construisent dans la capitalisation des savoirs se connectant, dans des espaces géographiques concentrés, à d'autres cultures rapprochées par migrations physiques ou par connections technologiques. L'espace augmenté déplace la destinée manifeste en la contextualisant dans la compétitivité libérale financière, technologique et culturelle. Dans cette compétitivité, la culture déplace les allégeances et transforme les individus et les sociétés en les inscrivant dans le démocratique ou le dictatorial, dans le libéral ou l'autoritaire. Voilà qui nous amène aux remarques de Richard Slotkin reliant *frontier*, destinée manifeste et *Reaganomics*: «Reaganomics in effect proposed a tertiary Turnerism, in which the multiplication and manipulation of financial capital replaces ... agrarian commodities» (1992: 645).

Le nouveau monde est, comme le soulignait déjà Willa Cather dans *O Pioneers!* en 1913, non pas un lieu d'enracinement mais de mouvement, un *home* au sens anglo-saxon du terme, c'est-à-dire une maison transportable et adaptable à différents contextes géo-culturels. Le *home* est d'un certain point de vue une destination future, presque un hôtel! Certes, le Canadien-français Adolphe Basile Routhier rejetait en 1871 les hôtels et la civilisation qui les incarnait dans ses *Causeries du dimanche*: «À propre-

ment parler, les États-Unis ne sont pas une patrie pour la plus grande partie de leurs habitants. C'est une immense hôtellerie ou de nombreuses caravanes de peuples sont venues prendre un billet de logement» (1871: 86).

Un siècle plus tard, l'Amérique du Nord, sinon toute une partie de la planète, explore le déplacement dans l'expansion des multinationales et la mobilité des financiers, des commerçants, des intellectuels, des artistes, des spécialistes et aussi celle des travailleurs migrants. Cette dynamique est analysée avec humour par Pico Iyer dans *The Global Soul*: Pour lui, l'aéroport et l'urbain se rejoignent, car ils sont tous deux «a place where everyone's a stranger, so it seems, on his way to somewhere else» (2000: 44). Dans ce contexte, la légitimité du déplacement inhérente à la destinée manifeste se tourne de plus en plus vers le vecteur de l'avenir. Il est la source des identités états-uniennes dans un multiculturalisme qui échappe au passé, source de division pour des gens qui proviennent de cultures parfois incommensurables. Cet avenir évoqué par J. Urgo est ce qu'offre la destinée manifeste à une planète qui a échappé aux atrocités du nazisme et des goulags et dont les populations aspirent à vivre dans le démocratique. Toutefois, ce démocratique a plusieurs modèles, celui des États-Unis mais aussi, par exemple, celui du Canada qui sait assez bien combiner le libéralisme économique et des programmes sociaux protecteurs.

Un espace de bonheur tourné vers l'avenir, c'est-à-dire la combinaison du spatial et du temporel ouverts sur l'expansion des libertés dans un pragmatisme qui permet de reconnaître l'autre et ce qui, en l'autre n'est pas acceptable pour une vie démocratique, surgit de réseautages nouveaux. Ils ne sont pas forcément liés à la destinée manifeste au sens traditionnel, mais ils parviennent souvent à la recontextualiser en la déplaçant géo-symboliquement dans des images de soi multiples, c'est-à-dire dans des identités toujours en mouvement et en processus de recontextualisation. C'est ce qu'exprime Pico Iyer dans *The Global Soul*: «In that respect, Toronto felt entirely on my wavelength. It assembled many of the pasts that I knew, from Asia and America and Europe; yet unlike such outposts of empire ... it offered the prospect on uniting all the fragments in a stained-glass whole» (125). Voilà une métaphore qui, dans le vitrail, nous fait retrouver de manière déplacée l'idée de rédemption inhérente à la destinée manifeste et exprimée par Thoreau dans "Walking". Dans ce poème, le personnage marche vers un Ouest comparé à la Terre sainte, une idée qui sera reprise dans l'invention de la société mormone en Utah: «To Americans I hardly need to say,—“Westward the star of empire takes its way”. As a true patriot, I should be ashamed to think that Adam in paradise was more favorably situated on the whole than the backwoodsman in this country» (2001: 223).

LES DÉPLACEMENTS ET LES MULTICULTURALISMES

De nos jours, l'exceptionnalisme états-unien se recontextualise dans la confrontation avec certaines régions de la planète dont les ambitions inscrites dans la postcolonialité s'affirment par une capacité à déplacer les traditions, les enjeux et les limites. Cette dynamique rejoint la valorisation du déplacement postmoderne et sa critique de la représentation telle qu'elle est évoquée par Carlton Smith dans *Coyote Kills John Wayne*. Dans cet ouvrage sont rejetés les dualismes tels ceux entre cowboys et In-



diens ou entre espace et temporalité pour ouvrir à des rapports transculturels, notamment entre anglos et chicanos négociant constamment les échanges. Ils mènent non à l'hybridité fondée sur la croyance en une certaine pureté originelle, comme le montre A. Chanady (2003: 21–34), mais à un caméléonage bien évoqué par Yann Martel dans *Self ou Life of Pi*. Cette postmodernité se combine bien avec l'idée de transition permanente liée à des temporalités courtes. Elles sont courtes non seulement par rapport à l'histoire de l'Europe comme le rappelle Gérard Bouchard dans *Genèse des nations et cultures du Nouveau Monde* (2000) mais aussi face à un avenir qui est, malgré des points de référence stables, liés à des bases libérales et démocratiques en négociation permanente.

C'est dans la capacité à négocier constamment les enjeux de la société civile dans le contexte de la société du savoir et des multiples rapports de force inter- et transnationaux que se déplace la destinée manifeste dans un contexte mondial où de plus en plus de pays ou de régions tentent de mettre en place un mode de vie démocratique permettant l'épanouissement individuel dans une égalité de droit respectant les différences qui ne sont pas incompatibles avec cette égalité de droit. C'est cette problématique qui est en partie analysée par Carlos Agudelo au sujet des cultures Afro-colombiennes dans *Retos del multiculturalismo en Colombia* (2005).

LA DIVERSITÉ LINGUISTIQUE

Un des véhicules importants de ces diversités est la langue et son utilisation. Cette problématique mène généralement à des remarques souvent émotives, alors que la problématique de la langue devrait plutôt être vécue dans ses multiples dimensions pragmatiques permettant à des individus de s'insérer le mieux possible dans un univers lié aux échanges culturels et économiques et aux révolutions technologiques dont la prochaine, annoncée pour 2011-2012, sera fondée sur les changements qu'amèneront la commercialisation et la vulgarisation de solutions fondées sur la nanotechnologie. Certes, nombre de chercheurs soulignent l'omniprésence de l'anglais comme langue de communication sur la planète. À ceci prêt qu'à partir du moment où on parle d'une langue mondialisée, il ne s'agit plus de l'anglais, ni de l'américain mais d'une langue protéiforme au niveau des accents, de sa capacité à incorporer des vocabulaires divers et de sa fonction communicatrice qui se mêle à sa fonction de support culturel. Ce support culturel d'ailleurs, comme le prouve l'attribution du Booker Prize au fil des ans, devient tout à fait protéiforme puisque des auteurs provenant de régions très variées de la planète peuvent le recevoir. Le plus notable peut-être est de constater qu'un auteur montréalais de parents francophones comme Yann Martel, lui-même bilingue, a obtenu ce prix pour *The Life of Pi* (2002) qu'il a écrit en anglais. Ceci lui a permis de devenir un best-seller mondial et de vendre des centaines de milliers d'exemplaires de cet ouvrage en français par la suite, une situation quasi impossible pour un auteur Québécois francophone qui écrit d'abord en français. Dans le contexte contemporain, rien de plus utile qu'une langue comme l'anglais, surtout s'il est possible qu'elle laisse aussi la place aux autres langues dans des contextes précis comme ce fut le cas pour le deuxième congrès mondial de l'International American Studies Association tenu au Canada, à l'Université d'Ottawa en août 2005. Dans ce cas,

les dynamiques canadiennes qui insistent sur le bilinguisme français/anglais se sont combinées à la reconnaissance de l'importance de l'espagnol pour les Amériques et les États-Unis, le tout menant à un congrès trilingue.

Il faut bien voir de toute façon que le monolinguisme pratiqué par la majorité des États-Nations de la planète est, de nos jours, tout à fait contre-productif et ce, aussi bien pour les citoyens des États qui étendent leur influence dans tous les domaines, que pour les citoyens des États ou des régions qui n'étendent leur influence que dans certains domaines.

Pour cela, on prendra l'exemple du Québec et de ses lois concernant la protection du français face à l'hégémonie de l'anglais et on proposera une lecture particulière de la loi 101 et de ses effets sur les différents groupes culturels du Québec. Ainsi, pour les francophones, la loi 101 qui ne permet pas d'envoyer les enfants francophones dans les écoles anglophones publiques, est vu comme une protection du groupe. Il est un avantage collectif qui mène à promouvoir une forme d'unilinguisme évitant les dangers de l'assimilation par la langue anglaise. En effet, selon la logique du jeu à somme nulle, on pense qu'une collectivité qui apprendrait l'anglais et qui est en situation minoritaire à l'échelle nationale et continentale, finirait par perdre le français. Si cette inquiétude était justifiée dans une atmosphère néo-coloniale telle que l'évoquaient les intellectuels de la revue *Parti-pris* dans les années soixante-dix à Montréal, ceci n'est pas évident de nos jours, vu la transformation énorme de la société québécoise depuis les années soixante-dix et vu que la majorité des gens poursuivent des études collégiales ou universitaires. Pour Neil Bissoondath, immigrant anglophone des Caraïbes vivant à Montréal et parlant aussi l'espagnol, auteur du *Marché aux illusions* (1995) et de nombreux romans, envoyer son enfant à l'école francophone représente un enrichissement non pas collectif mais individuel. En effet, les enfants pourront devenir trilingues et auront un immense avantage dans le contexte des échanges culturels et économiques tels qu'ils s'insèrent dans la mondialisation. Pour nombre d'enfants des collectivités culturelles, qui parlent déjà souvent la langue de leurs parents (vietnamien, chinois, arabe, espagnol, etc.) et qui sont très conscients que pour compétitionner efficacement, il faut connaître l'anglais, apprendre une langue comme le français leur permet d'être trilingues et, de plus, de s'intégrer efficacement les valeurs québécoises, ce qui est un avantage essentiel.

Ainsi, il y a des rapports de pouvoir énonciatif très différents dans le cas des deux collectivités. Contrairement à certains anglo-québécois qui resteraient parfois sur des positions valorisant l'unilinguisme anglophone, les membres des deux collectivités, la francophone et l'allophone, manifestent qu'il y a un avantage fondamental à l'application de la loi 101. Il y a donc accord de ces deux collectivités mais dans un certain malentendu puisque les francophones québécois de souche protègent surtout des droits collectifs tandis que les autres visent surtout l'expansion des droits individuels et des avantages concomitants. Toutefois, cet accord dans le malentendu se passe dans la bonne entente, car tous gagnent selon les paradigmes respectifs auxquels ils se réfèrent. Des relations non-confliktuelles quoique compétitives, sont établies entre groupes et individus et agissent sur la manière dont les gens vont pouvoir négocier leur rapport aux changements culturels et économiques marqués par la mondialisation et les rapports interaméricains.



Évidemment, dans ce contexte qui ne repose plus uniquement sur des rapports compétitifs limités aux logiques de l'État-Nation favorisant des savoirs utiles dans les limites intérieures au pays, mais qui sont ouverts aux rapports transculturels et trans-économiques mondiaux, ceux qui maîtrisent le plus de langues et qui dominent bien l'anglais ont un avantage. C'est pourquoi, des années après la promulgation de la loi 101, le gouvernement québécois a saisi qu'un changement dans le fonctionnement systémique demande d'autres changements pour rééquilibrer les rapports entre les communautés. Il a donc décidé, non pas d'autoriser les francophones et les allophones à aller à l'école anglaise, mais de proposer un programme d'études qui permet d'étudier l'anglais dans les écoles francophones dès le plus jeune âge puisque, plus tôt on apprend une langue, plus on a de chance de la maîtriser. Dès lors, les francophones du Québec peuvent espérer avoir une égalité de chances avec les enfants des communautés culturelles ou être, du point de vue linguistique, à un niveau comparable à ceux parmi les francophones de l'Ontario qui maîtrisent à la fois le français et l'anglais comme on peut le voir dans une publicité récente de la Cité collégiale (Collège technique francophone d'Ottawa) rappelant les avantages du bilinguisme aux employeurs: «FRENCH speaking students, BILINGUAL employees».

Ce renversement de perspective transforme la différence des étudiants franco-ontariens minoritaires en avantage alors qu'ils étaient soumis jusqu'à récemment à la dominance de l'anglais sans que le français ait été vu comme un avantage dans le contexte d'un État-nation et d'une province. Cet avantage est encore plus net quand il est lié à un savoir techno-scientifique en demande et lié aux réseautages mondiaux, «the gateway to a broad range of regional, national and global opportunities» (*Ottawa Business Journal* 2000: 11). Les minoritaires francophones mais bilingues en savent plus que les anglophones unilingues ce qui, dans le contexte de la mondialisation leur fait échapper en partie aux limites de l'État-Nation et aux structures de pouvoir statiques qui donnaient l'avantage aux anglophones. Désormais, les francophones échappent au *not quite* soustracteur de Homi Bhabha (1984: 125–133) pour lequel en savoir plus (sa langue locale et la langue du colonisateur) menait à être constamment exclu des réseaux de pouvoir. En savoir plus, linguistiquement, est désormais un avantage. Cela va à l'encontre du bilinguisme soustracteur dont parle l'écrivain franco-ontarien Patrice Desbiens dans *L'homme invisible/The Invisible Man*. Évidemment, ceci ne signifie pas que ce bilinguisme soustracteur n'existe plus, mais plutôt qu'il est désormais tout à fait possible de s'engager dans une autre dynamique.

LA MULTIPLICATION DES PERSPECTIVES LÉGITIMES

Dans ces contextes où jouent constamment réflexion sur l'égalité des droits, compétitivité et respect de certaines différences, il n'y a pas que les États-Unis qui sont à considérer car le décentrement est loin de n'être que la capacité à pénétrer progressivement tous les lieux du globe pour aboutir à une domination homogénéisante comme le craignent, dans leurs écrits dystopiques, les intellectuels traditionnels. Le décentrement ouvre les États-Unis à une forme de post-nationalisme. En effet, les spécialistes non-états-uniens des États-Unis, par exemple Sonia Torres au Brésil, dirigeant le livre intitulé *Raízes e ramos: perspectivas interdisciplinares em estudos americanos* (2001), saisis-

sent que leurs discours, autrefois considérés comme extérieurs, ont une importance certaine dans la recontextualisation des constructions impliquant les États-Unis. C'est ce que montrent John Carlos Rowe, le directeur du livre intitulé *Postnationalist American Studies* (2000), Djelal Kadir dans «Defending America against its Devotees», ou un volume comme *Converging Disensus? Change, Public Culture and Corporate Culture in Canada and in the Americas* dirigé par Patrick Imbert (2006). Dans tous ces textes se manifestent des visions internes et externes manifestant bien les diverses perspectives et leur intérêt dans le contexte mondialisé.

De plus, dans le débat concernant la diffusion des valeurs démocratiques et l'épanouissement des individus, d'autres discours libéraux s'affirment et parviennent à pénétrer les divers centres réseautés dans une diffusion qui transforme beaucoup de discours et de textes en foyers d'influences transnationales. En ce sens, le Canada par ses multiculturalismes, celui de Banting et Kymlicka ou celui de Bissoondath, qui diffèrent du multiculturalisme du penseur états-unien Jacob T. Lévy, met en place des positionnements nouveaux. Ils sont en rapport avec un avenir à construire qui permettrait, comme le dit Geertz, de 'rendre possible à des gens habitants des mondes différents d'avoir un effet véritable, et réciproque, l'un sur l'autre' (1986: 32). Telle serait la nouvelle dimension transnationale de la destinée manifeste qui, en se diffusant se détache du national pour ouvrir des possibilités mondiales liées à certaines conceptions de la démocratie, du libéralisme et des multiculturalismes porteurs de la reconnaissance des droits des individus et à leur désir d'échapper à la peur et aux terrorismes étatiques, religieux ou de divers groupes.

CONCLUSION

La destinée manifeste, si elle représente un élément essentiel de la culture des États-Unis et des motivations qui poussent ce pays à se diffuser à l'extérieur, n'est pas absente de la vision d'autres sociétés. Le Canada français s'est lui aussi découvert une mission au XIX^{ème} siècle comme, plus récemment, le Canada par le multiculturalisme propose une image transnationale idéalisée de lui-même. La destinée manifeste est liée aux cultures des Amériques aspirant à une démocratisation des relations et visant l'expansion individuelle que ne favorisait que très lentement l'Europe avant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. En cela, la destinée manifeste est une composante majeure d'une vision structurée par les discours en concurrence dans les Amériques et par l'action des mythes porteurs de renouveau.

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THANKS TO MANY, ONE

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*Harvard University professor of Romance Languages and Literatures Doris Sommer has graciously granted us permission to republish an excerpt from her widely acclaimed book *Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education* (Duke University Press, 2004). The excerpt is taken from the third chapter entitled 'Irritate the State', in which Sommer suggests a middle way between abstract liberalism and particularist identity politics by highlighting the democratizing effect playing of bilingual games and creolization. Her provocative plea to 'teach a taste for irritation' seems to disturb the agenda of both liberal political philosophy and multicultural aesthetics in that it propagates respect for minority languages even while underscoring the sociopolitical relevance of a neutral but flexible *lingua franca*. Sommer's thesis about the importance of bilingual puns and double-talk as counterpoints to the monovocalism of the modern nation-state directly impinges on the issue of language in American Studies as a globalizing field of study. We hereby offer it to the reader as an 'irritating' stimulus for further debate.*

Allow me to defend an analogy between many religions and many languages, in order to bring home—after calls for jihad and crusade—the stabilizing effect of overloaded state systems. Overloads, obviously, are also the precondition for what Rawls called 'overlapping consensus' among peoples (Rawls, 1993). It is true, as Charles Taylor and Will Kymlicka among others object, that culture (let's say language as the basic part for the whole) and religion behave differently with respect to politics. Religion can be private and separate from the state; but a particular language is a public medium for the state.

Politics cannot decouple from a language nor, therefore, can it be culturally neutral. All the more reason for vigilance and testing against strange cultures. The difference between public language and private church is significant, but difference doesn't dismiss an analogy. Analogy shows points of divergence as well as contact, Wittgenstein observed. Otherwise, comparison would be too close or too far-fetched to produce the witty (unanticipated but irresistible) relationship that we call analogy. It is the figure that describes genre for Wittgenstein, not the particular rule that governs a game, but the similarity of rule-making systems that establishes gaming or identifies an activity. Different rule-bound activities, gaming and drawing, are themselves linked by analogy: 'The kinship [of games] is that of two pictures, one of which consists of color patches with vague contours, and the other of patches similarly shaped and distributed, but with clear contours. The kinship is just as undeniable as the difference' (Wittgenstein, 1997: #76). It is the difference that goes without saying.

THANKS TO MANY, ONE



The link I wish to show between language and religion is the effect of multiplicity on both. The effect is aesthetic because it estranges (or decouples) any particular language or religion from the presumption that it is natural or necessary. Multiplicity makes you notice that your own language or religion is one option among others, not the only legitimate vehicle for human life. Estrangement can provoke anxiety, of course, but it can also jog reflection about the artifice of society and perhaps about the normal proliferation of artful constructions. I grant that unhinging one cultural term (language or religion) from 'natural' moorings is not the same as separating two different terms like public and private¹. But defamiliarizing one's own unexamined practices and beliefs cannot be irrelevant to politics. Two reasons come to mind: First, estrangement develops irony (which is close to tolerance). Estrangement may even develop a taste for the unfamiliar aesthetico-political goods to the pleasures of reflection. Distaste for reflection in the United States keeps the country from ratifying accords for international rights, including the Convention on Rights of Children. But under the pressure of cultural pluralism, Thomas McCarthy notes, institutional arrangements sometimes change and law becomes reflexive (McCarthy, 1999: 205). Taylor's hope for a Gadamerian 'fusion of horizons' where 'the other becomes less strange' would reduce anxiety and along with it the knack—and the kick—of reflection (Taylor, 1996: 20). And second, overloads of linguistic and religious constructions can be unmanageable and therefore demand coordination at a different, political, level.

If you think about it, the separation of Church and State works when there is more than one church, each irritating the others. Different religious beliefs don't amount to a unified system that might stand in for state power, so that in practice, churches stay separate from government when there are too many to speak for the general body public. James Madison was unequivocal on this distinction. Religion was both a problem for politics and its own solution, because the cacophony of beliefs ensured so much conflict that a secular government and civil society became necessary structures of coordination². Thanks to religious incommensurabilities, secular society stayed secure because the overload and excess of religious meanings demanded an order of coordination that politics can provide³. In a similar way, I am suggesting that multilingualism demands an agile *lingua franca*. Competing churches and multiple languages keep any one culture from overlapping with politics in ways that might stifle its breath. Politics is robust and hard at work when it coordinates

¹ William Connolly thinks this distinction too artificial and impractical. See his article 'Refashioning the Secular' (2000), where the case for 'pluralizing' participation in the public sphere includes admitting religious voices.

² Here it was Madison I think, who better grasped the unique implications and consequences that the commitment to disestablishment would have for the constitution of American civil society. In part, this was because he predicated his general solution to the overarching problem of 'curing the mischief of faction' on the empirical evidence that the existing multiplicity of sects had already promoted the general security of religious liberty that he now hoped to advance in an even more principled and consistent way. As the classic formulation of *Federalist 51* asserts: 'In a free government, the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other, in the multiplicity of sects' (*Federalist 51*, quoted in Rakove, 2001: 253).

³ Today, though, Brian Barry is sure that anarchism would prevail. See his *Culture & Equality* (2001: 133).

many cultures through the law. If there were no need to coordinate, if culture were only one, how might we see or hear the difference between culture and universal political institutions?

In other words, when politics is singular and culture is plural, decoupling makes sense, despite the skeptics. Then languages, religions, etc. need administration instead of offering a 'natural' vehicle for it. Is the majoritarian language a practical choice for the *lingua franca*? Then members of the majority should learn at least one more language, in order to reflect on political convenience and to feel creatively distracted by divergent grammatical (relational) constructions.

Contemporary theorists have taken a lead from Madison in order to credit the in-harmonious churches for helping to establish secular democracy⁴. Can we credit multilingualism for keeping democracy hard at work? Harmonizing is the name for top-down control through diversity management in the European Union (Bennett, 1998: 7). Instead of dismissing religious choice as indifferent for democracies, and urging away ethnic or racial 'choices' in preference for an ideal, color-blind liberalism⁵, religious conflicts and language differences can actually enhance democracy by forcing a bright line between cultural practices and administrative procedures.

The 'negative moment' of the analogy comes, obviously, from the fact that everyone speaks some language(s) but by now not everyone belongs to a church or believes in God (despite salutes to the flag, emblems on money, and inspired speeches). At independence, United States religious sectarianism was the irritant around which liberal politics developed, like a pearl around a grain of sand. Today, one incentive to roughen and refresh politics comes from the 'foreign' languages that both irritate English and require it as the *lingua franca*. Despite all the theory that comes from Canada, it is not, in my opinion, the best model of irritation, except maybe for the big cities where multicultural immigration makes trouble for official bilingualism. The reason is structural, not specific to Canada: official bilingualism doesn't require one *lingua franca*; instead it frustrates under-represented (French) speakers and bothers the (Anglophone) majority that perceives no need for a second language. Debates get stuck between communitarian authenticity from the minority viewpoint and personal freedom from the majority. Any bilingual country, including a possible (but unlikely) United States were Spanish recognized, can polarize like this. Switzerland and Belgium are no better models: A typical joke about Belgium is a series of riddles: 'What do you call a person who speaks three languages? Trilingual. And someone who speaks two languages? Bilingual. What about a person who speaks one language? Waloon' (Grosjean, 1982: 20).

Instead of Canada, think of India, as Robert Dahl does when he considers why democracy works there, in so linguistically complicated a country. It works, he says, precisely because it's *so complicated* that people don't understand one another with-

⁴ See for example, Rawls: 'While most of the American colonies had known establishments of some kind (Congregationalist in New England, Episcopalian in the South), the United States, *thanks to the plurality of its religious sects* and the First Amendment which they endorsed, never did. A persecuting zeal has been the great curse of the Christian religion' (Rawls, 1999: 166, note 75; my emphasis).

⁵ 'Let us agree that ethnic and racial affiliation should be as voluntary as religious affiliation, and of as little concern to the state and public authority' (Glazer 1997: 159).



out the *lingua franca* and its administrative institutions⁶. Thomas L. Friedman concurs, to the point of holding up India as a model of secular civility between Muslims and their neighbors⁷. Active citizens generally speak both (elite Hindi) or ‘associate’ official English and at least one local language. India has the paradoxical good fortune to claim English as a mere convenience, to follow Nehru’s modernizing line of statesmanship, rather than a particular native language that would favor some citizens and inconvenience others⁸. English never got under India’s skin (Dasgupta, 1993: 99)⁹. It developed alongside local codes, and provides a vehicle for sidestepping conflicts among them (like a secular state runs alongside contending religions). Had India been a bit more flexible and tolerant at Independence, had it included Urdu among the many official languages, Pakistan might not have broken away. Frustrated language rights have a way of congealing into less negotiable, sometimes intolerable, religious differences (Brass, 1974)¹⁰. Think also of the ‘ramshackle’ multiethnic Ottoman Empire, where ‘ethno-religious groups remained culturally autonomous’ under a hole-ly government. It was ‘far from a perfect political system, but it worked’, unlike the disastrously streamlined replacement that the British imposed¹¹. Perhaps the United States can take some advantage of linguistic loose ends to put democratic coordinating procedure to hard work, now that non-English speakers are coming to this country in unprecedented numbers. It will not be the first American country to wrest an advantage out of troublesome diversity.

Peru has been learning the lesson after centuries of official monolingualism that effectively excluded the indigenous masses. As late as 1990, Mario Vargas Llosa ran for president on a platform that considered Indians to be only potential Peruvians,

⁶ ‘India’s widespread poverty combined with its acute multicultural divisions would appear to be fertile grounds for the rampant growth of antidemocratic movements ... Why has this not happened? First, every Indian is a member of a cultural minority so tiny that its members cannot possibly govern India alone. The sheer number of cultural fragments into which India is divided means that each is small, not only far short of a majority but far too small to rule over that vast and varied subcontinent. No Indian minority could rule without employing overwhelming coercion by military and police forces. But the military and police are not available for that purpose’ (Dahl, 1999: 162).

⁷ ‘The more time you spend in India the more you realize that this teeming, multiethnic, multi-religious, multilingual country is one of the world’s great wonders—a miracle with message. And the message is that democracy matters ... for all these reasons that the US is so wrong not to press for democratization in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Is it an accident that India has the largest Muslim minority in the world, with plenty of economic grievances, yet not a single Indian Muslim was found in Al Qaeda?’ (Friedman, 1999).

⁸ ‘Nehru found English necessary for ‘co-opting the South to participate in the new national project’, since Tamil speakers resented the hegemony of Hindustani (Sonntag, 2000: 137). ‘The right’s agenda of propagating a Hindu imagining of the nation contains an elitist component; hence the right sometimes finds itself defending the elite language of English, sometimes promoting a chaste Hindi over English’ (137).

⁹ Of course Gandhi resented English and in his wake, Rammanohar Lohia went so far as to ally with the elite defenders of Sanskritized Hindi against using English. See Sonntag (2000: 138).

¹⁰ I am grateful to Amrita Basu for the reference to Brass. She commented that today the conflicts around Kashmir could be negotiated as territorial, but when religion is the issue, difference becomes intractable.

¹¹ ‘During World War I Britain and its allies destroyed the old order without considering the long-term consequences ... But most of the new states were weak and unstable, the rulers lacked legitimacy, and the frontiers were arbitrary, illogical, and unjust, giving rise to powerful irredentist tendencies’ (Shlaim, 1995: 5, 16–17).

once they left their traditions for modern ways. But today, the country is trying to recast its self-image as incomparably diverse, with its citizens as beneficiaries of both indigenous and immigrant cultures. After the presidency of Alberto Fujimori, known as 'el chino' though his roots and possible political future are in Japan¹², and the election of President Toledo who campaigned in Quechua (through his foreign wife) as well as in Spanish, Peru experiments with a bi-cultural program of education that assumes all citizens should know Spanish plus at least one (of forty) indigenous languages¹³. The assumption is a bit romantic, though, as if being Peruvian imposes nativist cultural demands. In practice, Spanish speakers don't bother to learn even Quechua, let alone minor languages. Peruvians are diverse and many resent Mrs. Elianne Karp Toledo's efforts to Andeanize Peru. Can we imagine a practical adjustment that promotes respect, enhances education for all, and gets unstuck from damaging implosions of nation and state? What if Quechua counted as a legitimate language that, like English or French, conferred bilingual benefits alongside Spanish as the *lingua franca*? Bilingual migrants might be ahead of monolingual Creoles and serve, without essentializing their Peruvianness, as models for the country.

The US too can take the hint about the broad bases of allegiance supported by migrants' double moorings that make the either/or choice of cultural identity obsolete. Many a newcomer still feels pressed to lose a home language to the host, although relief from linguistic irritation weakens the ground for democracy.

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¹²What does a former president do after he has led his country for 10 years, crushed two guerrilla insurgencies, gone into exile and dodged an international warrant for his arrest? If you are Alberto K. Fujimori of Peru, you repackage yourself as an expert on terrorism with an eye toward a political comeback. Mr. Fujimori has reportedly consulted leaders of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party about running for a seat in Japan's Parliament' (Brooke, 2002: 1).

¹³During the late 1990s, Professor Juan Carlos Godenzzi was able to establish a new bilingual educational program in Peru on a national scale by the creation of a *Dirección Nacional* within the Secretary of Education in Peru. Also see: Zavala (2002).



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SERVING McAMERICA...

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English is a global language, and probably already spoken at a great deal at International American Studies conferences without being officialized. Making English the official language of these conferences is, in diplomatic terms, too aggressive; it will imply that a scholarly contribution by a native speaker of English has more global impact and higher quality than by a scholar who does not 'speak American'. As the author of *Weird English* (Harvard University Press, 2004), a book that chronicles how English can be combined with foreign languages, I am aware of the virtues of English as a bridge language. But here, as in *Weird English*, I argue for multilingualism. The American experience is no longer monolingual for anyone. Some English will naturally occur in critiques about America, but imposing a rule that English should be used excludes many scholars. And it may cause a decline in the imaginative and creative potential of American studies scholarship.

Across the globe, scholars have critiqued America in any language with occasional English to fill in the holes during translation. Journals (for instance *Transtext(e)s/Transcultures*) that publish essays in a number of languages are gaining popularity. Critiques of America, from the popular to the academic, are also viewed or read in many languages. Dubbed versions of *Borat* are causing international buzz. Jean Baudrillard's *America* and Tzvetan Todorov's *The Conquest of America* had large impact in their original language. And countless scholars have been obsessed with defining Americanness, without even approaching the fluency of Nabokov and his linguist Lolita. For such critiques, we don't need language requirements. History has shown that people can offer insights into a culture without being fluent in that culture's language.

Some say English would bring a little bit of order to American studies. There is no discipline in the discipline, one scholar said to me. But the lack of order and the indiscipline in the discipline is enlightening: it exposes the subject that makes American studies so messy—the lack of boundaries of America itself. *America is everywhere*. It is no longer confined or confinable to a specific population, or specific landmass. Its image, substance, or spirit is no longer communicated or experienced solely in English. Aside from its immigrant and multilingual residents, its potential to be experienced polylingually is provided by travelers, internet surfers, and visitors. They tell us how America looks from everywhere. They blog, snap, scribble, and paint; through photos, films and other media and in this way give us their experience of America.



Welcome or not, America is a concept of living that is portable by plane, telephone and now internet. The increased role of globalization in defining Americanness has made it more difficult to discern the ingredients that compose it. We do not simply use other languages to connect to the American consciousness, we rely on them. America has translated itself to other cultures so much that homophonic equivalents of Coke (*kele* in Chinese or *coca* in French), McDonalds, and Starbucks exist globally. Youth culture has maximized the potential of the internet to bring skateboard contests to every country that can afford them. With internet use, there is less control on the property of America that used to have some connection to solid ground. America's ubiquity is an issue in itself, something to be managed. And in pre-internet times, language was one of the ways in which conceptions of America could be defined and controlled. But now, visuals and language tools make instant translation possible ... perhaps such roll-out translations are not always polished but language tools are increasingly accurate.

We cannot manage the ubiquity of America in one language without risk of reinforcing the franchise mentality that has accompanied globalization. American studies is enriched by the possibility of being captured by another language. Furthermore, the advantage of other languages being used to describe America is that it makes us translate the other, and listen to the other as a separate voice. America is too often the benefactor of translations. American studies scholars have opportunities to shape what America means to the globe. For the present, Americanness is no longer amber waves of grain and a healthy dollar, but we have the opportunity to shape its image and to see what others think America might be.

Conferences must also reflect that America, being multilingual, has much to benefit by presentations that feature its other main languages—Spanish of course being one of them. *Spanglish*, a comedy film, accomplished this well when it told the story of an immigrant housekeeper learning English. If we do declare English as the language of International Conferences, another problem is, what English? American English is a *mélange* that does not have either stable or standard percentages of English and other languages. In the barrios and Chinatowns of America, English can often be but a fraction of linguistic practice and must compete with Spanish and dialects of Chinese. The bridge language, the Spanglish or Chinglish that emerges in the mix, is a result of the linguistic commerce between cultures and generations. The linguistic triumph is that these languages can be mixed, that the *bric-a-brac* architecture of syntax and grammars is liveable space, linguistic homes that can be either clumsy hybrids or elegant reconstructions, depending upon whether the art of language is important to the users. In *Weird English*, I focus on the mixed Englishes of writers, devoting most of the work to the fine details of the elegant reconstructions of English—but I also find fruitful the study of spontaneous hybrids and rule-breaking concoctions that can happen. I found indiscipline in immigrant and postcolonial linguistic anarchy—and the immigrant and postcolonial experiments with language that defied rules of grammar and syntax. At American studies conferences, indiscipline might be found in the jettisoning of English when describing America.

In the chaotic linguistic worlds of ethnic-speak, English is not only broken but at times uttered in completely foreign accents. Social, emotional, economic, and artistic trans-

actions happen despite apparent unintelligibility. In fact the collision of all these things that have shaped contemporary English has made the notion of intelligibility less important. Getting the idea can be more important than getting the language right. One example of English getting lost in the forces of evolution is rap. Most of my students cannot transcribe rap music, yet they love listening to it iteratively, so it might seem that artistically English is important in this case while the ideas being communicated are less of a priority. Emotion—the creation of American emotion—is what is being established by rap, rather than any systematic linguistic connection. What is American about that emotion? Perhaps that it is exuberant and exhausting, adventurous, raw, pioneering ... we can put in the sense, mood, or flavor—the Americanness—that we desire.

This debate might be an indication that someone, somewhere is looking for a way to control the flow toward linguistic chaos that is happening in America itself. But if American English itself is experiencing an inevitable spiral towards linguistic chaos, American studies conferences can reflect this by embracing the chaos of mixed languages. To enforce McEnglish is a mundane alternative; why not enjoy the phenomenon of a mixed language conference—where people will be inventing linguistic hybrids to communicate to one another, and having arguments over how to convey an idea in non-English. Other cultures will be more than up to the challenge of finding bridge languages (such as 'I have un feeling about the wifi' or 'are the san-ming-zhi at mai-deng-lo the same as in America?'), and the goodwill that American scholars will obtain by temporarily immersing themselves in another culture's medium will not only lead to valuable international relationships, but make American scholars more aware of the burden and value of the Americanness they carry. This, after all, underlies the aim of American studies, and scholars can use conferences as a training ground for becoming both intellectuals and diplomats.

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READING EMILY APTER IN VIEW OF INTER-AMERICAN STUDIES

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Translation scholars and literary comparatists will, I trust, have observed with interest the rapid expansion of the new series 'Translation/transnation', edited by Emily Apter and published by Princeton University Press. In the twelfth volume, the editor makes her own series debut with *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* (2006), a book with an inviting title. The 'translation zone' is the author's 'theoretical mainstay' (Apter: 5), derived from a translation of one of Walter Benjamin's profound *aperçus*, and the 'new comparative literature' is traced to a development from 'German-based philology', which Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach brought with them to Istanbul University where they and other refugees helped to implement Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's policy of modernization in the 1930s and 1940s. In Apter's view, the teaching of literature based on Christian or Greco-Roman premises or both to a non-Christian audience outside the tradition of classical antiquity resulted in a secular humanist pursuit to which Edward Said responded with enthusiasm. There is, therefore, Apter argues, a specific tradition of secular humanism which inspires both postcolonial studies and her own new comparative literature.

My original plan was to read the book in view of what can be learned for Inter-American Studies. This is still my objective. But I feel now that I should first state my reservations, which arose when I came across philological and historical flaws in areas where I have first-hand reading knowledge: problems which often affect the very argument. In all modesty: students of literature and culture, as of other fields, have a vested interest in the solidity of scholarship and the validity of argumentation—the credibility of their chosen field depends on it.

(1) The new, expanded scope of translation studies which Apter recommends—ranging from real blood, sweat, and tears matters via the 'literary appropriation of pidgins and creoles, multilingual experimentalism', and 'translation across media' all the way to 'linguistic ecology'—looks so extensive in part because the author ascribes so narrow a range to translation studies as hitherto practiced: '[T]ranslation studies habitually concerned itself with questions of *adaequatio*; that is to say, the mea-

surement of semantic and stylistic infidelity [no misprint] to the original literary text' (5). Much depends on what precisely is meant by 'habitually'. I have known a fair number of translation scholars in Europe and Israel these last twenty-five years who have long kicked this habit. Indeed, Apter's book bears hardly a trace of the extensive work on translation and literature that is in print in easily accessible languages.

(2) One of the rare links with extant translation theory is a quotation from E. Jephcott's translation of one of W. Benjamin's essays, which includes the definition: 'Translation is removal from one language into another through a continuum of transformations' (7). According to Apter, 'Benjamin effects an important shift in translation theory ... toward a transcoding model, in which everything is translatable and in a perpetual state of in-translation'. Reading this, I was surprised that Benjamin should have said so trite a thing. What he really said is quite different: 'Die Übersetzung ist die Überführung der einen Sprache in die andere durch ein Kontinuum von Verwandlungen'—'Translation is the transformation of one language into another through a continuum of (almost magical) changes' (Benjamin, 1977: 151, my translation). Indeed, hardly anything is more alien to Benjamin's philosophy of language than the misleading pragmatic notion of language as a code in which we encode messages that can be transcoded. In the same essay, he noted the following, and I translate directly: A given language, 'German, for instance, is by no means the expression for everything we *believe* we can express *through* it; it is, rather, the immediate expression of what communicates *itself* in this language' (141). What the published translator and the reader missed can be found, in a nutshell, on the concluding pages of S. Weber's paper on Benjamin, included in volume 8 of Apter's series, beginning with Benjamin's explication of *translatability*, and particularly, in Weber's paraphrase: Languages 'relate not to human needs, which is to say, to meanings or messages, but to what Benjamin calls "pure language"' (Weber, 2005: 74). The foundation for the 'state of in-translation', then, is not in Benjamin but, at best, in Jephcott. Apter's views can, of course, be tested regardless. The 'translation zone' results from linking her notion of 'in-translation' with Guillaume Apollinaire's poem of 1912, 'Zone', not inappropriately characterized as a 'psychogeographical territory identified with the Paris periphery where bohemia, migrants, and marginals converged' (5).

(3) In a later chapter—the precise context is not important here—Apter's argument takes its point of departure from Theodor W. Adorno's *Minima Moralia* (1951). 'Though Adorno's life world', the author explains, 'shattered as it was by his conviction that Hitler had wrought the death of culture, was of course distinctly different from that of a postcolonial critic ... I would argue nonetheless that the mix of Marxism and diasporic consciousness filtering both critical tendencies abuts in a keen sense of the "damage" to the human caused by capitalism' (149). The point about the damage caused by capitalism is one thing; but I think it would have been better, for the sake of clarity, if Apter, when reflecting on Adorno's sense of the death of culture, had also considered the remark which I find in my thumbed copy of *Minima Moralia* on p. 67: 'Die Behauptung, daß Hitler die deutsche Kultur zerstört habe, ist



nichts als ein Reklametrück derer, die sie von ihren Telefentischen aus wieder aufbauen wollen'. Here, Adorno, in no uncertain terms, identified the claim that Hitler destroyed German culture as nothing but a promotional ploy. Dialectical thought has quite a distinctive movement of its own.

(4) Still on to the same subject, Apter offers a perfect summary of one of Adorno's observations: 'In a section of *Minima Moralia* called "Not half hungry" (a British expression meaning "starving", that correlates to the German *kohldampf*—"steamed cabbage", or "poor man's food"), Adorno interprets workers' dialect as the bitter taste of class hatred' (150–51). True, except that Adorno's title of the section, *Kohldampf*, which looks as though it might translate as 'cabbage steam', is unrelated to the vegetable. A standard dictionary, *Duden: Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (1978), identifies the word as soldier's slang linking two words which, in *Rotwelsch* (thieves' Latin), both mean 'hunger': *Koller* or *Kohler* (a fit), and *Dampf*. The duplication suggests—no: insists on—extreme, long lasting hunger pains. It was a very popular feeling in Europe in the 1940s.

(5) In the same context, Apter, guided by D. Lloyd, refers to G. Deleuze and F. Guattari's book on Kafka. The focus in one of the chapters is said to be on 'Kafka's German as a pastiche of the "vehicular" tongue—meaning in this case the impoverished bureaucratese, the hollow state language imposed on Czechoslovakia by the Prussian state' (155). Yet this is but one of the points made there. And while a reader conversant with Kafka can, I think, appreciate the remark about the pastiche of bureaucratese as applicable in places, Apter curiously draws on an English translation again, this time to substantiate her view that Kafka's is a 'very differently textured use of the German language'. Now if her statement, 'the original is always and inevitably lost in translation' (226) is more than a quip, there is a problem here. Even if one holds that a moderate position is more true to the facts of translation, e.g. 'something of the source text is always salvaged in the target text', it is none the less true, as studies of prose translations show, that texture is only very rarely among the things that come across. Apter's version of history is also remarkable. Czechoslovakia rose from the wreckage of World War I. At that time, Prussia, an integral part of the defeated *Deutsches Reich*, was incapable of imposing anything. The truth of the matter is that German was the administrative language of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy, in use, as such, in Bohemia etc. till 1918. Since no such reference is in the French of Deleuze/Guattari's chapter, and since I have no access to the English translation, I cannot say who invented Prussia's astounding influence.

(6) One of the most far-reaching claims in the entire book is that it 'may be no great exaggeration to say that the entire Franco-Prussian war [of 1870–71] was hinged on [a] single term' in the so-called 'Ems Dispatch' (20). By retaining the false friend «adjutant» (a non-commissioned officer and always a commoner) for German 'Adjutant' (an aide and at the time, always a nobleman on a monarch's staff), the French translation, according to Apter, suggested an 'outrageous breach [read: breach] of protocol' on the part of King Wilhelm I of Prussia because he apparently sent a message to the French ambassador through the hands of a commoner; the 'level of insult was profound' and contributed to a 'momentum for war' that was 'impossible to curb' (20). If a mistranslation indeed had such a momentous consequence, we should all

rush to request the reapportioning of substantial funds from defense to the humanities. Upon second thought, it seems a good idea first to ask how Apter substantiates her claim.

In order to do so one must make it plausible that, in the particular crisis, the Ems Dispatch made war unavoidable. The issue was the succession to the Spanish throne, after Queen Isabella II had been deposed in 1868 and had taken refuge in Paris. Napoléon III wanted to reinstall the House of Bourbon in the person of Isabella's son Alfonso. After three other candidacies had failed due, in a large measure, to massive French intervention (Kolb, 1970: 44–45; Wetzel, 2001: 39–44, 46–56), the Spanish interim government secretly invited Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, a relative of King Wilhelm I of Prussia, and, after long hesitation, Leopold accepted on June 19. Shortly after the news had spread in Madrid and the French ambassador had been officially notified of the new development, Napoléon III and his cabinet again initiated counter-measures. The three-to-four-week period which precipitated the crisis leading to the French declaration of war on 19 July 1870 is one of the best-researched months in European history. Apter (254) gives credit for her version to 'multiple Internet sources', M. Howard's history of the war (1961), and J.F. McMillan's biography of Napoléon III (1991). The most comprehensive and detailed account in English, though, is D. Wetzel's recent examination of the crisis in terms of the personalities involved (2001). There are some infelicities of presentation but it is a meticulously documented book, and its findings coincide with those of H. Kolb's equally thorough study of 1970, unsurpassed for its analysis in terms of the prevailing diplomatic customs—expectations, conventions, norms—though the different focus makes for different emphases. Hurried readers may wish to consult the first 27 pages of G.A. Craig's eminent, and eminently readable, history, *Germany, 1866–1914* (1978), where they will find the main points which Apter's authorities missed. Undoubtedly, an extremely compressed account of a complex historical episode requires some drastic foreshortening.

But it is crucial—and not impossible—to keep the proportions in balance. As for Apter's account, it is in at least one important place at variance with the established sequence of events. It is also misleading because of the omission of whole sequences of pertinent actions. There is just no space here to argue the case in detail. It is, however, important to note that the French reactions to the publication of the Ems Dispatch, which Apter recounts and evaluates as the irresistible momentum to war, all occurred on July 15 or later. But by this time the road to war was clear. The French government had already decided to call up the reserves—a decision which was 'as good as a declaration of war' (Wetzel, 2001: 168). When the decision was made in the afternoon of the fourteenth, the transactions between Wilhelm and the French ambassador at Bad Ems were as yet unknown in Paris (Wetzel, 2001: 160). The Ems affair just could not have elicited public responses at that point. According to Wetzel's move-by-move account, the government had, at the time, a German newspaper article at hand, and in the evening, when it confirmed the decision to mobilize, two pertinent diplomatic cables. In his estimate, the 'Ems telegram ... was of negligible impact and thus of no significant influence on the deliberations of the French ministers' (Wetzel, 2001: 159–60; also see 172). I do not wish to imply



that Wetzel's interpretation, though supported by massive evidence, is necessarily the last word in this matter. But an opinion to the contrary is not persuasive unless it has taken the facts and arguments on his side fully into account—not forgetting Kolb's and Craig's. In view of these philological and historical bumbles, I hesitate to give an account of chapters covering areas where I do not have a reading knowledge. I cannot guarantee that my report will not be inadvertently misleading. Perhaps I can minimize the danger by proceeding selectively, focusing on areas which may be of interest to scholars in Inter-American Studies.

The Translation Zone is formally divided into four parts. If I deal with the Introduction and Part I ('Translating Humanism') together, I do so because they provide basic information on Apter's approach without getting overly abstract. The chapters of the other three parts, 'The Politics of Untranslatability', 'Language Wars', and 'Technologies of Translation', are more in the nature of case studies. Each combines micro-critical with macro-critical moves. Sometimes, the author asks her readers to take a patient look at passages of texts, and then dares them to follow on leaps across chasms of languages, modes of writing and, on occasion, times. The first Chapter, 'Translating after 9/11: Mistranslating the art of war', is another plea to recognize the importance of foreign language training, one in an alarmist mode. The author feels that the 'psychic and political danger posed by the Anglocentrism of coalition forces was never sufficiently confronted' (12) and offers a long list of news items on security problems occasioned by a lack of language competence, among them the massive backlog of potentially security-sensitive materials awaiting translation and the failure to identify persons due to a translator's confusion of pronouns. At points such as these, the argument strikes me as preoccupied with adequacy in Apter's sense of the word and, hence, as rooted in 'old' translation studies: For the issues are an inadequate rendering of pronouns and a lack of capable translators and interpreters.

What I find interesting, from an Americanist point of view, is much of Apter's discussion, in Part I, of a central project of Atatürk's modernization policy by offering Western European scholars—most of them Jewish refugees from Hitler's Germany—leading positions at the University of Istanbul in the 1930s and 1940s, so that the country would be transformed by an infusion of European ideas and values as well as by German scholarship and advanced teaching. If one takes into account that the old *Dar-ül-Fünun* was legally closed one day in 1933, so that the Turkish faculty lost their jobs, and a new university was founded on the next, where some of them became assistants to the foreign professors—many of whom 'settled into a rather privileged and comfortable existence on the hills of Bebek' (Seyhan, 2005: 280)—the whole project looks as though it had more than a touch of self-colonization. But I am, at this point, less interested in this aspect than in Apter's characterization of Istanbul as having a 'tradition of a cultural crossroads' and as possessing 'established Jewish and German enclaves' (51–52). They were, in fact, two different kinds of enclave. One was, at the same time, an exclave flung out from the cultural, political, linguistic, and geographical center, Germany, whereas the Jewish enclave, at the time, had no

homeland, only a mental center, which, depending on individual attitudes, may also have been part of a spiritual identity. The cosmopolitan university of Istanbul was itself an enclave more in the nature of the Jewish one.

The American colonies and their successor countries, I submit, are cultural crossroads writ large; their cultural life as a whole, including its English-speaking part, requires for an adequate description the concept of a complex culture of cooperation, counteroperation, and uneasy, mutually ignorant coexistence of major and minor enclaves/exclaves. The 'American experience', too, was a project of modernization, led, in part, by an immigrant elite which, however, had not been invited in; in part, it worked as a grassroots movement, spontaneously guided like a shoal of fish, as in John Steinbeck's *Sea of Cortez*.

But to return to Apter and to Istanbul: In her chapter on Leo Spitzer, the leading scholar at the university at the time, she notes a tension between his willingness to immerse himself in the Turkish language and in Turkish culture on the one hand and, on the other, his penchant for ethnically insensitive remarks (29–31); she opines that the philological search for the root («racine») of a word—actually a minor philological pursuit in the German tradition of classical philology—amounts to the 'racing' of philology (28), and commits herself to the astounding claim that a 'buried problem with race lies at the heart of the philological tradition' (36). I am not quite sure whether this tradition is supposed to be the line that runs from Spitzer and, primarily, Auerbach to Said, a connection which can also be subsumed under the heading of 'elaboration of ... *Welt*-humanism' (69). Given her own alignment with this tradition, it is, I think, important to take a closer look at Apter's definition of humanism. Linked with Said's, its ingredients are 'individual freedom, universal human rights, anti-imperialism, release from economic dependency, and self-determination for disenfranchised people' (66). But what *exactly* is meant by freedom, imperialism, and other key terms? One person's freedom is, after all, another person's libertinage, one person's imperialism, another's protection of legitimate rights, etc. And remembering the truly memorable historical debates, one recognizes the need of complementary considerations.

To take up a single point: How humanistic is it to insist on universal rights but to ignore universal responsibilities? Responsibilities for the mutual welfare of family members, for the quality of the work one does and for the workmen one employs, etc. If something should go wrong: is there a place for justice tempered by mercy? Let us not forget reverence in the face of creation. And to remember a great American humanist of the twentieth century, Kenneth Burke: What about his emphasis on action in the full sense of the word as a *humanum*, as against mere motion?

In Part II, Chapter 5, entitled 'Nothing is translatable', focuses on Alain Badiou's *Petit Manuel d'Inesthétique* (1998) and his claim that, in Apter's rephrasing, '[u]ltimately it is a text's singularity that confers universal value and truth' (86). In my reading, the singularity or individuality—not necessarily of any text but—of each literary work of art, which is recognizable even, and perhaps, particularly, in terms of intertextuality, has been disregarded in much recent scholarship, with sometimes unfortunate institutional consequences. This 'singular universalism' does not, however, preclude Badiou's recognition, across 'chasms and gulfs of untranslatability', of similarities be-



tween Labîd ben Rabi'a, a pre-Islamic Arabic writer, and Mallarmé (88–89). I have made a note to read Badiou in the light of Manfred Frank's discussion of the 'individual universal' in *Das individuelle Allgemeine: Textstrukturierung und -interpretation nach Schleiermacher* (1977).

Chapter 7, 'Plurilingual Dogma: Translation by Number' should be of special interest to internationally minded Americanists. One of the writers Apter examines in some detail is Eugène Jolas, best known, perhaps, as the editor of the 'little magazine' *transition*. The posthumous publication of his autobiography *Man from Babel* (1998) seems to have stirred an interest in his other pursuits, including, in Germany, his contributions to the 'denazification' of the language when he served as American press officer in the aftermath of World War II.

More centrally, he published verse in the three standard languages he was fluent in, French, German, and English. Apter is most interested in his serious macaronic verse, which combines the three languages in single texts, and, in particular, in his more adventurous language experiments, most of them unpublished, of compounding words, taken from additional languages, in an effort to help bring about an '*Atlantic, or Crucible Language*', rudiments of which his ear caught as a delivery boy and, later, as a reporter in the United States (113). Apter, it is true, drags him and his likes in by the ears when she argues that his work is a translation 'reduc[ed by the Quinean position on untranslatability] to the play of semiotic substitutions within a univocal language world' (112). For the samples of Jolas' macaronics I have seen suggest that their structural principle is plurilingualism rather than even a reduced form of translation. Apart from this point, I go along with Apter's argument. I also submit that his position on the fringe of American literature makes his work an ideal 'triangulation point' for identifying if not reassessing the 'mainstream' of American poetry not only *entre deux guerres*.

There is one later chapter which I should like to recommend in particular, 'Condé's *Créolité* in Literary History'. I do so not so much for the checklist of two handfuls or so of 'models of literary history' selected from the 'myriad . . . still in use', where H. Taine's triad appears with ingredients—'*milieu*, genre, and social class' (178)—that differ from the ones in my edition (if I use the same), and where no mention is made of the arguments of critics who find that literary history is impossible (e.g. D. Perkins) or that verbalization as such amounts to distortion (e.g. H. White). The strength of this chapter is, in my reading, where Apter stops casting about for 'cognitive metaphors' or 'organizing concepts' (180, 181) and settles down to reading Maryse Condé's *La migration des coeurs* as a 'Caribbean Gothic' rewriting of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (178), in analogy to Jean Rhys's Caribbean-based rewriting of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (182). Apter concludes that *Créolité* is not a peaceful coexistence in 'narrative hybridity' but rather an adversary strategy, a 'transhistorical denomination referring to the way in which Creole fiction reveals literature "happening" as a narrative event or plot dimension. Literacy as a shaping force of character *Bildung*, the passage of common or marginalized speech into the domains of *lisibilité* and *littérarité*, and the transcoding of language politics into narrative structure—these aspects of the novel [*La migration des coeurs*] hold out the promise of a creolized world-historical turn' (190). This is not my way of putting things, and I am always

ill at ease in the face of claims that are global in both the English and the French senses of the word. But I submit that *Créolité* is but a special case of an interliterary situation where writers who feel an allegiance to an 'emerging' literature write themselves away from the predominant literatures, as was the case with American literatures. At the same time, the identification of attitude-charged connections between 'source' and 'target texts' not in translation but in rewriting relations, somewhat along Ezra Pound's principle of 'criticism in new composition' (Pound, 1954: 75), is about as close to literary historiography one can get after having taken the searching and devastating critique of all conventional methods into account (for a sustained argument please see Frank/Mueller-Vollmer, 2000: 21–67).

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'WHO REALLY READS US?' NOTES FROM CALIFORNIA

Jannika Bock

Universität Hamburg

'Can we hear them now?' asked Jim Hicks at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Studies Association in Oakland, CA. More than 1,500 scholars came together to discuss 'The United States from Inside and Out: Transnational American Studies'. Since 2003, Hicks has been putting transnational American Studies into (teaching) practice: at Smith College he directs the one year 'Diploma in American Studies' program, which is only open to international graduate students and fosters a scholarly exchange across borders, disciplines and cultures.

In Oakland, few people heard Hicks speak: he presented his excellent paper on the hollowness of some practices of transnational American Studies on Sunday morning, a slot notorious for tiny audiences. Less than one percent of the registered conference attendees joined Hicks for the workshop on Transnational Pedagogies. In his paper, Hicks repeatedly challenged his audience by asking if voices from international academia are sufficiently heard within the United States. He referred to the voices of non-American Americanists. Voices like mine. And like those of many members of IASA. In this short position paper, I'd like to take up Hicks's inquiry and relate it to the theme of the current issue of *RIAS*: the question of language, which is so central to transnational American Studies.

Scholarship that transcends national borders and questions them as such needs to find a common language to address those issues in. In the field of American Studies this language has long become English. Professional organizations outside the United States conduct their conferences in English. At meetings of the 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Amerikastudien' (DGfA, The German American Studies Association), which is the organization I am most closely affiliated with, you will not find a single paper presented in German. The association's journal, *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, also almost exclusively prints articles in English. The shift from mainly German to predominately English texts occurred towards the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s. I could not identify a specific date (or issue), which marks the transition point. The change took place over the years culminating in the first issue of a newly elected editorial board in 1991: issue 1 of volume 36 is entirely in English, including the editor's note. Among those new editors was Alfred Hornung, later president of the DGfA, and found-

ing member of the ASA's International Initiative¹. In the following years, German texts can still be found in the journal, but the majority of printed articles are written in English. I'm limiting my observations to the European, specifically German context. This should not be understood as a value judgment, simply as an indicator of my cultural rearing and lack of extensive knowledge on other national American Studies associations and their publications. Giles and Ellis (2005) give a broad survey of regional American Studies journals, so I refer the reader to their excellent overview for a truly international perspective.

The reasons for establishing English as a *lingua franca* at the DGfA and in its journal as well as in other American Studies circles outside the United States are well known and need not to be discussed again. Accessibility, internationalization and marketability—these catch words should be sufficient to describe the current trend. Of course, there's also a scholarly explanation: in the age of transnationalism foreign journals of American Studies can provide the very outside perspective that former ASA president Shelley Fisher Fishkin put at center-stage in her 2004 presidential address². But are these journals actually read for this reason by US Americanists? And does a transnational exchange of ideas really take place within the pages of the professional journals of the six continents that engage in American Studies?

Hicks, determined to get at least a preliminary grasp on the extent of the transnational flow of ideas within the field of American Studies, conducted a small empirical survey: he 'compiled a comparative table which enumerates the times [American Studies] journals, both US and not, were cited annually, according to the *Arts and Humanities Search* database' (Hicks, 2006: 7). The result—especially for a non-US americanist like myself—was quite disillusioning. But before I go into Hick's findings, I want to briefly allude to a conceptual difficulty: so far, I have been writing as if a distinction between US americanists and scholars from outside the United States could be easily drawn. This is, of course, not the case. In the age of (literary and actual) transmigration it is almost impossible to distinguish who's inside from who's outside a given space such as the United States (whose boundaries are subject to discussion themselves). Should a German scholar publishing in a US American journal be considered a non-American americanist? And what about an American teaching and writing in Germany? Or maybe even in both countries? I leave the task of answering these questions to

¹Hornung and others approached Fishkin at the 2003 ASA Annual Meeting in Hartford, Connecticut. In the following year the International Initiative was launched, which Fishkin sees as 'an ongoing effort by the American Studies Association comprised of a series of special projects and activities involving international scholars and affiliated societies. We desire to encourage increased contact between international American Studies scholars and American Studies scholars based in the US, and to evaluate whether the existing offices, publications, and committees of the ASA are serving the needs of international members and affiliated associations. We would like to facilitate collaborations not only between the ASA and affiliated international American Studies associations, but also between international American Studies centers, programs, and journals and American Studies programs, centers and journals based in the US. And we would like to explore the possibility of new or revised mechanisms for supporting these ongoing and suggested activities, including seeking extramural funding' (Fishkin, 2004: par. 6).

²Fishkin said: 'Today American studies scholars increasingly recognize that understanding requires looking beyond the nation's borders, and understanding how the nation is seen from vantage points beyond its borders' (Fishkin, 2005: 20).



those who devote a more substantial study to this subject. In the context of this short position paper, a rather crude juxtaposition will have to do. So let's return to Hicks's survey and its disillusioning results.

Sure, I knew that US American journals are cited much more frequently than those published in other countries. I also expected that the number of references to the *American Quarterly* would be at least ten to twenty times as much as to, say, the German *Amerikastudien/American Studies*. I was not, however, prepared for such a difference: according to Hicks's research non-US journals are hardly read at all. In 2005, the database found a total of 109 citations from articles published in *American Quarterly*. During the same year, the British *Journal of American Studies* was only referred to 29 times, and that is the most popular non-US journal. All other journals Hicks searched for were not cited from more than five times. The *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, despite the fact that the Japanese American Studies Association is highly represented at the annual meetings of the ASA, was not even referred to once (Hicks, 2006: 8).

But what about 'my' journal, the German *Amerikastudien/American Studies*? Hicks did not include it in his research. Upon my return from Oakland, I consulted the *Web of Science*, which brings together the following databases: the *Science Citation Index Expanded*, the *Social Science Citation Index* and the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*. I searched for references to articles published in *Amerikastudien/American Studies* within the past five years. The result was as discouraging as the findings of Hicks: according to my search only in two instances did authors of articles in American journals cite from articles published in the German journal. Both citations happened in the past two years. The optimistic reader discovers an upwards trend; the pessimistic one can't look past the incredibly low number.

I tend to be a pragmatist, so I immediately ask for the reasons behind such a finding and look for a way to improve the situation. I can think of three. First, the quality of articles in non-US publications is not high enough for an international audience. Second, the journals are not easily accessible outside the country in which they are published. And third, they are simply not high up on the priority list of (American) readers for various reason (lack of interest, time and /or critical acclaim)³. The first explanation can be ruled out easily. A look at a random issue of *Amerikastudien/American Studies* testifies to its scholarly sophistication. Articles address a wide range of topics, employ different methods of engagement with the subject of research, and renowned scholars of the field can be found as authors and editors. The second explanation deserves another database search before it can be refuted: according to *WorldCat* the journal *Amerikastudien/American Studies* can be found in 160 libraries worldwide. Its circulation is far smaller than that of *American Quarterly*, which is shelved in approximately nine times as many libraries and which is sent to every member of the ASA, the world's largest association of American Studies scholars. This ratio, however, does not correspond to the citations (that ratio was less than 1:50). Also, more than 800 libraries own the British *Journal of American Studies*, and still citations from that journal are

³The reason could also be linked to the method of research and the database consulted. It is possible that *Web of Science* is more thoroughly searching US-based journals than those from outside of the US. I thank Michael Boyden for pointing this out to me.

small in number. *WorldCat* gives numbers worldwide, but we can also get a glimpse at regional accessibility: in New England (excluding Maine), *Amerikastudien* is available in 24 libraries. *American Quarterly* can be read in 60 different libraries in the state of Massachusetts alone. Again, circulation is noticeably different, but I believe insufficient accessibility can't account for the small readership of non-American journals inside the US. Too many libraries own copies of *Amerikastudien*.

This leaves us with the third explanation: that (American) readers ascribe a low priority to foreign scholarly publications in the field of American Studies. Giles and Ellis note the high number of journals devoted to American Studies, a number that has grown exponentially within the last decade (2005: 1,033). Readers have to select: because of time constraints, importance, interest. They have to choose what to read, and they choose American publications over foreign ones. Whatever the reason behind this decision may be, the result remains the same: our journals are not widely read. And the transnational flow of ideas tends to tilt to one side⁴.

There is danger in generalizing, I know, as there always is. At conferences in the US, more and more non-Americans are presenting and US americanists listen eagerly to their points of view. At the 2006 ASA Annual Meeting, roughly 160 of the 1575 registered scholars came from outside the United States⁵. Also, recently published books quite frequently address transnational perspectives on the subject matter. There are many excellent examples of this, far too many to mention them all here. Just to give you one, I name a book from the field of my research: Lawrence Buell's *Emerson* which introduces the transcendentalist as a figure who 'anticipates the globalizing age' (Buell, 2003: 3) and integrates transhemispheric views on Emerson into the book's narrative. Buell also broadly discusses Emerson scholarship outside the United States.

Yet, I believe our attention still has to be drawn to the fact how little our ideas and journals seem to be read. The basic but telling research by both Hicks and myself indicates that. If further research—conducted in a more far-reaching and sophisticated manner—should support our findings, steps have to be taken to change the status quo. It does not seem to be enough to establish English as the *lingua franca* in national journals. As Giles and Ellis have outlined, editors may have to cede local power and create a continental journal to rival *American Quarterly*, as unsuccessfully attempted by the European American Studies Association (2005: 1,042). Also, US Americanists need to do more than to demand to see the inside and outside as 'interpenetrating' and to call for a bringing together of these distinct perspectives (Fishkin, 2005: 21). The transnational in American Studies has to be turned into a means of teaching, researching, and, yes, reading.

In this short statement, I did not offer any solutions. I raised questions—just as Hicks did in Oakland. Maybe the editors of our national journals have to step in and fol-

⁴ For the sake of emphasizing my point, I have not taken into account the transnational exchange of ideas within the pages of *American Quarterly* and other US-based journals, in which scholars from very different countries publish.

⁵ It is not entirely clear whether this number given by the conference registrar refers to non-US residents, scholars holding non-American citizenship or any kind of persons who came to the conference from outside the US (which could also include US scholars living abroad).



low Giles and Ellis's advice⁶. Or maybe *RIAS* can fill the (transnational) gap. Or maybe we at *RIAS* even have to start with the same question: 'Who really reads us?'

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⁶Recently, a first step was made in that direction: following the ASA 2006 Annual Meeting, 31 editors from 17 countries launched the Internet site *American Studies Journals*, which seeks 'to connect American Studies scholars and research across national borders'.

REPLY TO 'AMERICAN DIPLOMACY AT WORK' (I)

Patrick McGreevy

American University of Beirut

I am grateful to Gönül Pultar for taking CASAR's first international conference seriously and for providing her 'candid impressions' in the first issue of *RIAS*. Comparing her report to my own in the March 2006 *ASA Newsletter* reveals just how divergent experiences and interpretations of the same event can be. It reminds me of the tale of the six blind men who compare the same elephant to a tree, a rope, a snake, a spear, a fan, and a wall. Indeed, my report concluded that 'the most salient feature of the conference was lack of agreement' (McGreevy: 15). Yet it is the voices of those with whom we disagree that are most likely to challenge us to re-evaluate our own values, commitments and assumptions. We need each other to even begin see the whole elephant. The faint hope I still feel in Lebanon after the war, is the same I felt at the conclusion of the conference: that we can continue to talk across what many assume are profound fault lines. It may sometimes seem that such conversations take place on a delicate platform suspended above an abyss, but the abyss is in our own vision and of our own making. Why should we even look down?

Pultar's impression is that the conference was 'more than anything else, a subtle American diplomatic endeavor' (Pultar: 41). I understand the pervasiveness of US power; it was one of the foci of the conference, but if the conference was an 'American diplomatic endeavor', who was doing the endeavoring if not the organizers? If diplomacy was the effect, rather than the intention, the conference must indeed be the outstanding exception among the failures of US public diplomacy efforts in the Middle East (*Hi* magazine, Radio Sawa, Al-Hurrah TV, and Karen Hughes's visits). If public diplomacy is supposed to make people love the US, the conference had no diplomatic effect, as Pultar's reaction indicates. When the US State Department sponsors academic activities in the Middle East, it may welcome debate and even criticism of US policies because these subtly display values it wants to label 'American'. But when an independent academic center actively seeks out diverse voices, creates a space for dissensus—and spends its resources to support regional scholars who, in Pultar's words, 'do not usually have the financial means to attend American studies conferences in the West' (42)—to label that 'American' is to accept that fostering academic discourse is a unique attribute of the culture and political system of the United States. The conference, she argues, was 'in the end, a very American affair: smoothly run, it could have taken place on US soil, with all the patrician amenities thereof' (44). What



does this assertion imply about how non-Americans would run a conference? Finally Pultar suggests that CASAR should 'on principle, be operated by non-Americans' (42). This is a curious notion. Why does citizenship carry so much meaning? And who is an American? People with US citizenship do not have some privileged position to speak synecdochically for their fellow citizens, let alone America or the Americas, but would eliminating their voices somehow purify the project? The committee that organized the conference—which was composed of two Lebanese and three US citizens—wanted to create a space in which people from different parts of the world could gather to make 'America' an object of scrutiny while recognizing that America was already in the Middle East and the Middle East was already in America.

Finally, I want to thank Dr. Pultar. She wrote several generous things about me. Moreover, she has opened another space for dialogue. We intended the conference to do the same thing.

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REPLY TO 'AMERICAN DIPLOMACY AT WORK' (II)

Melani McAlister

George Washington University

I am writing in response to Dr. Gönül Pultar's conference report from the *America in the Middle East/The Middle in America* conference at the American University of Beirut in December 2005, which appeared in the first issue of *RIAS*. In her report, Dr. Pultar discusses my lecture on the 'Global Visions of American Evangelicals'. Unfortunately, I think she misunderstands my argument—or, at least, its intent. My aim was to convey the multi-faceted ways that American evangelical Christians are involved in global issues.

Those involvements are surprisingly complex. They range from direct support of the 'clash of civilizations' rhetoric, which positions evangelicals as major backers of the Bush administration's 'War on Terror', to activism on global poverty and health issues. These latter activities, while often problematic, have had the effect of making some American evangelicals into supporters of debt relief for Africa, and of raising awareness about the US role as an omnivorous consumer of global resources. Dr. Pultar found my lecture to be 'almost like a slap in the face' (Pultar: 44), because she took me to mean that there is no hope—either for those who are fearful of the role of American evangelicals as conservative stalwarts, or for those of us who want to change US foreign policy in the Middle East and elsewhere.

What I intended to convey was the opposite. It's true that I believe evangelicalism will remain a significant force in the United States for some time to come; what we are facing is not a temporary phenomenon. My goal in this research is to show the complexity of the ways that power operates. I don't believe it does any of us a service to either minimize the power of evangelicals in the United States or to simplify their role. For some people, the controversial aspects of my talk were those that showed the possibilities of change among evangelicals. These possibilities include the emergence of a critique of US militarism within a population that has long been predominantly and deeply conservative. I'm not overly sanguine about those changes, but I see them as important to understand. And I have some hope that a liberalizing front among evangelicals might have an impact on US policies in the future. Because I made this argument, some people saw me as 'soft' on evangelicals. Dr. Pultar apparently found the opposite, and believes that I presented evangelicals as uniformly belligerent and fully in control of US policy. She left with the sense that I was at the conference to tell people in the Middle East to 'get used to it'. If that was



her impression, I can certainly understand why she found a 'bitter taste' in her mouth (44). I wish it had been otherwise.

I had hoped my colleagues at the conference would emerge with a richer sense of the lay of the land among the diverse group of people who call themselves evangelicals. That group includes many people who are committed to a preponderance of American power and a vision of Christian superiority. However, it also includes some others who see themselves as challenging aspects of both the Bush administration agenda and their own community's complacency in the face of global inequality.

The proceedings of *America in the Middle East/The Middle East in America* give a good sense of the intellectual richness of the conversations at the conference, which went far beyond my talk or any other single presentation. Our shared endeavor in Beirut was analyzing, and disagreeing about, the nature of the multiple relationships between the United States and the Middle East. Those relationships include profound and deadly political conflict, racism, religious bigotry, and an ongoing struggle over the politics of representation. They also include moments of contact, connection, and community. In the face of an urgent global situation, we do not have the luxury of either denial or despair. Instead, we are required to be intellectually honest, politically engaged, and determined to struggle for a better world. I believe the conference was part of that project, though I know for certain that it was neither the beginning nor the end of the task.

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MARCH 15, 2007

SPECIAL ISSUE *RIAS* ON 'THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MODERNITY IN THE AMERICAS'

The third issue of *RIAS* will focus on the cultural significance of modernity in the context of the Americas, and its interpellation in the cultures and peoples of both Old and New Worlds. If the 15th century clash that was the cultural encounter of Discovery describes the origins of modernity, then the birth of modernity and its aftermath represent a potentially fruitful avenue for comparative cultural investigation. The study of culture in traditional academic contexts has historically been undertaken within the prescribed parameters of the nation-state and its official language, as well as within neatly demarcated chronological divides. With the advent of the new intellectual paradigm of the Americas, however, these seemingly stable categories and divisions have increasingly come into question, especially when considered in relation to the actual historical record, in which the many encounters and engagements of disparate peoples of the Americas across nations, languages, cultures and centuries often transcend the conventional academic boundaries that would seek to contain them. Considering the meaning of modernity in the Americas from this perspective opens up many possibilities for cross-cultural, multilingual, and transnational dialogue not realizable in more traditional contexts, highlighting the interactions not only of diverse peoples of the New World, but also their encounters with those of the Old.

We are particularly interested in essays and short position papers that explore historical points of contact or convergence between two or more peoples of the Americas or between peoples of both the New and the Old Worlds, essays that examine the academic significance of considering the interrelationships between historical periods, or essays that consider the conflict between the Americas as a new intellectual paradigm and traditional academic contexts. We encourage online submissions via the *RIAS* electronic submission platform. For questions, suggestions for topics, or paper proposals, and the like, contact the *RIAS* guest editor Cyraina Johnson-Roullier at e-mail: cjohnson@nd.edu.



DECEMBER 1, 2006

CONFERENCE ON 'THE HISTORY OF LATINO/LATINA SEXUALITIES'

The Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the University of California, San Diego and the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, invite paper proposals for a conference on the history of Latino/a and Latin American Sexualities. The best papers presented at the conference will be peer-reviewed and edited as a special issue of the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*. The conference will be held in San Diego on the UCSD campus on Friday and Saturday, January 12–13, 2007. All expenses will be covered for conference participants.

We invite paper proposals for participation in the conference on any topic that deals with the history of sexualities in Latin America or among Latinos/as in the United States. Topics may include, pre-marital sexual control and seclusion, marital and sexual practices, incest, rape, same-sex eroticism, adultery, indigenous sexual practices, state regulation and surveillance of sexualities, proscriptive literatures on sexualities, discourses on affection, desire, and love, sexual identities, asexuality, auto-eroticism, to name just a few.

For consideration as a conference participant please send electronically 1) a two-page paper proposal and 2) a two-page resume listing of your publications. Send proposals to Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Mathew Kuefler at the following e-mail addresses:

rgutierrez@ucsd.edu, jhistsex@mail.sdsu.edu.

BOOK PUBLICATIONS

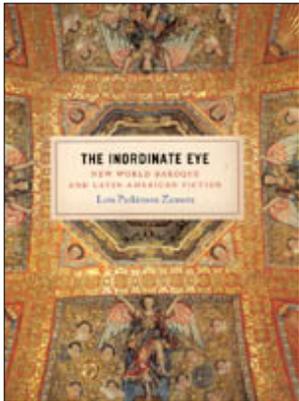
America in the Middle East/ The Middle East in America

Conference proceedings are now available at cost. The papers represent a selection of those submitted by presenters at the first international conference sponsored by the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Center for American Studies & Research (CASAR) at the American University of Beirut (AUB), held in Beirut, December 18–21, 2005. For ordering information, please visit CASAR's website: <http://www.lb.aub.edu.lb/~webcasar/Conference/proceedingsvolume.html>.

Converging Disensus? Change, Public Culture and Corporate Culture in Canada and in the Americas

Edited by Patrick Imbert. Ottawa, University of Ottawa Research Chair: 'Canada: Social and Cultural Challenges in a Knowledge Based Society' Publisher, 2006, 165 pp. Texts by: Patrick Imbert 'Cultural Changes and Economic Liberalism in Canada and in the Americas'; Gilles Paquet, 'Corporate Culture and Governance: Canada in the Americas'; Roque Callage Neto, 'America's Differentiated Congregational Citizenship: The Development of Different Fields of Conscience as a Condition for Socio-Economic Transformations'. For a copy of the book, please contact: pimbert@uottawa.ca.

The Inordinate Eye: New World Baroque and Latin American Fiction



By Lois Parkinson Zamora. University of Chicago Press, 2006; 420 pp, 108 illustrations. *The Inordinate Eye* traces the relations of Latin American painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature. Moving from pre-Columbian codices and sculpture through New World Baroque art and architecture to Neobaroque theory and contemporary Latin American fiction, Lois Parkinson Zamora argues for an integrated understanding of visual and verbal forms. The New World Baroque combines indigenous, African, and European forms of expression, and in the early decades of the twentieth century, Latin American writers began to recuperate its visual structures to construct

an alternative account of modernity, using its hybrid forms for the purpose of creating a discourse of 'counterconquest'—a postcolonial self-definition aimed at disrupting entrenched power structures, perceptual categories, and literary forms. Zamora engages this process in order to elucidate works of fiction by Borges, Carpentier, Lezama Lima, Sarduy, Garro, García Márquez, and Galeano, among others, and also to establish a critical perspective external to their work. Because visual media are 'other' to the verbal economy of modern fiction, they serve writers (and their readers) as oblique means by which to position their fiction culturally, politically, and aesthetically.

O papel de parede amarelo e outros contos de Charlotte Perkins Gilman: Tradução e crítica

Org. Stelamaris Coser Vitória, ES: Edufes, 2006. Tradutores e ensaístas: Diego Rodrigues, José Ricardo Fazolo da Silva, Leila Harris, Lillian DePaula, Lucia de la Rocque, Marcia Rocha, Roberto Ferreira Júnior, Stelamaris Coser

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THE LANGUAGES OF AMERICAN STUDIES



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