East-West Symbioses

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The Reconciliation of Opposites

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In memory of

C. Allen Winold
(1928-2016)

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INTRODUCTION

These seventeen essays on the East-West theme represent presentations and papers over many years, the earliest presented in 1989; most of them have been published, and three of them are included in my book, *The Promise and Premise of Creativity: Why Comparative Literature Matters*, because they exemplify some concerns of interest to comparatists. I have, in each case, noted the venue at which I first made the presentation because the audience addressed on a particular occasion often influenced the thrust of what I was offering.

Any title with the phrase "East-West" alludes, willy-nilly, to Goethe's seminal *East-West Divan* (*West-Östlicher Divan*), and while that work was prophetic, its "East" was primarily the Turkish and Arabic countries, not Asia. Goethe's "East" was Persia and Arabia, not China and Japan. The word "Divan" also has dated connotations: derived appropriately from the Persian; it connotes an Oriental council of state (*OED* #1a); the hall where the divan is held (*OED* #2); and a name sometimes given to a smoking-room furnished with lounges (*OED* #5). But the meaning most apposite to Goethe's use was "A Persian name for a collection of poems (Persian, Arabic, Hindustani, Turkish); *spec.* a series of poems by one author, the rhymes of which usually run through the whole alphabet" (OED #6). Cited by the *Oxford English Dictionary* is the observation in the 1877 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (VII, 292/2): "The most important diwans are those of … Hafiz, Saadi, and Jami among the Persians. The plan has been imitated by Goethe in his 'West-östlicher Divan'." Goethe did not adhere strictly to the definition, and did not compose poems which ran through the whole alphabet, but he left his mark by juxtaposing East and West. (Edward Said, a comparatist, and Daniel Barenboim, a conductor, have appropriated the term in their formation of an orchestra consisting of both Palestinian and Israeli musicians under the heading of West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.)

Instead of the word "divan", I have opted for the word "symbioses" because I want to emphasize the meaning of "living together" (*OED* #1); by using the plural form, I am highlighting the fact that there are different ways of "living together". I am also mindful of another definition of "symbiosis", taken from biology: "Association of two different organisms (usually two plants or an animal and a plant) which live attached to each other, or one as a tenant of the other, and contribute

to each other's support; any intimate association of two or more different organisms, whether mutually beneficial or not" (*OED* #2a). One can see from the essays that follow that sometimes the symbiosis is beneficial; sometimes it is not.

As I have lived, personally and professionally, between two worlds, I am sensitive to the extremes of "nativism", which assumes that only a native can truly understand the local culture, and of "cosmopolitanism", which assumes that natives take their culture for granted, and that only a non-native can understand what is familiar to the natives. Both extremes embody bigotries: in the first instance, relegating foreigners always to ignorant tourists who can only acquire, at best, a superficial knowledge of a culture they have encountered secondhand; in the second instance, denigrating natives as being insufficiently systematic to represent real knowledge. Well, I have encountered natives who really do not understand their own culture, as well as natives who do. Natives are not always infallible, even on their own culture, something I try to demonstrate in Chapters 5 and 7. And I have encountered non-native scholars whose knowledge of the native culture, both in terms of its significance and its familiarity, exceeds that of many natives, as well as *poseurs* who traffic in the stereotypes and clichés of the "foreign" culture. I try to develop a theory of knowledge that accommodates both kinds of knowing (in Chapter 2, "The Heuristics of Intercultural Literary History", and in Chapter 17, "The Insights of the Outsider"): being familiar with, which I would call *emic* (borrowing from Kenneth Pike), and realizing the significance of, which I would call *etic*. There can be little question that most natives are superior in *emic* knowledge, and that many non-natives are stronger in *etic* knowledge. One can illustrate my conception of knowledge with the example of a teenager riding a bike: his or her body calculates the physics of forces exactly, because no bike rider fails on mere technique alone to arrive at a destination, but the said rider is not likely to understand the moments of force that enable him or her to thrust him- or herself forward on two wheels. Yet, I have known physicists who do not know how to ride a bicycle, who cannot ride a bike. A native can tell you that Du Fu is a great poet, but an outsider must satisfy him- or herself *why* Du Fu is a great poet. In other words, my notion of knowledge involves bike riders who understand the moments of forces that enable them to progress on two wheels.

Acknowledging my indebtedness to others would be futile, although I make an attempt in the Acknowledgements; the authors who have lent their insight to my understanding are credited in footnote references and in the Works Cited section. Friends and colleagues whom I have had the good fortune to encounter would constitute an interminable list. Furthermore, they would eclipse the many anonymous

people who left their mark on my thinking; these would include the kindergarten student who asked, after I gave a lecture on China, "Is there any difference between a Chinese revolution and other revolutions?" My answer was both simpler and more complicated than I had expected: "Yes, there is a difference," I said, "in China, there have been four revolutions in the twentieth century alone: the revolution that toppled two thousand years of imperial rule in 1911; the Literary Revolution of the May 4th Movement in 1917 (revived in 1925), which overthrew the hegemony of classical as opposed to vernacular Chinese; the Communist Revolution of 1949, which overthrew a capitalist society for communal government during the next generation; and the Cultural Revolution of 1966, which overthrew the elites and the intellectuals. [Today, some might characterize the spectacular rise of capitalism in Communist China since 1979 as yet another revolution.] In the West, so far as I know, revolutions occur only once: the American Revolution of 1776, the French Revolution of 1789; the Russian Revolution of 1918." This encounter with a kindergarten student might serve as my acknowledgement of the debt I owe to the students I have taught in a lifetime. They taught me more than I taught them, and I have been blessed with, and I continue to attract, terrific students. If I have learned anything in my years of teaching, the most important lesson has been: how to learn.

One of the things I have learned about the English language, which I did not realize until I taught Chinese students, the last 23 years in Hong Kong, is the meaning of 'to learn'. After a class, students would come to me and express their gratitude with the following expression: "Thank you, Professor, I learned a lot of knowledge today." That prompted me to realize that the verb "to learn" can use any object save one. One can learn mathematics, your spouse's disposition, astrophysics, or a city, like New York, Paris, or Hong Kong. But there is one thing one cannot learn, and that is "knowledge". Conversely, one can use almost any verb with the noun "knowledge" save one: one can get, acquire, lose, find, steal, borrow, or offer knowledge, but one cannot "learn" knowledge. Why? Perhaps because English wants to avoid tautology, because knowledge is already learned. Yet, one can be ignorant in a knowledge that someone else commands. One can acquire a knowledge of Spanish, say, but one cannot learn a knowledge of Spanish: one learns Spanish, *tout court*.

The chapters of this book each focus on a specific topic, East-West relations, but together they suggest a program for learning: to acquire as much intimate knowledge as possible and, at the same time, to establish as much as possible the objectivity of distance.

One of the themes underlying much of what I have written is the irony, one could almost say, with the Chinese, the *maodun* of knowing:

that what one knows sometimes constitutes an obstacle to learning about what one does not know. Humans tend to understand that which resembles what is familiar to them, but that obstructs our ability to understand that which is unfamiliar, that which is unlike what we know, or that which is even opposite to what our experience has been. The truly liberated mind adapts his or her mind to the complexities of reality; she or he does not demand that what one does not know must conform to what one does know before it is understood. We may be inconvenienced that the world is not black or white, but knowing requires us to see shades of gray. In a three-dimensional world, one can appreciate the limitation of one or two dimensions, but whether we like it or not, the world is multidimensional and we must develop minds that are equipped to understand that level of complexity.

Implicit to my notion of understanding is not merely knowing the structure of someone else's thinking but empathizing with the way that someone else thinks. The more we get out of ourselves, the more we are able to understand others. It is not enough to be good and to understand goodness; one must also understand evil without ultimately being evil. This is, as we will see in Chapters 6 and 13, the true meaning of the Mencian concept of 仁 which has been wrongly oversimplified by translators and sinologists for generations as "benevolence".

PARADIGMS

1.

INTERCULTURE: BRAVE NEW WORLD[1]

The word "culture" is generally used to designate the "customs, values, habits of mind, art, science, artifacts" of one country. It is normally assumed that one country has but one culture. So, for example, we speak routinely of Japanese culture, American culture, and Chinese culture. But what this usage overlooks is the heterogeneity of every culture, from the Anglo-Saxon (often viewed erroneously as "pure"), Japanese (which comprises a significant Chinese component), to the Chinese (which contains substantial contributions from India). Even so-called Western culture is an admixture of different cultural elements which can be identified as Teutonic, Latinate, Islamic, or Turkic. And where would any culture in the world be without the Arabic component in its mathematics? There may be British mathematicians, Japanese mathematicians, and Chinese mathematicians, but, in the modern period at least, there is no British mathematics, no Japanese mathematics, and no Chinese mathematics. Since every mathematician uses Arabic numbers, every mathematician uses a part of the Arabic language, and is indebted to Arabic culture.

The recognition of other cultures in a particular literature has been designated "macaronic", and examples abound, from Euripides's *Medea* to the Biblical Book of Ruth in the ancient period, Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Henry V* in the Renaissance, and from the *Rubayyat of Omar Khayyam* in the nineteenth century to the many examples of the modern period. What I want to chart in this chapter is a progression through three stages: (1) a stage when the foreigner is represented as foreign; (2) a stage when the foreigner is admitted as an immigrant and émigré, and

[1] Paper originally presented at the "Comparing/Translating Poetry" international symposium in honor of Professors Koji Kawamoto and Earl Miner (1927-2004), Otemae University, November 19, 2011.

the foreign is imported; and (3) when the foreign is recognized as not alien, but native. The first stage might be labeled "cultural"; the second "intercultural", and the third, borrowing from Heidegger, we might call "int*ra*cultural".

"Cultural"

Since the nationalist movements of the nineteenth century, cultures have inevitably been considered monolithic, and the default concept is that each country has one unique culture. But this is belied even by the most homogenous countries, like Japan, for whom China and, to a lesser extent, Korea, have been salient factors; Great Britain, while not as hospitable to foreign cultures as the United States, nevertheless has significant French (Norman) elements as well as Italian components in its culture, as any cursory study of the sources of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or Shakespeare's plays will confirm; nineteenth-century Russia derived much from French culture, as well as a smattering of English culture, as can be seen in the writings of Dostoyevsky (who read Dickens and Balzac) and Nabokov, a Russian whose later work was composed in English and who lived in French-speaking Switzerland; and that most quintessential of French authors, Marcel Proust, read Carlyle, Darwin, Emerson, Ruskin, George Eliot, Hardy, Stevenson, Wells and Wilde carefully.[2] Influenced by foreign books as these writers were, they remained, in their sensibility and their imagination, essentially of their own culture: Chaucer and Shakespeare were no less English for having borrowed liberally from continental authors, Dostoyevsky is no less Russian because he admired Dickens, and Proust is no less French for his devotion to John Ruskin.

Indeed, one can cite examples in which the pull of nationalism is strong: Joseph Conrad, a Pole, became an English writer; more recently, Tom Stoppard, who delights in calling himself a "bounced Czech", has become preternaturally English; François Cheng, of Chinese origin, was admitted to the Académie Française, and Gao Xingjian, who became a French citizen, writes in both Chinese and French; and there is no novel published in English that is more English than *The Remains of the Day*, composed by Kazuo Ishiguro, who was born in Nagasaki, Japan, and whose family moved to England when he was six years old. Samuel Beckett, as his published letters show, was comfortable in both French

[2] Cf. Robert Fraser, *Proust and the Victorians: The Lamp of Memory* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1994).

and English. One often forgets that Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay (Mumbai), and spoke Hindustani as a boy, leaving for England at the age of five. His first language, Hindustani, infuses such works as *Kim*,[3] and, though it was quickly supplanted by English, oral Hindustani remained an essential part of his vernacular imagination, even when imperialist pressures compelled him to downgrade his subaltern "mother tongue".[4]

Perhaps the most moving depiction of a loyal foreigner comes from the Book of Ruth in the Bible. When Naomi asks her two Moabite daughters-in-law to return to their homes after the death of her two sons, their husbands, Ruth refuses, with these memorable words: "Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn back from following you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me." (Ruth 1:16–17 NKJV). No greater expression of filial devotion and of self-sacrifice can be found in ancient literature. To turn one's back on one's homeland, and, in this case, also the god one has worshipped as a child, and to follow a mother-in-law to a foreign land, represents the supreme act of filial devotion. The "foreigner" is no longer the "barbarian", but a devoted member of the family, and a convert to its religion: her devotion to the family she married into proves that, far from remaining a barbarian, she has become "civilized".

Family ties lie behind another "foreign" woman who marries into a family. Euripides's *Medea* shows the bitterness of the foreigner rejected by the natives, especially when one of the natives is her husband. Medea's fury—part humiliation, part jealousy, part alienation—represents the horrors of the human heart, both in terms of what it fears and what it is capable of. At her best and at her worst, Medea is no less than "foreign", yet no more than human. Euripides achieves that rare feat—of making us identify with the outsider. We feel, with Medea, what it is like to be "out of one's element"—and unwelcome.

Shakespeare's *Othello* also depicts jealousy as the linchpin of alienation, of being left out of a community, left out, he thinks, of his

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[3] Sue Walsh, *Kipling's Children's Literature: Language, Identity, and Constructions of Childhood* (Farnham, U. K.: Ashgate, 2010).

[4] "Because that 'vernacular idiom' (presumably Hindustani) which must have been Kipling's mother-tongue, the first language he ever spoke, was the language of a subject race, his training as a 'Sahib' meant that he had to lose it."—Jan Montefiore, *Rudyard Kipling (Writers and their Work)* (Tavistock, U. K.: Northcote House Publishers, 2007), p. 32.

wife's affections, and left out of a sane grasp of reality. The madness that overwhelms Othello is the crux of what it means to be insane: insanity does not constitute a lack of reason, but rather the realization that others do not share one's reasons; the frustration of insanity derives from an indignation that others do not understand one's thoughts. Paranoia is the ultimate insanity for the foreigner: the isolation into one's private thoughts, a refuge that represents one's ostracism from society, one's estrangement from sanity—which is the "reason" of the collective.

However, not all that is foreign needs to be viewed as a threat. Not everything foreign needs to be repulsive or off-putting. There is also in the foreign both the erotic and the exotic, attractions of the strange and the eccentric, and the fascination with the mysterious and what Orientalists called "the inscrutable". Shakespeare gives perhaps the best illustration of this in the comic dialogue in which Henry V woos the daughter of his French counterpart.

KING HENRY V
Fair Katharine, and most fair,
Will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms
Such as will enter at a lady's ear
And plead his love-suit to her gentle heart?
KATHARINE
Your majesty shall mock at me; I cannot speak your England.
KING HENRY V
O fair Katharine, if you will love me soundly with your French heart, I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly with your English tongue. Do you like me, Kate?
KATHARINE
Pardonnez-moi, I cannot tell vat is 'like me.'
KING HENRY V
An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.
KATHARINE
Que dit-il? que je suis semblable a les anges?
ALICE
Oui, vraiment, sauf votre grace, ainsi dit-il.
KING HENRY V
I said so, dear Katharine; and I must not blush to affirm it.
KATHARINE
O bon Dieu! les langues des hommes sont pleines de tromperies.
KING HENRY V
What says she, fair one? that the tongues of men are full of deceits? (V, ii)

In an exchange that features what some modern linguists would deplore as "code-switching", Shakespeare exemplifies the dilemma of depicting the foreign, which is both to preserve its strangeness and to enhance its

comprehensibility.[5] Cleaving to the daughter of his enemy (Katherine asks, later in the exchange, "Is it possible dat I should love de enemy of France?"), Henry V enacts on a national scale the all too familiar trope of the male's triumph over the female, of courtship as besieging a fortified city, and of *amours* as so many conquests.

Nevertheless, there is an attempt to understand the foreigner, even if the motive is domination.

"Intercultural"

One of the problems of a "cultural" rather than an "intercultural" perspective on nations and their traditions is that the zeal to posit a national solidarity and a coherent self-image obscures the significant vitality that immigrants bring to any culture.

The attempt of the native to understand the foreigner begins, but does not end, with translation. Depending on the caliber of the effort, translation may make the foreign more comprehensible, or it may exacerbate the incomprehensibility of the foreign. Translation may present something pseudo-foreign, i.e. an image that bears no resemblance to the original, or it may provide access that inspires a familiarity that is virtually native. It is translation that attempts to move nations from the "cultural" stage to the "intercultural" stage: a stage that recognizes the existence of the foreign and attempts an accommodation with it.

The history of literature and studies of translation tend to assume a monolithic conception of every culture as being represented by a unique national language. In fact, multilingualism is the norm, not the exception, in world cultures. As Marvin Carlson reminds us:

> The model of monolinguistic congruence between play and audience, requiring translation into a parallel language when the target audience changes, is so familiar that it might appear almost universal, but in fact nearly every period of theatre history offers examples of plays that utilize

[5] I have dealt with this challenge in Chapter 14, using Meir Sternberg's notions of (1) referential restriction (in which things foreign have no place); (2) vehicular matching (where an attempt is made to depict the foreigner as foreign), and (3) homogenizing convention (when what is foreign is presented as if it were as comprehensible as something native). Cf. Meir Sternberg, "Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis," *Poetics Today*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Summer-Autumn, 1981), pp. 221-239; Eugene Eoyang, "English as a Post-Colonial Tool: Anti-hegemonic Subversions in a Hegemonic Language," *English Today*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (October 2003), pp. 23-29.

> more than one language, and our own era is particularly rich in the number and variety of multilanguage performances.[6]

Bilingualism and trilingualism are not rare phenomena in the Old World, whether Europe or Asia (particularly if, in the case of China, one recognizes that so-called "dialects" should be considered "languages" because of their mutual incomprehensibility[7]). The omnipresence of traditional Chinese teachings in many countries of Asia, ranging from Korea and Japan in the north, to Vietnam and Singapore in the south, would seem to suggest that a good part of Asia is at least bilingual. Bilingualism has also been a factor in many translation traditions in Asia, as K. W. Taylor points out for Sino-Vietnamese translation, William Cummings for the translation of Malay and Arabic texts into a generically mongrel Makassarese, and Doris Jedamski for Malay translations of Arabic, Chinese, Indian, and European source texts.[8] In Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, as Judy Wakabayashi points out, "Classical Chinese was domesticated in various ways and in varying degrees over time, resulting in hybrid language forms known as Sino-Korean, Sino-Japanese and Sino-Vietnamese."[9] These intermixtures have not always received the attention that is their due, and one speaks of national literatures as if they were independent and separate. A true history of Asian literature must be, perforce, more "intercultural" than "cultural".

That is why I am opposed to the current preference in some circles for "foreignization" in translation. Not only does this promote more and more incomprehensible renderings under the guise of "preserving" the "foreign character" of the original (because the main attribute of the foreign is its incomprehensibility), but also because such a theory assumes that the identification of the foreign is unproblematic. In

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[6] Marvin Carlson, "The Macaronic Stage," in *East of West: Cross-Culltural Performance and the Staging of Difference*, ed. Claire Sponsler and Xiaomei Chen (New York: Palgrave, 2000), p. 16.

[7] Indeed, some Chinese "dialects" are more mutually incomprehensible than some Western "language" pairs, such as German and Dutch, or Swedish and Norwegian.

[8] K. W. Taylor, "Sino-Vietnamese Translation from Classical to Vernacular"; William Cummings, "Rethinking the Translation in Translation Studies: Questions from Makassar, Indonesia"; and Doris Jedamski, "Translation in the Malay World: Different Communities, Different Agendas," in *Asian Translation Traditions*, ed. Eva Hung and Judy Wakabayashi (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2005).

[9] *Asian Translation Traditions*, p. 25.

some countries in Asia, China is both foreign and native. At the very least, Chinese is not "foreign" in Asia in the same way that Western cultures are "foreign".

The awareness of interculturality does not necessarily diminish the coherence of a national literature. The German-Iranian philosopher Hamid Reza Yousefi has written:

> Interculturality is an orientation of thought and action that stems from the idea of unity in diversity—with this is meant the protection of one's own cultural differences and the acceptance of those of other cultures. Cultures, in an intercultural context, are not balls that bang and bounce against one another but rather the threads of a fabric interwoven together each with its own individual colour. They are free patterns of action and can demonstrate both commonalities and illuminating differences; the emphasis here is set on that which is shared, that which connects.

Then Yousefi adds: "Interculturality considers the idea of purity in culture, religion, philosophy or scientific concepts to be fictional."[10]

In an exchange with a Chinese poet whose work I have been translating for years,[11] we encountered intercultural insights relating to a poem about a full-breasted robin, singing, as the poet writes, as if he were Caruso.[12] Her description of the robin as corpulent tenor included the phrase 體如鼓, "a body like a drum." She balked at first when I rendered this phrase "barrel-chested", and wanted me to retain her original image. But that does not convey corpulence, I protested, offering the proverbial "tight as a drum" as the conventional way in English of picturing a drum. After some discussion, we realized that while there are convex as well as cylindrical drums in China and the West, the Chinese think more often of the convex drum, while Westerners are more mindful of the cylindrical drum. Then, she offered an interesting challenge. She would translate

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[10] Hamid Reza Yousefi, *On the Theory and Practice of Intercultural Philosophy*, p. 118. Available at: http://www.yousefi-interkulturell.de/inphile.pdf; accessed May 22, 2011.

[11] Wann Ai-jen; cf. "Seven Poems by Wann Ai-jen, Translated by Eugene Eoyang," *Renditions: A Chinese-English Translation Magazine*, Number 73, pp. 63-77; "Five Poems by Wann Ai-jen, Translated by Eugene Eoyang," *Renditions: A Chinese-English Translation Magazine*, Number 74, pp. 33-39.

[12] I first discussed this exchange in a paper titled "New Wine in Old Bottles: Contemporary American Poems in Classic Chinese Forms", presented at the 2010 conference of the American Comparative Literature Association in New Orleans.

into Chinese a poem that I would compose in English. This is what I produced:

A Robin in a Snowscape

Red-breasted, cold-tested,
Unruffled and feather-crested,
His ruff looks like chuff;
His fur is enough
To keep the robin warm
As a toasted bun.
He sings to show he's in form,
While he basks in the February sun.

Her retranslation rendered my "toasted bun" as 烤餅, which is not exactly "toasted bun" but something like "a pan-fried pancake", as the Chinese do not go in too much for either bread or toast. Would I have been satisfied with a more literal 多士饅頭 or 多士麵飽? No, I do not think so. Just as "body like a drum" did not work for 體如鼓, so 多士饅頭 would have sounded unnecessarily strange, "foreignized". The poem is about fat robins, after all, not about drums or buns.

The challenge of intercultural study is not only to discover what is the same and what is different among cultures, but also to uncover differences in what is assumed to be the same. I have coined the term "ethnotopes" to describe these false universals which I define as "cultural premises which are assumed to be universal, but which are not". The false assumption of universality merely betrays the hegemonic ignorance of ethnocentricity. Take, for instance, the seemingly unarguable concept of "clockwiseness" and "counterclockwiseness", the meaning of which is widespread. It is widespread because Europeans have imposed their viewpoint on the rest of the world. As far as mechanics is concerned, it does not matter in which direction the hands of the clock move, but as the clock imitated the previous time-marking technology in the West, which was the sundial, it was natural for clock-makers to follow the direction in which the shadow indicator of a sundial moved. But the early clockmakers were Europeans who inhabited the Northern Hemisphere, and indeed, the shadow on a sundial does proceed in what we now think of as a "clockwise" direction. But, had the first clocks been invented south of the equator, where the shadow indicator on a sundial would have proceeded in the opposite direction, "clockwiseness" would be now what we think of as "counterclockwiseness".

Steven Pinker, the renowned linguist, was guilty of promoting an even more egregious ethnotope when he published a book that explored "how the mind works", in which he proposed to study the

processes of the human mind by studying a phenomenon he posited as universal, i.e. irregular verbs. This blatant Eurocentricity neglects the fact that many languages in the world—Chinese, Japanese, and Hebrew among them—are totally bereft of irregular verbs. Another famous ethnotope is Samuel Johnson's condemnation of the Chinese language as being an inadequate instrument to convey meaning, when he harrumphed, "Sir, they have not an alphabet. They have not been able to form what all other nations have formed." The assumption that alphabets are universal components of language and that any country that is without an alphabet must be perforce inferior or benighted is a prime example of an ethnotope.

"Int*ra*cultural"

Although there is some tendency to minimize the difference between the terms "int*er*cultural" and "int*ra*cultural",[13] I would like to posit the following distinctions between "cultural", "intercultural", and "int*ra*cultural". By "cultural", I refer to the perspective in a country that sees something different as "foreign" and intractably unattainable. Perhaps the best expression of a "cultural" perspective would be William Butler Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium", where the object of interest and fascination is in proportion to the difference and the distance it constitutes from the persona of the poet.

THAT is no country for old men. The young
In one another's arms, birds in the trees
—Those dying generations—at their song,
The salmon-falls, the mackerel-crowded seas,
Fish, flesh, or fowl, commend all summer long
Whatever is begotten, born, and dies.
Caught in that sensual music all neglect
Monuments of unageing intellect.
An aged man is but a paltry thing,
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
For every tatter in its mortal dress,
Nor is there singing school but studying
Monuments of its own magnificence;
And therefore I have sailed the seas and come
To the holy city of Byzantium.

[13] Cf. Lin Ma, "Is There an Essential Difference between Intercultural and Intracultural Communication?" *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, Issue 6 (February 2003-May 2004).

O sages standing in God's holy fire
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
And be the singing-masters of my soul.
Consume my heart away; sick with desire
And fastened to a dying animal
It knows not what it is; and gather me
Into the artifice of eternity.

Once out of nature I shall never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
Of hammered gold and gold enamelling
To keep a drowsy Emperor awake;
Or set upon a golden bough to sing
To lords and ladies of Byzantium
Of what is past, or passing, or to come.

—William Butler Yeats, 192

The point I wish to make is that "Sailing to Byzantium" is rooted in its place and time, and the poem explores the emotional distance, in place and time, between early twentieth century Ireland in 1928 and the Byzantine Empire (395-1453) in Anatolia. A translation of the poem in modern Turkish, which would place it deictically in Istanbul, would have a totally different feeling. What is exotically far in distance in Yeats's English would be deictically near in present-day Turkish. The poem is deictically intractable.

By contrast, an "intercultural" perspective refers to the recognition (not as conscious in the "cultural" perspective) that any culture is made up of motley elements, and that some "foreign" elements have been absorbed, either by immigration, by conquest, or by the importation of ideas from a culture regarded as "dominant" or "superior". By "int*ra*cultural", I have in mind the perspective in which Heidegger's sense of *heimat* obtains not only in the country of one's origins, nor only in the disparate cultures that might have been incorporated in one's own country, but in a sense of seeing even elements not part of one's own tradition as "native"; for the int*ra*cultural citizen, the *heimat* is the world.

To illustrate the difference, we can contrast the intercultural figures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the int*ra*cultural figures of the twentieth and twenty first centuries. Joseph Conrad, Vladimir Nabokov, Joseph Brodsky, Rudyard Kipling, Tom Stoppard, Kazuo Ishiguro, Samuel Beckett, and E. M. Cioran are authors who, despite their multicultural origins, subscribed to, or felt allegiance toward, one or two cultures: Kipling, Ishiguro, and Stoppard to British culture; Nabokov and Brodsky to Russian and American culture; and E.

M. Cioran to Romanian and French traditions. The int*ra*cultural authors of the twentieth century are those like T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Ezra Pound, who subsumed the "foreign" into a larger, more cosmopolitan sense of the "native". When Eliot ends *The Waste Land* with "*Shantih, shantih, shantih"*, he is not displaying an alien concept, though he quotes Sanskrit. He implies that "*Shantih"*, whatever its origins, is now, or should be, part of the modernist tradition. Eliot is not saying that "*Shantih*", like Yeats's Byzantium, is forever remote; he is saying that it is, or should be, very near.

James Joyce, particularly in his later works, *Finnegans Wake* and the fragments of *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, assumed an int*ra*cultural stance by incorporating foreign locutions into English. When Sean O'Faolain, his compatriot, attacked Joyce for departing from the "immobility of language", Joyce's friend Eugène Jolas, editor of *transition*, retorted: "Like Shakespeare and Milton, he [Joyce] had earned the 'right' to create a vocabulary which is not only a deformation, but an amalgamation of numerous modern languages spoken in the world today."[14] Joyce was not translating foreign words and concepts into English, he was *integrating* them into English, making the foreign native, and requiring of readers in English that they become citizens of an int*ra*cultural world, where they would be heirs not only to their own culture but also to the cultures of civilizations with which they had had no direct contact.[15]

Translators have given yeoman service to the process of "int*ra*culturization", for, in providing access to the foreign, translators permit the native reader to internalize what was previously external, to familiarize themselves with what was alien before. An illustrative and ironic insight is available when contemplating the two most prolific translators of Chinese in the twentieth century: Ezra Pound and Arthur Waley. Both left a body of work which was—from the perspective both of philology and of literature—flawed. Yet both achieved some signal

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[14] "Multilingual Innovation after Joyce" panel, Modernist Studies Association Conference, October 13, 2011. Available at: http://www.msa13.com/pan-60/; accessed 8 November, 2011.

[15] Of the four great modernists, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, and Yeats, I exclude Yeats from the company of int*ra*cultural authors, despite the fact that he "translated" four Noh plays. Adapting foreign genres for native use is not the same as trying, as Joyce, Eliot, and Pound attempted, to inhabit the foreign. "To a considerable degree, [Yeats] abandoned the selflessness implicit in the Noh in order to make space for his personal … statements on the dissolution of western civilization"—Masaru Sekine and Christopher Murray, *Yeats and the Noh: A Comparative Study* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1990), p. 118.

successes. Different as they might have been in many ways, they had one thing in common: neither could speak Chinese. Now, linguists and pedants would cite this fact as evidence proving that they were both frauds, pretending to expertise that they did not really possess. Certainly, both made elementary errors. Pound showed his ignorance in his most famous translation, from the 1915 collection titled *Cathay*, "The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter", a rendering of Li Bai"s 李白 *Changgan xing* 長干行 ("A Song of Changgan"). In his translation, Pound wrote "...the river Kiang" as if "Kiang" 江 were a proper name, when what it means in Chinese is "river". Waley also made mistakes, far fewer because he could read Chinese even if he could not speak it; his most famous gaffe was to mistranslate the Chinese compound for "bare feet" 赤足 as "red feet". Nevertheless, however imperfect their attempts were to capture the original Chinese in accessible English, Waley and Pound were int*ra*cultural pioneers, because they tried to incorporate what was alien and strange into their own sensibilities—to create a nativized, anglicized China. Their feat and their ambition were all the more remarkable precisely because they did not speak Chinese. To try to understand a foreign sensibility without full access to their language, from the int*ra*cultural perspective, far from being a lamentable incompetency, may be viewed as brave and venturesome.

The int*ra*cultural world is more widespread than one might first suspect. From the Indians who have discovered their own Sanskrit tradition—"the Bhagavadgita, the Upanishads, the Epic and Purana literature"[16]—in English translation; to the Japanese who discover their native masterpiece, *The Tale of Genji* (*Genji monogatari*), in English translation (first Arthur Waley's, now Edward Seidensticker's); to the Israelis who are more comfortable with the King James Version of the Old Testament than the Biblical Hebrew they chant at the synagogue; and to the European heirs of Aristotle, whose preservation of texts in Arabic translations and whose recovery through Avicenna and Averroes sparked the Renaissance and initiated what we now regard as the modern world—the int*ra*cultural factor has been by no means marginal or incidental in world culture. Sometimes, crucially, one recaptures one's native culture through translations from a foreign tongue. In these instances of cultural exchange, it is hard to distinguish between what is foreign and what is native.

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[16] William J. Jackson, ed., *J.L. Mehta on Heidegger, Hermeneutics, and Indian tradition* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), p. 154.

The relevance of translation is not merely that it conveys works from one language into another language; translation often affects the original. Indeed, in Japan, it was the impetus for *gembunitchi*, a new sublanguage combining colloquial and foreign elements.[17] In the case of Haruki Murakami, translation is at the heart of his voice, and the way he constructs his fiction. Murakami, as Sam Anderson has reported in a profile in *The New York Times*, "is always shuttling us back and forth between worlds. This calls to mind the act of translation—shuttling from one world to another—which is in many ways the key to understanding Murakami's work .... When Murakami sat down to write his first novel, he struggled until he came up with an unorthodox solution: he wrote the book's opening in English, then translated it back into Japanese. This, he says, is how he found his voice. Murakami's longstanding translator, Jay Rubin, told me that a distinctive feature of Murakami's Japanese is that it often reads, in the original, as if it has been translated from English."[18] By sounding like a translation in the original, Murakami has effectively integrated the foreign into the native, the other into the self. Indeed, his characters act like translators: "A Murakami character," Anderson says, "is always, in a sense, translating between radically different worlds: mundane and bizarre, natural and supernatural, country and city, male and female, overground and underground. His entire *oeuvre*, in other words, is the act of translation dramatized."

One of the most memorable int*ra*cultural moments that I know of occurs in Jean Renoir's classic 1937 film, *La Grande Illusion*, in which Pierre Fresnay plays Boeldieu, a French aristocrat, and Erich von Stroheim takes the role of Rauffenstein, representing German nobility. In their colloquy, which takes place in French, Rauffenstein laments the fact that, whatever the outcome of the war, it will represent the end of the Boeldieus and the Rauffensteins. Clearly, Rauffenstein views French not as a foreign language but as part of his own aristocratic heritage (the two

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[17] A subject that has been researched by two late lamented colleagues: Masao Miyoshi (1928-2009) in *The Accomplices of Silence: The Modern Japanese Novel* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1974) and Ohsawa Yoshihiro (1949-2005), "Beyond the Genbun Itchi Movement: Natsume Soseki's Writing in Kokoro," in the *Proceedings of the Association for Japanese Literary Studies*, Summer 2001.

[18] Sam Anderson, "The Fierce Imagination of Haruki Murakami," *The New York Times*, October 21, 2011. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/23/magazine/the-fierce-imagination-of-haruki-murakami.html?src=me&ref=general; accessed October 23, 2011. One might well ask how one might "foreignize" Murakami in translation!

also exchange a snatch of English). Nationalism, both French and German, are, Renoir seems to suggest, at the roots of the conflict, but the solidarity between classes across cultures and languages is more ennobling than patriotism and military service. For Rauffenstein, command of French (and English) is the mark of sophistication, worldliness and refinement. His deference to his French counterpart indicates a sympathy for the other and an inclusion of the other in one's own self-image. He has taken the foreign to heart, and is as comfortable in French as in German. His *heimat* is not Germany, but Europe; his perspective is not cultural, nor even intercultural, but int*ra*cultural.

Marvin Carlson has detailed the phenomenon of the macaronic stage all over the world, from the Québécois theater productions in French and English to the production of *Waiting for Godot* alternately in Hebrew and Arabic in Haifa, and to his productions in New Zealand which offer dialogues in both Maori and English.[19] Bilingual theatre is especially congenial to satire: one recalls Jacques Barbeau's take-off of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*; Barbeau's play, in the 1970s, was entitled "Manon Lastcall". Macaronic—int*ra*cultural—theater has even arrived on Broadway with David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish*, with dialogue in both Chinese and English.

The notion of int*ra*culture, an "at-homeness" in the world, no matter how foreign the venue or the culture, was enunciated early on, in the twelfth century, by Hugh of St. Victor, in a passage which the Bulgarian-French literary theorist, Tzvetan Todorov, has quoted:

> The man who finds his country sweet is only a raw beginner, the man for whom each country is as his own is already strong; but only the man for whom the whole world is as a foreign country is perfect.[20]

In the foreword to *The Conquest of America*, from which this quote derives, Todorov continued with an aside that placed him in a succession of int*ra*cultural men of the world:

> (I myself, a Bulgarian living in France, borrow this quotation from Edward Said, a Palestinian living in the United States, who himself found it in Erich Auerbach, a German exiled in Turkey.)

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[19] "The Macaronic Stage," in *East of West: Cross-Cultural Performance and the Staging of Difference* (New York, Palgrave, 2000), pp. 21-30.

[20] Quoted by Tzvetan Todorov in *The Conquest of America*, translated by Richard Howard (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 250. I first discussed this quote at the end of my Epilogue in *The Transparent Eye* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), p. 280.

The chain of exiles can be extended around the world with writers like Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, Vladimir Nabokov, Josef Brodsky, Emil Cioran, Paul Celan, James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Czeslaw Milosz, Gao Xingjian, François Cheng, Samuel Beckett, Kazuo Ishiguro, Tom Stoppard, and David Henry Hwang. We have a new iteration of Goethe's notion of *Weltliteratur*, for we have not only translations that give us access to the literatures of many countries, we now have many authors who embody different parts of the world in their own cultural compositions, and who reflect, in their writing, different cultures of the world.

Goethe was particularly proud of the Germans of his time, and of German translations of foreign literatures:

> It is part of the nature of the German to respect everything foreign for its own sake and to adapt himself to foreign idiosyncrasies. This and the great suppleness of our language make German translations particularly accurate and satisfying.[21]

"One must learn to note the characteristics of every nation," Goethe counseled on another occasion, "and *take them for granted*, in order to meet each nation on its own ground" [italics mine].[22]

Goethe was, indeed, an int*ra*cultural citizen of the world, who, proud German as he was, saw himself as heir to the world's treasures, not merely the Teutonic traditions. Goethe was, as Hugh of St. Victor had foretold, "a man for whom the whole world was as a foreign country", but they were foreign countries in which Goethe insisted on feeling at home: "The world at large", Goethe wrote, "no matter how vast it may be, is only an expanded homeland [*erweitertes Vaterland*]...."[23]

That Goethe was a true citizen of the world can be corroborated by no less a witness than Napoleon, as recalled by Nietzsche. In his *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche wrote: "Finally we should understand with sufficient profundity Napoleon's surprise when he came to visit

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[21] Johann Peter Eckermann, *Conversations with Goethe*, 1835; quoted in Fritz Strich, *Goethe and World Literature*, translated by C.A.M. Sym (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 27.

[22] Quoted in Fritz Strich, *Goethe and World Literature*, p. 13-14.

[23] John Gearey, ed., *Essays on Art and Literature: Goethe's Collected Works*, Vol. 3 (New York: Suhrkamp, 1986), p. 277.

Goethe—'Voilà un homme!'—which is, in effect, saying: That is really a man! And I had expected only a German!"[24]

[24] Friederich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 1886, Online Edition, Chapter 6, "We Scholars", p. 83; translator, Helen Zimmern; 4th ed., 2nd impression, London, Allen & Unwin, 1967. Available at:
http://www.aestheteka.com/beyond%20good%20and%20evil.htm;
accessed November 7, 2011. Punctuation modified according to the online text prepared by Ian Johnston; available at:
http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/nietzsche/beyondgoodandevil6.htm;
accessed November 10, 2011.