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REVIEW ARTICLES

VISIONS AND DESIRES IN THE 13TH ICLA '91 TOKYO CONGRESS AND ITS PROCEEDINGS*

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The aim of this review article is to analyse the complete set of the proceedings of the 13th Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, Tokyo 1991, and the separate Chinese version containing the contributions of the Chinese participants from the PRC.[1]

For Haga Toru and Kano Takayo whose tireless and enthusiastic work made the ICLA '91 possible

"Since ancient times," wrote the unnamed author in the official programme of the 13th ICLA Congress, "people have used vision to try to come to terms with the world, and to find spiritual sustenance. Today as well we seek the power to envision the future. The force of vision is an ardent wish for the infinite and the absolute. It encompasses both love and hatred and the irresistible urge for beauty, wealth and immortality."

Haga Toru, *spiritus rector* both of the 13th ICLA Congress and of its *Proceedings,* wrote sincerely in the *Preface. A New Breeze from the East, New Breeze toward the East*, that it was Kobayashi Yasuo, a specialist in French literature, who restated the original idea of "illusion, or imagination, as a 'vision'", and then Kawamoto Koji, Haga's *aide-de-camp,* proposed "*vision no chikara*" (the force of vision), that became the most general topic of the congress. Ochi Hiroshi, one of the most lavish sponsors, mentioned the *Bible*, and Haga Toru

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[1] *The Force of Vision. ICLA '91 Tokyo. Proceedings of the XIIIth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association.* Miner, Earl and Haga Toru (General Editors), 6 Vols., Tokyo, University of Tokyo Press 1995, 549, 657, 596, 142, 186 and 626 pp. and *Yuwang yu huanxiang. Dongfang yu Xifang (Desire and Vision. East and West)*. Ed. by Yue Daiyun and Liu Guozang. Nanchang. People's Publishing House of Jiangxi Province 1991, 511 pp.

looked into it, and found one example of the "force of vision" in the *Proverbs, 29*, 18: "Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he." The vision (*yixiang* in Chinese) in the *Bible,* is concerned mostly with two aspects of God's Providence: words by Prophets and revelations in dreams.[2]

I personally would prefer to use another kind of *biblical* vision. Since my childhood I appreciate very much a woodcut by W. Aarland, one of the painters in the "Nazarite Group" around Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld (1794–1872),[3] showing Moses, "an hundred and twenty years old",[4] on the Mount of Nebo (which means, by chance, Heaven in Slovak), with God showing the greatest among the Hebrew Prophets, the whole *Promised Land*: "all the land of Gilead, unto Dan. And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Juda, unto the utmost sea. And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar."[5] What Haga Toru and his ICLA '91 Tokyo Congress Headquarters has done, mainly thanks to many years of efforts by Kano Takayo, is in our time similarly magnificent as the view and vision just mentioned. The framework of this new vision comprises nearly all corners of Comparative Literature in *orbe universo.*

It is self-evident that the unnamed author immediately after the *Bible* reached for the legacy which was one of the most important sources of the East Asian tradition: for *Zhuangzi*, Chapter Twelve entitled *Heaven and Earth*. Here the man of kingly Virtue "sees in the darkest, hears where there is no sound. In the midst of the darkness, he alone sees the dawn; in the midst of the soundless, he alone hears harmony. Therefore, in depth piled upon depth he can spy out the thing; in spirituality piled upon spirituality he can discover the essence."[6] The eminent translator Burton Watson is right when he compares these words with Laozi's *Daodejing,* XXI: "shadowy and indistinct, within it is a thing; dim and dark, within it is an essence."[7] And maybe, it is likewise right to claim that all these allegations find its most eloquent illustrations in the fabulous Zhuangzian roc, named Peng, that "measures I don't know how many thousand li across, and when he rises up and flies off, his wings are like clouds over the sky..."[8] This mythical bird, "with a back like Mount T'ai... beats the whirlwind, leaps

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[2] *"Chinese Hastings". Dictionary of the Bible.* Edited by Rees, W. H. and Macgillivray, D. Hong Kong, Shengshu gonghui 1953, p. 611.

[3] Schnorr von Carolsfeld, J.: *Die Bibel in Bildern.* Bilderläuterungen von Heinrich Merz. Dortmund, Harenberg 1983, p. 135.

[4] *Deuteronomy*, *34*, 7. With the exception of the text to note 11, the translation used here is always the *King James Bible.*

[5] Ibid., *34*, 1–2.

[6] *Zhuangzi yinde (A Concordance to Chuang Tzu)*. Peking, Harvard-Yenching Institute 1947, p. 29 and *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu.* Trans. by Burton Watson. New York and London, Columbia University Press 1968, p. 128.

[7] Loc. cit.

[8] Cf. ibid., p. 1 and 29 respectively.

into the air, and rises up ninety thousand li, cutting through the clouds and mist, shouldering the blue sky, and then he turns his eyes south and prepares to journey to the southern darkness."[9]

This *xiaoyaoyou* (free and easy wandering) is not so easy as it seems at first glance. It is not only a product of imagination, it is also a consequence of much efforts, courage, broad and deep knowledge of things and their essence, transcending often the borders of our time and space. The *nanming* (southern darkness), just mentioned, here alludes to something unknown, not as yet studied, for us enigmatic, the very object of our present and future research.

Haga Toru in his *Preface* pointed to Matsuo Basho (1644–1694) and to Yoshida Shoin (1830–1859), François Villon, Henry David Thoreau and Kenneth Clark, as examples for just such a vision. As a representative of the "Tokyo School" of Comparative Literature, he tried and succeeded to bring it closer to Comparative Culture. This tendency quite obvious at the ICLA '91 Tokyo Congress, became generally accepted also at the ICLA '94 Edmonton Congress and at the last ICLA '97 Leiden congress.

1

The first volume of the *Proceedings* begins with the section *Dramas of Desire*, ed. by Ziva Ben-Porat and Hana Wirth-Nesher (both of Tel Aviv University). "Dramas of Desire" was also the topic of the first section, and it was probably only by a freak of chance, that it begins with a study by Maria Alzira Seixo (University of Lisbon), the President of the ICLA between the Tokyo and Edmonton Congresses, on two Portuguese and their relation to the Land of the Rising Sun. "Comprehensive differentiation" in the work of F.M. Pinto (1511–1583) and "nostalgic differentiation" (I, p. 17) in the works of Venceslau de Morais (1854–1929) in relation to his homeland and to Japan, presented here shows us two examples we should strive for in this age of globalization: intercultural communication and mutual understanding. The Japanese proverb: Au wa wakare no hajime (Meeting is the beginning of separation), quoted by de Morais, may be supplemented here by the second sentence from *Lunyu (The Analects of Confucius)*: You peng zi yuan fang lai, bu yi luo hu? (Is it not a joy to have friends come from afar?)[10] Both have one thing in common: the Others and We are involved in dialectical and reciprocal relationship that should be solved for the benefit of mankind.

In one of the shortest essays of the whole *Proceedings,* Kimie Imura Lawlor (Misei University, Tokyo), condensed the work of years on research into the reception of Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* in Japan. Probably in no other country of the East was Wilde's one-act-play so manysidedly welcome as in Japan. Probably

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[9] Cf. ibid., p. 1 and 31 respectively.

[10] CONFUCIUS: *The Analects (Lun yü)*. Trans. by D.C. Lau. Hong Kong, The Chinese University Press 1983, pp. 3 and 4.

Mishima Yukio's creative elaboration of the theme was most representative and unique, since *Salomé* "gave definitive expression to his aesthetic theory in its final phase", (I, p. 43) before his death in 1970.

As seen from another essay by Sasaki Hideaki (Nagoya Institute of Technology), Morita Sohei, author of the novel *Baien (Smoke)* from the year 1909, was not so successful as Mishima. Maybe because of the inadequacy of his imagination, his vision of the two lovers did not achieve the depth and the zeal of the *Triumph of Death* by Gabrielle d'Annunzio, although it was the author's aim.

Paola Mildonian (University of Venice) in her paper with a long title *Codes d'amour et codes sociaux dans la littérature arménienne du Moyen-Age: à la croisée de cultures islamiques et chrétiennes,* treats the topic of love and desire in some works of Armenian poetry on the background of the Greco-Roman, Christian, Arabic, Persian, Georgian, and famous epics, such as *Layla and Majnun, Rustam and Zal, or Shirin and Farhad*.

Not desire, but passion, honour, its defence and vengeance, is the topic of Joseph V. Ricapito's (Louisiana State University): *Literary Configurations of Honor: A Comparison between Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Racine and Corneille.* After Corneille's *Cid*, de Vega's *Peribáñez y el comendador de Ocaña* and *El castigo sin venganza*, Racine's *Phèdre*, Ricapito analyses three novellas by Cervantes where Christian humanism and the author's "great understanding of life's processes break through over cruelty and vengeance" (I, p.155).

József Pal (University of Szeged) devotes only a few pages to another interesting theme within the realm of desires and their (un)fulfilment in wonderful treatment in *Mors osculi: un motif syncrétique dans la Florence du XVème siècle.* Its origin Pal sees in the Neoplatonism and in its predecessors, and nourished by the teachings of Moses, Pythagoras, Plotinus, Zoroaster and Cabbala. The objects of the analysis are Lorenzo de' Medici, Michelangelo, Pico della Mirandola, and even "Osculetur me osculo oris sui"[11] from the biblical *Song of Songs.* For me, at least, the paper *Visions of Beauty: The Western Rhetorical Tradition*, seems to be the best among the section II, introduced by Roseann Runte (Université York, Toronto) and Hans H. Runte (Dalhousie University, Halifax). Its author George A. Kennedy (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), traces the concept of beauty from the words contributed to Homer through Plato, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* up to Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, or William Hogarth's *The Analysis of Beauty,* and comes to a statement that a "vision of beauty, whether human beauty, natural beauty, or transcendental beauty, is a rhetorical device by which emotional energy is imparted to a text." (I, p. 289). Up to the 4th cent. B.C., there were no really voluptous representations of womanly beauty in Greek art. More attention was paid to the draperies and beautiful clothes. Beauty was an outcome of different effects on the consumers. Beautiful and good

[11] *Canticum canticorum Salomonis, 1,* 1. In: *Biblia sacra Vulgatae editionis.* Tomus II. Ratisbonae 1857, p. 437.

(*kalos k'agathos)* should connect physical and moral beauty. The very different beauty of the *Song of Songs* began exercise its power in Europe during the Middle Ages and later. As to beauty and truth, just the same is valid, as to with beauty and goodness. Beauty is never a guarantee of the first or of the second. It is more or less an illusion. It has much to do with our needs and visions. It may be a source of inspiration as well as of deception.

Walter Bernhart (University of Graz) in his contribution *"Kalogenetic" Functions of Prosody: An Exercise in Comparative Poetics,* follows neurophysical findings (and hypotheses?) by Frederick Turner and Ernst Pöppel, according to which the metrical organization of the poem are "closely related to the hemispheric specialization of the human brain", i.e., to its right part, while "poetry as language is presumably processed by the left temporal lobe" (I, p. 306). Kalogenetic (beauty-begetting) is, according to Bernhart, *kokoro* in *waka* or *tanka* (specifically in *Kokinshu*), where the linguistic shape of the poem is not so important as *kokoro*, which helps to achieve a "profound awareness of reality" and "constructs a unified harmonious image of the world" (I, p. 309).

Rabindranath Tagore would certainly not agree with G.A. Kennedy that beauty is only a "rhetorical device". As shown in the paper *Visions of Beauty: Tagore and European Romanticism* by Mohit K. Ray (Burdwan University), Tagore was most impressed by Keats' idea from the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* that "Beauty is truth and truth is beauty", but also to Plato's *Lysis*, "the good is beautiful", or to his *Republic* where beauty is considered as the manifestation of goodness. From German Romanticists Tagore mostly followed Schiller's idea of the aesthetic education of man and proclaimed that the job of the soul "is to establish communication. This leads to the creation of beauty" (I, p. 347).

Besides Kimie Imura Lawlor, another Japanese scholar Yamashita Mayumi (Tohoku University of Art & Design, Yamagata), in *Aesthetic Resistance of Mishima Yukio in Modern No Plays,* analyses a play *Sotoba Komachi (Komachi on the Stupa)*. The original version of this No play delineates famous *waka* woman poet Ono no Komachi, celebrated for her beauty and brilliant talent. She was self-proud and cruel to her innumerable adorers. One of them, Captain Fukakusa, could have won her after visiting her one hundred times. He did not succeed because he died of despair after being in her presence ninety nine times. This beauty without mercy was a model of creative imitation by Mishima, who instead of aristocratic gentleman Fukakusa made Komachi's partner in wooing a shabbily dressed and drunken young poet who tries to persuade himself that the old and ugly courtesan is indeed beautiful. He succeeds in it, but according to her prewarning such a declaration would bring his immediate death. If the figure of Salomé was the perfect symbol for Mishima's theory of life (I, p. 43), Ono no Komachi became for him the ikon "of the metaphysical beauty that can survive any kind of disastrous reality" (I, p. 401). If the caricature of the poet from *Sotoba Komachi* is Mishima's self-portrait, *Salomé* presented his aesthetic theory in the last years of his life.

Joshua S. Mostow (University of British Columbia), underlines the idea that in Chinese, and mainly Japanese literature of the classical period, at least from

Heian up to *The Tale of Genji*, there are to be found parallels to the Western art and literature, where paintings are connected with silence, sometime joyful, but even more often full of sadness as in the poem by Sanjô no Machi (7th cent.): "Is this the waterfall/ of the dammed up thoughts/ within my heart? Although I see it fall/ I can hear no sound" (I, p. 464). I personally suppose that the amount of silence in Japanese and Chinese classical poetry far exceeds that in European literatures.

If Mostow's contribution alludes to the beauty indirectly, Eva Le Grand (Université du Quebec à Montréal) makes out of it a part of the research programme in *Kitsch, roman et beauté,* where her compatriot Milan Kundera is the main object of her study. The *bel effet* of the kitsch is an eternal problem of the aesthetic evaluation of the art production. The kitsch is not only a question of the bad taste. According to Hermann Broch every work of art contains a small particle of kitsch, and according to Kundera, kitsch (inclusive its fictional dimension) is an existential category and it is correct to regard it as an "expression esthétique de tout *accord catégorique avec l'être*" (I, p. 427). We have to live with it in our modern and postmodern age.

Lessley Higgins (New York University, Toronto) considers the beauty from the point of view of its counterpole. *"I think we are in rat's alley": Modernism and the "Cult of Ugliness",* turns upside down many of the Plato's and later visions, fracturing and dismantling them. Hulme, Eliot, Pound and Lewis are a target of his investigations and Jules Laforgue's irony to "vivre et penser selon le Beau, le Bien, le Vrai", (I, p. 512) their immediate aim.

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The second volume of the *Proceedings* contains the materials from Section III, entitled Visions of History and introduced by Gerald Gillespie (Stanford University), and Section VI, entitled Visions of the Other and introduced by Sumie Jones (Indiana University, Bloomington) and Margaret R. Higonnet (University of Connecticut, Storrs). As admitted by Gillespie, it is necessary (or "interesting", as he mentions) "the relative absence of major topic in this volume, or at least the difference in emphasis on or approach to it" (II, p. 7). If the first volume is more excellent in this respect, i.e., the force of vision there is more conspicuous, this one also to be read by the interested scholars, since the vision is only a part of the reality under the research – and literary comparatists should be regarded as such. It is necessary to agree with a very sober reasoning by Alsted in his *Scientiarum omnium Encyclopaedia* from the year 1649: "Si fingat, peccat in historiam, si non fingat, peccat in poesin" (II, p. 21). Therefore some kind of *caveat* in relation to the vision is understandable and to recommend in the scholarship.

One kind of this vision is shown in John J. Boccelari's (Kanagawa University, Yokohama), *The Resurrection of History: Motoori Norinaga and Text Commentary.* Norinaga (1730–1801) *peccavit in historiam*. He was partly right when being one of the initiators of the attack against the "Chinese learning" (*kara-*

manabi) in relation to the Japanese literary heritage. On the other hand, when he supposed that "using Chinese words to grasp Japanese situation can only lead astray" (II, p. 95), he was wrong. A rigid vision of the harmful effect of Chinese language on Japanese thought and culture was erroneous, although a mild national spirit was necessary as a force leading to the revival of the Japanese identity.

Sangkok Lee (Seoul National University) in his contributions to Conrad's *Nostromo* and Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* presents two different visions of history. Whereas Conrad "deliberately uses the time-shift technique so that history may appear to have come to a standstill" (II, p. 137), in Márquez's novel "there are many short patches of recollections by major characters... but in Macondo somehow history seems to have stalled" (II, pp. 137–138). In reality, Conrad was more attached to history as it seems at first glance, and in Márquez even more famous novel the history is forgotten and only memory is trustworthy faculty of human brain.

Two other important contributions have something to do with Hebrew and Christian apocalyptic visions. In the first of them Francis K.H. So (Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung) treats them typologically in relation to the endings of popular and hagiographic tales from *Taiping guangji* (5th-10th cent.). The Chinese vision did not presuppose divine end judgement, it was always without threat and terror present in Judeo-Christian apocalypses. There the cosmic rhythm does not cease and the life of the universe remain, so-to-say, forever. Visionary Christian Puritanism, according to Peter J.H. Titlestad (University of Pretoria), produced a peculiar kind of apocalypse in the l7th cent. English literature. It was much less human, built on the (mis)conceptions of the Christian exegeses. The subject of analysis is Milton's *Paradise Lost* on the background of the contemporary struggles between Puritans and Presbyterians trying to achieve power in England. According to Milton, not apocalypse leads to paradise. Paradise on this wicked world is possible only within human souls.

A. Owen Aldridge (University of Illinois, Urbana) in his *Paradise Lust: Sex, Sexuality and Utopianism* certainly does not follow Puritan millenarianism, but European exoticism, especially after Henry Neville's *The Isles of Pines* (1668), "the title of which is an anagram on the male sexual organ" (II, p. 187) and Diderot's *Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville* (1792). As a prominent comparatist at home both in the East and West, he strides over the centuries in searching for utopian, even more dystopian places describing erotic visions and desires in their common, but also queer forms.

Dreamy visions of Renaissance are treated by Eric MacPhail (Indiana University, Bloomington). They are constructed as prophecies and memoirs, due to the impact of the god Janus Geminus who has two faces symbolizing "both an exit and an entry, both illusion and revelation" (II, p. 193). In the paper by Emma Marras (Italian Association of Comparative Literature), similar dichotomy, this time between history and romance, reality and fiction, we find in Washington Irving's literary analysis of Christopher Columbus' experience.

It was very good choice to reach after the Jewish and Chinese genocide literature and to consider its treatment of obsession and oblivion as two different and nearly contradictory visions. Sheng-mei Ma (James Madison University, Harrisonburg) analyses the approaches of the Jewish and Chinese writers to Nazi Holocaust and Maoist Cultural Revolution. The literature on the Jewish racial genocide is much more deep and valuable from literary point of view, than mostly censured and restrained literature concerned with Chinese *cultural* genocide. Maybe, except for other mostly political reasons, also the need of the traditional Chinese literature stressing the principle of *wen rou dun hou* (moderate, gentle, sincere and deep), had an impact on this literature.

From sociopolitical, not from just literary point of view, the section VI, Visions of the Other, was probably the most significant topic of the ICLA '91 Congress. In addition to it, a special panel discussion introduced by Douwe Fokkema (Utrecht University), and held at the very end of the Congress, was also devoted to it. Let us begin with the last one.

Fokkema in his *Introduction* stressed the cognitive models when dealing with the communication between Us and the Others, which are usually difficult to acquire, and they are in reality insufficient (VI, pp. 358–359). The need of study, research and teaching was underlined by some speakers from the floor, including me and Ziva Ben Porat, as far as I remember, in a very vivid discussion. It is necessary to agree with Fokkema, who was a Chairman, that all these noetic and pedagogical procedures are problematic, if both sides involved in the intercultural or other kind communication are not enough intensive, and do not comprise also counterfluent faculties of Us and the Others, mainly volitional and psychological.

In *Recurring Mispresentations: Images of Others and Their Interpretations* Ben Porat analysed the interliterary communication between Israelis and Arabs. First, she cited *Genesis 32*, 24–30. There, in the passage depicting the wrestling of the Patriarch Jacob at Peniel (i.e., The Face of God) an unspecified Other certainly appeared, but he was friendly to Jacob anyway. The situation with Arabs (and vice versa) in the state of Israel is different. The relative unwillingness on both sides to acknowledge the cultural, political, religious, ethical and other values of the Other, not enough mutual understanding and esteem, national prejudices, have the result that the successful communication which should always be an aim behind the visions of the Other, will certainly not be achieved in the foreseeable future.

Chieko Mulhern (Fukuoka Jogakuin College) showed in her paper concerned with these visions in Japanese literature that the Japanese women writers "have never felt, much less been treated like 'mad women in the attic'" and they likewise "never had to apologize for their creative energy as artists, or suffer the negative image of the female artist as a monster or a mad woman in social rebellion, they had no pressing need to define the male as the Other to fight and subjugate" (VI, p. 384), as many other militant feminists usually do.

Ho-Hsiang Yuan (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) followed the "image of the Other" on the basis of very broad material beginning with *The Odys-*

sey and ending with World War II in Japan and China. He understood it more or less in the sense of the ancient Greeks as a contradiction between Greeks and "barbarians", although the objects of mutual confrontation were always in the process of unceasing change. He stresses Foucault's concept of power/knowledge and according to him "the vision of the other is often linked in a circular relation with systems of power which attempt to sustain the power to further perpetuate it" (VI, p. 403). This, of course, prevents any kind of mutual communication and understanding.

In the proper discussion on Visions of the Other Yael S. Feldman (New York University) returns back to the problem analysed by Ziva Ben Porat, but with the shift in emphasis on the distinction between Jews and Israelis, Ashkenazis and Sephardis and the secular-religious coexistence. The "Otherness" among themselves is one of the important aspects in contemporary Israeli fiction.

From *The Rupture of Eurocentric Perspective in Latin America's Fictional and Critical Discourse* by Eduardo de Faria Coutinho (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), shows that the eminence of the Latin American writers in the world does not extend to literary critics, or in the words of the late Octavio Paz, Latin American Criticism "did not as a general rule, nourish itself on its own thought" (II, p. 367), and is satisfied with some exceptions, with the import of currents from Europe, mostly French Structuralism and post-structuralist trends. Here it is necessary to intensify the tendency contributing towards questioning Eurocentrism in literary studies, and revalorization of indigenous traditions, as was the case in Latin American fiction.

Octavio Paz is also *Kronzeuge* in the paper by Tania Franco Carvalhal (Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul) entitled *La tradition du Haiku dans la poésie latino-américaine: un cas de médiation*. Octavio Paz claimed the presence of Japanese *haiku* in the works of Mexican poets Juan José Toblada and Effren Rebolledo. The process of communication between "Us" and "Others" may be, or could be mutual. If the Mexicans embraced *haiku* on one side, the Japanese responded with favourable reception of Mexican Concrete Poetry by Haroldo Campos and others.

Muriel Détrie (Université de Tours) in her *La question de l'amour dans quelques adaptations occidentales de la légend du Bouddha*, tries to follow problem of heterosexual love in the works by Paul Morand, Edwin Arnold and Victor Segalen in relation to Buddha's teachings and the mythical stories connected with him. None of them contradict his doctrine which considers "l'amour comme un aveuglement et le pire des attachements" (II, pp. 399–400).

Rien T. Segers (University of Groningen), in his *Research into Cultural Identity: The Case of Japanese 'Uniqueness' between East and West,* doubts the cultural "uniqueness" of every nation, Japanese inclusive. The problem of identity is very problematic in this state of research, and especially it cannot be raised by the representatives of this identity, national or cultural, but must always be checked by the "Others" whose vision could correct the inadequacies of the subjective view. In Comparative Literature, this specific problem, if guided by a

properly elaborated methodology of an interdisciplinary kind, may bring fruitful results.

Claude Gandelman's (Haifa University) *From Metaphysical Aesthetics to Semiotics: Claudel, Malraux, Barthes as Interpreters of Oriental Civilizations for the West,* highlights these three outstanding men of letters for their import to the better knowledge of the East, especially Japan, to the West. Although not one of them was really proficient in any Oriental languages, due to their talents and intuition, or visions, they were able to enrich our understanding of Oriental literatures and arts. I do agree with much in Claudel's and Malraux's contribution, although not in all, since the language is extremely important in this respect, but I doubt about Barthes' contribution in the field of semiotics what is Japan as *The Empire of Signs* concerned. Even if I do not take into account his musings of the kind, "to know a foreign (alien) language and yet not to understand it... to descend into the untranslatable, to experience its shock without ever muffling it until everything Occidental in us totters and the rights of the 'father tongue' vacillate" (II, p. 517), which are too sophistic, Barthes' admiration, e.g. for postal designation in Tokyo not indicating the names of the streets, made me angry and reminiscent of my stay there during the ICLA Congress when I lost four hours in the evening searching for my sleeping place (even with the assistance of a Japanese friend) near Hikashi Nakano Station.

Walter Pache (University of Augsburg), when comparing Lafcadio Hearn's *Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life*, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's introduction to its German translation, and his *Elektra,* points out to the impact of Buddhist belief in transmigration of souls, or the idea of preexistence in the case of Elektra, who is not able to take revenge on her stepmother Klytaemnestra for killing her father Agamemnon.

Klytaemnestra (this time as Clytemnestra, or Clitennestra) and Helen, re-visioned and re-presented in contemporary women writers by Kathleen L. Komar (University of California, Los Angeles) were analysed as feminine mythmaking products during the 20th century. Helen is delineated from this perspective by H(ilda) D(oolittle) and Judy Grahn, and Clytemnestra by Dacia Maraini and Christine Brückner. These women authors deconstruct "the earlier female type in order to reconstruct their own versions of female existence," e.g., when asking: "Bist du nun glücklich, toter Agamemnon?" (II, p. 593), or changing her into a lesbian figure, or into an Italian ex-prostitute, textile-worker hating her Sicilian Agamemnone earning his money in America, and dying mentally insane after her pregnant fourteen year old Ifigenia lost her life during childbirth.

Hendrik Birus (Universität München), the editor of the best commented version of Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*, tries to characterize Goethe's Orientalism, which was according to the author's opinion very different from that proclaimed by Edward W. Said, although Said refers to this work of Goethe "almost as a leitmotiv" (p. 573). A more liberal point of view might be the outcome of German non-involvement in the colonial enterprise of that time and Goethe's sympathetic identification with different Oriental literatures.

3

The third volume of the *Proceedings* consists of the materials from Section IV entitled Powers of Narration and was introduced by Gillespie and André Lorant (Université de Paris XII), and Section V entitled Vision and Re-vision of Literary Theory, introduced by Will van Peer (University of Utrecht).

I was never interested in the narrative methods in literature and Gillespie together with Lorant (or vice versa) have written an excellent systematic analysis of the papers from this section and therefore I think that it would be superfluous to write down my comments and impressions.

Section V is called very simply Literary Theory on the cover of the third volume of the *Proceedings*. I regard it as just up to the point, since the term "vision" would be probably a bit exaggerating its merits. Maybe "revision" or even "re-vision" would be better, but the second has got a rather feminist flavour in our time. More imagination than vision is to be found in the workshop Literary Theory appended to the volume, chaired by Elrud Ibsch (University of Amsterdam).

Feminist perspective is clear from Margaret A. Higonnet's paper on realism in the works of George Sand, nineteenth century German and English *Bildungsroman*, with the shift of emphasis on gender, as one of the significant features of the social order. Adrian Marino (University of Cluj, Rumania), one of the most eminent literary theoreticians from Eastern Europe, muses on a new comparative vision in relation to "European" and "World" literature. His is a "militant comparativism" modelled on Etiemble, where just this "militant" is probably its most important feature, but because its semantic dress it is a bit redolent of the atmosphere of the totalitarian era. Otherwise the essay is excellent for the end of our and the beginning of the next century, stressing the free communication and circulation of ideas, cooperation and mutual stimulation, competition and creative emulation, and last but not least, a new literary humanism including all literatures of the world.

Futuristic Directions for Comparative Literature by Gurbhagat Singh (Punjabi University, Patiala) is too critical of nearly all recent and contemporary theories of literature. He proposes to follow Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus* without explaining it sufficiently, and the so-called *semio-simulacral* study with "Kristeva's notion of 'semio-choric' creative-mother-energy of object (*Desire in Language)* against the reifying 'symbolic' and Baudrillaurd's 'simulacre' (*Simulacra and Simulation)* in which the signifiers get dissociated with the signifieds" (III, pp. 314–315). Here is *eloquentiae satis* but the rational message is missing.

In his treatise of generic (or genological) aspects of Eastern and Western literariness, József Szili (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest), tries to comment on or slightly expand Earl Miner's pioneering monograph *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay in Theories of Literature* (1990) and in his study *On the Genesis and Development of Literary Systems* (1979), mainly on the triadic view of genres (in modern Europe), and dyadic, concerned with an-

cient Greek drama, mostly tragedy, and Asian, i.e. lyric in its various manifestation. Narrative genre was pushed behind in the literary mind, not much discussed, but often written and read, although not always highlihted up to modern times in Europe and even up to the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th cent. in most Asian countries.

Izumi Keiko's (Shokei Women's Junior College, Sendai) *Similitude and Dissimilitude in Poetics. Motoori Norinaga and English Romantic Poets,* is another attempt in these *Proceedings* at the appreciation of Norinaga's contribution to Japanese poetics. This time, the author's supposition that Norinaga might have had an access to Aristotle's works seems to be impossible to prove. Typological study of this kind is, of course, plausible, but I think that the comparison between Chinese criticism (5th cent. B.C – 6th cent. A.D.) and Norinaga's many critical insights would be much more fruitful and bring enough reliable results.

Makoto Ueda (Stanford University), one of the best specialists on Japanese poetics, follows the closures of the English and Japanese poems and finds that all of them, if they are really closed, then follow circular, linear or spiral structures. Very often the Japanese poems are without end due to predilection for *yoyô* (overtones) or *yûgen* (mystery and depth). Ending without words they stress the "aesthetic of suggestiveness" (III, p. 412). In the 20th century, probably under the impact of Japanese and Chinese poetry and also the overall philosophical uncertainty and polyvalence, the tendency against anti-closure is more obvious even in English poetry.

Yue Daiyun (Peking University), the most prominent Chinese literary comparatist of the 1990s, compares the metaphor of the mirror in Western and in Chinese poetics, and comes to the conclusion that in the first "the mirror as metaphor is used basically for the artistic works to stress a truthful reflection of the world," and in the second "the same metaphor is often used to stress the necessity of keeping a still and empty mind to perceive the world" (III, p. 421).

Richard Trappl (University of Vienna) tries to bring the Chinese ancient concept of literature *(wen)* closer to modern European understanding using mostly the genre of *xiaoshuo* (short fiction), regarded sometimes as "chatting in the streets" (III, p. 489) and unrecognized by Chinese traditional literary criticism.

Eva Kushner (Victoria University, Toronto) in her paper *Towards a Typology of Comparative Literature Studies* simply does not believe that the imaginary mansion of the ICLA Committee on Literary Theory is embellished by Dante's famous admonition: "Abandon all hope ye enter here."[12] She traces many visions of the 1980s and before, and acknowledges their *raison d'être*. Recognizing that holistic theoretical works such as Ulrich Weisstein's *Theory of Comparative Literature*,[13] or François Jost's *Introduction to Comparative Literature*,[14]

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[12] Dante Alighieri: *The Divine Comedy.* New York and London, W.W. Norton & Company 1970, p. 13.

[13] Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press 1973.

[14] Indianopolis and New York, Pegasus: A Division of The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1974.

are no longer produced or published, and more "theoretical" than "comparative" studies are presented to the reading public. She mentioned polysystem studies (not qualifying them precisely, but *sapienti sat)*, and she highlighted, among others, the books by Dionýz Ďurišin and his international team on the problems of intra- and interliterary processes and their categories, and especially interliterary communities (or as she expressed herself: "concentrations of families of literatures" and the "dynamics of interaction"). José Lambert's vision of the "map of literatures" is also welcome, but a "patient construction" (III, p. 509) is recommended. Earl Miner's *Comparative Poetics. An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature*[15] and Lubomír Doležel's study *Fictional Reference: Mimesis and Possible Worlds*,[16] are also given as two examples of the possible approaches towards the theory of Comparative Literature.

The ICLA Committee on Literary Theory, led by Elrud Ibsch (Free University of Amsterdam) decided to slightly change the main topic of the congress when selecting not "vision", but "imagination" to be the catchword, while "the latter has a more specific meaning in the history of literature and the arts" (III, p. 519).

Susan Rabin Suleiman's (Harvard University) *The Surrealist Imagination in Postmodernist Fiction: Angela Carter's* The Infernal Desire Machines of Dr. Hoffmann, evokes immediately Lubomír Doležel's vision of "possible worlds" and brings us into the fantastic romantico-surrealist world of "diabolical Dr. Hoffmann", alluding to E.T.A. Hoffmann and his tales, to Dali, Magritte, Breton, *Gulliver's Travels,* and also to the personality and ideas of Herbert Marcuse and his book *Eros and Civilization*, the prophet of the optimistic, euphemistic society of liberated sexuality, victorious Freudian Pleasure Principle over Reality Principle, was never realized.

The two following contributions are concerned mainly with Romantic imagination: Tung Chung-hsuan's (National Chung-hsing University, Taichung) *The Sorts of Imagination of Literary Creation,* and Elinor S. Shaffer's (University of East Anglia) *Ideologies of Imagination: Remote Readings of Romanticism*. The first one by the Taiwanese author mostly presents research based on his book *Imagination and the Process of Literary Creation* (published probably in Chinese) from 1991, with some later views by John Ruskin, Samuel Alexander, Ernst Cassirer combined with some traditional Chinese ideas, as *shen-ssu* (literally: divine thinking), or the so-called *pi-hsing* (comparing and exalting, according to the author of the paper), which he understands roughly as "visionary imagination and technical imagination" (III, p. 545). The second one by English scholar is more devoted to the criticism of the Romantic imagination and its "revival" within the framework of Nazi ideology.

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[15] Princeton, Princeton University Press 1990.

[16] In: *Toward a Theory of Comparative Literature. Selected Papers Presented in the Division of Theory of Literature at the XIth International Comparative Literature Congress.* Ed. and with Introduction by Mario J. Valdés. Bern, Peter Lang 1990, pp. 109–124.

Wong Kin Yuen (The Chinese University of Hong Kong) devoted his attention to the problem of the imagination in the traditional Chinese painting influenced by the Taoist and Buddhist ideas of *yuan* (far-perspective), *hsuan* (dark and mystical), *hsu* (emptiness) and *wu* (nothingness) against the background of the phenomenological approach, mostly of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. He finds close juxtaposition and thus also a similarity between the Chinese ideas of "emptiness" and "nothingness" presupposing the creative imagination and Merleau-Ponty's "paradox of Immanence and Transcendence in perception" (III, p. 553) of the work of art.

Dutch scholars participating in this project put emphasis on imagination in relation to science, metaphor and the learning process in the act of reading of literature.

D. Fokkema, one of the most active contributors, in his paper *Hypotheses as a Product of Imagination: about Theories of Cultural Participation* made use at first of the views of Dutch scholar J.H. van't Hoff, the founder of stereochemistry, on the five stages of imagination and its force in scientific research and then proceeds to definition of the role of imagination in different phases of the scientific process, namely during the last stage of its appointment. He also gives some good advice concerning the established theories in (inter)cultural research, such as that of Pierre Bourdieu. John Neubauer (University of Amsterdam) was more sceptical towards the force of imagination, at least in science, although he also highlihted it to some extent when pointing to Gaston Bachelard's view that "important scientific theories always involve some 'Copernican revolution', a new way of seeing things that contradicts what common sense suggests" (III, p. 575), as in the case of relativity theory or quantum mechanics. It is possible to agree with the idea that "we need some highly imaginative minds", (III, p. 569), but how to connect the interliterary and intercultural studies, remains an unresolved methodological problem.

Will van Peer (University of Utrecht) shows much *Belesenheit* in his short but excellent contribution *Metaphor and Imagination.* By the study of this subject he claims after more interdisciplinary endeavours (just like his older colleague Fokkema), and warns against too much imagination, that one often assumed in literary studies. Not only in sciences, but also in the comparative literature is to recommend: to avoid metaphorical language at least to some extent.

The concept of imagination is also elaborated in the paper by Elrud Ibsch, the last in the third volume. She is interested in it in relation to creativity and to reading of literary texts. Creativity and imagination are, according to her, near-synonyms. The first is "more product-oriented, whereas 'imagination' is more process-oriented" (III, p. 592).

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The fourth and fifth volumes are much thinner than the three previous and the final sixth volume. The first presents the papers of the workshop entitled Translation and Modernization and edited by Theresa Hyun (Kyung Hee Uni-

versity, Seoul) and José Lambert (Catholic University of Leuven). The second consists of the contributions to the workshop entitled New Visions of Creation: Feminine Innovations in Literary Theory, and published here under the editorship of Maria Elena de Valdés (University of Toronto) and Margaret R. Higonnet.

Most attention in the fourth volume was devoted to the impact of and response to Symbolism (chiefly of French origin) in East Asia. Since it first reached Japan, two essays, one shorter, by Kawamoto Koji (University of Tokyo), who devoted more attention to the early years, mainly to Ueda Bin's *Kaicho-on (The Sound of the Tide)* from the year 1905, and one longer by Sugawara Katsuya (Tokyo Institute of Technology), where also Mori Ogai's translation *Omogake (Reflection of Shadows)*, from the year 1899 and Kambara Ariake's *Ariake-shu (Works of Ariake)* from the year 1908, is discussed from the points of view of both form and matter. The impact of traditional poetry (*tanka* and *haiku*) is quite obvious and Kawamoto also points to the indigenous sources, and claims that the "answer to this question lies in the nature of traditional Japanese and Chinese poetry, and its own 'symbolic' mode" (IV, p. 34).

The next two essays pay attention to Korean translations from Symbolist poetry. The first of them by Theresa Hyun, analyses Kim Ok's and Yang Yu-dong's renditions from the 1920s, and the second by Sang-ran Lee (Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul) is following the similar aim, but putting more stress on traditional Korean poetry under Chinese influence. Both of them show the intermediary role of Japanese literature, mainly in the first stage of translation, and Itamar Even-Zohar's or Theo Hermans' theoretical guidance.

Ma Yiu-man's paper (National Taiwan University, Taipei), when analysing the reception of French Symbolism in China in the years 1919–1925, follows a different path of investigation: not the translation of Symbolist works but the literary and critical essays of Chinese men of letters are the target of this essay. Three important papers have a theoretical character. José Lambert muses in his contribution *Literatures, Translation and (De)colonization* about the question of translation within the literatures and cultures of our age of globalization in general against the background of his project of literary and cultural "maps". He stresses the "political" aspects of translation efforts and often uses economic terminology when insisting that "translation is first of all a phenomenon of *importation* (and of *exportation*)" (IV, p. 108). Patterns of translation import (or export?) developed after Even-Zohar's study *The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem*,[17] as well after his own researches, present the core of the problem, and even if regarded by Lambert as hypotheses only, they should be read by theoreticians and translators (IV, pp. 109–111).

Richard Trappl in his contribution with the longest title in the whole proceedings, draws up his vision of future translatology by formulating some premethodological reflections in the time of the Space Age, computers, Internet and intercultural (mis)understanding. Trappl follows, among others Lambert's

[17] In: Holmes, J.S., Lambert, J. and van den Broeck, R. (eds.): *Literature and Translation.* Leuven, Acco 1978, pp. 117–127.

paper entitled *New Patterns in International Translation: A Task from Interdisciplinary Research* and Eugene Eoyang's (Indiana University, Bloomington) *Speaking in Tongues: Translating Chinese Literature in a Post-Babelian Age*, both delivered at the First International Conference of Chinese Literature, Taipei, 1990, where Trappl also participated at. He presents seven (hypo)theses which form methodological instructions for translatology in our age of globalization and cultural diversification (IV, pp. 138–140) and are likewise recommended to read carefully. According to Trappl "if translation is to be an intercultural communication it will not be sufficient to seek similarities in the other; it will become a socio-linguistic and ethnic task and even cultural self-defence (in a polyculturized world community) to cultivate the dissimilarities" (IV, pp. 141–142).

Eugene Eoyang in his paper on translating secular and sacred texts poses a question of difference between these two kinds of writings so important both for Oriental and Western cultures in history and in our times. He shows especially the difference of understanding of these texts, and often the same texts, by the Jews or Christians, the difference in attitudes towards them, e.g. more ironic among some Jews of rabbinic orientation, and very reverential and serious among Christian commentators. For Muslims until recently the translation of the *Koran* was forbidden. The Chinese classics – Confucian, Taoist or Buddhist, did not enjoy divine sanction, and therefore to interpret them in various ways was much easier. Multiplicity of meanings is also inherent in the *Bible,* and therefore a compromise is necessary, as is often the case, if we are aware of the different translations and the histories of their "coming to be".

In the last ten years feminist criticism has been a must at the congresses of the ICLA. A handy volume of contributions to this section is something extraordinary in the history of this association. The section was also carefully prepared. Even I have received a letter sent to me by M.E. de Valdés, who owing to my given name and inadequate reputation among literary comparatists, regarded me as one of the members of the *feminini generis* and asked me to contribute. I have contributed, but not just here.[18]

The first three papers in this volume are very much alike. Mrs. de Valdés analyses three works by Latin American women writers who narrate the life stories of three typical women of these countries, among them Rigoberta Menchú, a Quiche Indian woman from Guatemala, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. This testimonial kind of fiction seems to be one of the possible feminist self-expression in the future. The other two by Bella Brodzki (Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY) on feminist revisionary narratives in fiction and Marga Graf (Rheinisch-Westfällische Technische Hochschule, Aachen) on the autobiographical visions of women by Latin-American and European writers, have in common the stress on the works of Christina Wolf, namely on her *Kindheitsmuster*, then *Kassandra*, or *Nachdenken über Christa T.* and the diffi-

[18] GÁLIK, M.: *Some Remarks on Gynocriticism: Observations of a Member of "Masculini Generis"*. Human Affairs (Bratislava), 3, 1993, 1, pp. 62–71.

culties of this kind. Many other German writers, always had and still have, the troubles with, or completely avoid the *Nazi Vergangensheitbewältigung* which should be regarded as necessary both for male and female writers of this nation. Brodzki's analysis of Tony Morrison's *Beloved* is a good example in mythological feminist criticism.

The next three papers are concerned with different parts of the world: post-communist Poland and Czechoslovakia, postwar Japan and West Africa during the last two decades. The state of things in all these countries is rather gloomy. At the beginning of the 1990s the feminism, mostly of a socio-cultural orientation, was just starting there, and in Slovakia, probably E. Farkašová's essay on feminism and its philosophical issues from the year 1991, mentioned in the paper by Halina Janaszek-Ivaničková (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw), was one of the first swallows. The mythopoeic novel *Ciało niczye (No One's Body)* from the year 1988, stressing the fight against ideology, for self-consciousness, freedom in personal decisions, female self-appreciation is a new feature in the literature of Central Europe. A long confessional essay by Meio Masako, a translator and writer from Tokyo, presents us with a picture very different from that by Chieko Mulhern spoken of above. Mrs. Meio, born in 1939, was a witness of the whole postwar history, and being able to observe and to participate in its whole process, presents the readers with an interesting panorama. Not much has changed in the relation between men and women and the shining image of the "Sun Goddess Amaterasu both as the remotest ancestor of the Emperor and as the supreme divine figure" (V, p. 55) serves up to now as a model of the Great Mother to the Japanese population. But there is still hope for change and it is already possible to see it in the last years. In West Africa the situation is much more worse and according to Aduke Grace Adebayo (University of Ibadan), it is necessary to tear the veil of invisibility of African women. Adebayo stresses the positive complementarity of male and female and declares it as the "specificity of African women's writing" (V, p. 73), which is certainly new in Africa, but rather unusual among the Euro-American feminists.

We find a feminist attitude to the modern drama in the paper by Ross Shideler (University of California, Los Angeles) and in Joan Templeton's (Long Island University, Brooklyn). Both of them regard the modern family as a prison and a place for female death plots. Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler* and August Strindberg's *The Dance of Death* are analysed in the first. Templeton's paper is much broader because among the Fallen Dead Women we can find Marguerite Gautier from *La Dame aux Camélias* by Alexander Dumas fils, Strindberg's Julie, Mrs. Arbuthnot from *A Woman of no Importance*, Mrs. Cheveley from *An Ideal Husband* by Oscar Wilde, and of course, his *Salomé.* Hedda Gabler was not a Fallen Woman but she killed herself because she refused to satisfy "the norms of the patriarchy" (V, p. 117).

A short essay by Saeki Junko (Tezukayama-Gakuin Women's College, Osaka-Sayama) entitled *Visions of Beauty and Eroticism: The Meaning of Images of the Ideal Woman in East and West*, is mildly feminist. She claims that it "is historically inaccurate to conclude that the idealization of women's beauty and

erotic fascination is solely a male vision" (V, p. 135). The line from a poem by Jean Farran: "Toutes ces Muettes adorable" is in the title of the paper by the late Andrea Cady (Loughborough University, Long Island), a dedicated and learned feminist, who is calling the members of her gender to write poetry by and for themselves. She is right that women's voices were not heard, even when written, probably with the exception of the Japanese women around the end of the first and the beginning of the second millennium, but Cady does not mention this last. As to some theories the creation of a female imaginary writing mode, a "parler femme", I am afraid, that something similar is unrealizable. On the other hand I agree that poetry needs the woman poet "to rejoice in her own passions and volitions and feel habitually create them..." (p. 178).

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The title *Inter-Asian Comparative Literature*, otherwise Vol. 6 of the ICLA '91 Tokyo *Proceedings* is misleading. Except for Section VII of the congress, it contains papers concerned with Euro-Asian visions and four different workshops: Madonna Figures in Japanese Literature, ed. by Kinya Tsuruta (University of British Columbia, Vancouver), Visions and Revision on Kurosawa, ed. by Sumie Jones, "Postmodernity"?: An Examination of Avant-Garde Literature in the Third World Countries, ed. by Wang Ning (Peking University) and Kishida Toshiko (University of Tokyo) and even a workshop in Japanese: Nihon bungaku ni okeru katari no chikara, ed. by Noguchi Takehiko (Kobe University). The articles in Japanese are presented in the form of short abstracts by Ohsawa Yoshihiro (University of Tokyo) (VI, pp. 28–29) and the articles of Section VII are critically introduced by Heh-Hsiang Yuan. In this volume the interested readers may find also a solemn speech by H.I.H. Prince Naruhito and four keynote speeches. Panel discussion Visions of the Other was already analysed above.

I shall completely omit here the papers published in Japanese, since I do not read this language. Because of the minutious reviewing of the English part of the Section VII by my old and good friend Heh-hsiang Yuan, I ask the readers to follow his remarks and evaluations. I would like only to point out that also this time my gender was mistakenly changed again (and this not consistently since, my allegedly feminine signifier is mentioned there seven times, my male and real only once), although not due to Mr. Yuan, but probably to one of the assistant editors.[19] What should I do at my age, if not to seek refuge (and mild consolation) with old Confucius, who said to his pupils: "Is one not a superior man if he does not feel hurt even though he is not recognized?"[20]

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[19] This can be deduced from a copy of the letter by Professor Yuan and sent to the editors, and from another letter he sent to me (both dated Nov. 26, 1995).

[20] This translation is taken from Wing-Tsit Chan's translation in *Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*. Princeton, Princeton University Press 1963, p. 18.

The workshop Madonna Figures in Japanese Literature is connected really with Japanese works on the interliterary background. Takao Hagiwara (Smith College, Northampton) looks at the mothers in the novels of Shusako Endo from different angles: Christian, Jungian and deconstructionist theory. Cody Poulton (University of Victoria) analyses the iconology of women in the work of Izumi Kyoka from a Buddhist point of view, mostly in relation to Maya, mother of Gautama Siddhartha. Kinya Tsuruta (University of British Columbia, Vancouver) is doing something similar, but this time Yasunari Kawabata's Bodhisattva-like figures are the target of the research.

There were three keynote speakers at the 13th ICLA Tokyo congress: Sisir Kumar Das (University of Delhi), Mario J. Valdés (University of Toronto) and Saeki Shoichi (Chuo University). Sisir Kumar Das stressed the friendship with strangers and in reality delineated in his paper a history of relations between Us and Others, from the times of Greco-Persian Wars up to our days. He pointed out the importance of Comparative Literature in this native-foreign opposition and expressed the hope that literature as one part of the social consciousness, will help to transcend the barriers of the past. Mario J. Valdés pinpointed the main theme of the congress more in the direction of the imagination than in vision in spite of the title of his paper. He has done something similar to his Dutch colleagues. He presented musings concerning the creative force of the imagination in poetry (or art) and in science. While scientific research "constantly progresses, making yesterday's laws today's historical reference", poetry and its criticism "consist in constantly remaking the world and redescribing a number of essential players in that serious game of world-making" (VI, p. 344). The Shintoist vision of Saeki Shoichi was a most modest one. This vision was always simple, implicit, never spectacular, never showy, or visualized, but all-pervading. Japanese art, architecture, poetry, drama, or fiction are impregnated with it, although usually hidden under the Buddhist garb. Its is a kind of very special Japanese vision.

6

The comparatists from the PRC presented to the ICLA '91 Congress their own volume, as was mentioned at the beginning of this review article. Originally 109 papers were prepared and 31 selected for the *Desire and Vision – East and West,* and published in the last days before the congress in August 1991.

There are 9 papers from this volume in Tokyo *Proceedings* and from the remaining 23 I find at least 4 which could be interesting for the East-West specialists.

Two of them are thematological studies. Chen Yuehong (Peking University) in his *Harp of the Heavenly Kingdom: Death Consciousness in Chinese and Western Poetry* muses over the differences between the concept of death in Western and Chinese philosophy and religion and its expression in poetry. Wang Hongtu (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Shanghai) in his *Image of Doomsday in Western and Chinese Literature*, analyses three different attitudes

to the apocalyptic visions in the East and West. Since there was no divine sanction or judgement for the Chinese and thus a real apocalypse impossible in the Chinese understanding of the world, the literary vision was never so tragic, or even dramatic as in Europe. It was more lyric on the other hand. Zhuangzi's words: "Among the dead there are no rulers above, no subjects below, and no chores of the four seasons. Therefore our springs and autumns are as endless as heaven and earth. A king facing south on his throne could have no more happiness than this,"[21] are not typical for Western beliefs, with the exception of the well-known Pauline promise: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which hath God prepared for them that love him."[22] Four apocalyptic riders and their horses in the *Revelation*[23] have different impact on the readers from those of Du Fu (712–770) in his poem *Deng Yueyang lou (On Yue-jang Tower):* "The warhorse stamps north of the passes./I lean on railing and my tears flow."[24]

Gan Jianmin's (Suzhou Railway Teacher's College) *Close Reading and Qian Zhongshu Micro-critique* (sic) could be one of the first (if not the first) introductions in English of one of the most (if not the most) famous Chinese literary critics of our time. Close reading points to New Criticism and "micro-critique" (*weiguan piping)* should be his critical method used in his huge work *Guanzhuibian (Bamboo Tube and an Awl)* from 1979. Personally I would say that Qian Zhongshu's method is more similar to the Pointilism, later stage of Impressionism. Using his technique of "point contacts" (*Punktuelle Kontakte)*, Qian operates with the "dissociation" *(Zerlegung)*.[25] Putting these together, he either makes a new synthesis out of "dissociated" or analysed elements against the background of different disciplines, such as literature, linguistics, anthropology, psychology and East-West contact relations, or he uses typological analogies in order to induce a new knowledge of the old fact. Although Qian Zhongshu is regarded as one of the most brilliant Chinese comparatists by the Chinese themselves, he was against this opinion: "My forthcoming shapeless jumbo of a book (...)," he wrote about the *Bamboo Tube and an Awl*, "does not come under the 'Comparative Literature.'"[26] Whether it is necessary to agree with Qian Zhongshu, or with his Chinese compatriots, is not my duty to decide. In any

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[21] Cf. *Zhuangzi yinde*, p. 47 and *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, p. 193.

[22] *I. Corinthians, 2*, 9.

[23] *Revelation, 6*, 2–8.

[24] *A Little Primer of Tu Fu*. Trans. by David Hawkes. Oxford. At the Clarendon Press 1967, pp. 206 (Chinese text) and 209 (English translation).

[25] Motsch, M.: *Mit Bambusrohr und Ahle. Von Qian Zhongshu's Guanzhuibian zu einer Neubetrachtung Du Fus*. Bern, Peter Lang 1994, pp. 41–46.

[26] See Qian Zongshu's letter, dated Febr. 13, 1979, to John J. Deeney published in his article: *A Prospectus for Chinese Literature from Comparative Perspectives.* In: Deeney, J.J. (ed.): *Chinese-Western Comparative Literature. Theory and Strategy.* Hong Kong, The Chinese University Press 1980, p. 186.

case Qian "jumbo" is a grandiose source for the students of comparative scholarship in the realm of philosophy, history and literature.

Xie Tianzhen's (Shanghai International Studies University) paper entitled *Creative Treason in Literary Translation* is interesting mainly due to many examples concerned with the Chinese translation of famous works from the realm of world literature.

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In both proceedings analysed here we had the possibility, at least partly, to get acquainted with 346 papers, prefaces or introductions, all comprising exactly 3,267 printed pages. If much of it was not shown in this review article, even the papers of my good friends, it is due to my inadequate abilities and also to the space alloted to a contribution of this kind. The success of the 13th ICLA '91 Congress lay not only in that what was printed, or mentioned here.

The Japanese hosts prepared for the participants a unique atmosphere by showing them two performances of the Kabuki version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet (Hamureto Yamatonishiki-e*) in the Tokyo Globe Theatre and of the contemporary Noh drama *Azuchi no Mihaha (Madonna of Azuchi)* in the Tokyo National Noh Theatre. There was also one-day excursion to Hakone with a wonderful view of Mount Fujijama, a boat ride around the Lake of Ashinoko and a visit to the MOA Museum in the landscape situated in green natural surroundings. In no other congress of ICLA, in which I participated, were the organizers so devoted to the common cause and so nice to their colleagues from the world. Seven years after ICLA '91 one has to agree with Earl Miner, at that time the President of the ICLA, who wrote that it seemed to him unlikely that "there will ever be a second so new in kind, so fresh in innovation, or so generally provided in thoughtfulness as well as financial support" (I, p. III). If there is something to be criticized, then it was very low participation of scholars from Africa. These will find their opportunity at the XVIth ICLA Congress to be held in Pretoria in 2000.

Since 1970 I have attended 8 different congresses of ICLA. The Tokyo Congress, I have to say frankly, was the most interesting, most attractive and with the best scholarly results so far.