RIAS Vol. 3, № 1–2
WINTER/SPRING 2008
ISSN 1991–2773

Review of International American Studies

AMERICAS STUDIES / AMERICANIST CANONS

VOL. 3, 1–2 WINTER/SPRING 2008 **ISSN 1991–2773**

TYPESETTING: ExMachina Academic Press, Poland
www.exmachina.pl

ExMachina

Review of International American Studies (*RIAS*), is the electronic journal of the International American Studies Association, the onlyworldwide, independent,non-governmental association of American Studies. *RIAS* serves as agora for the global network of international scholars, teachers, and students ofAmerica as hemispheric and global phenomenon. *RIAS* is published three times a year: in the Fall, Winter and Spring by IASA with the institutional support of the University of Silesia in Katowice lending server space to some of IASA websites and the electronic support of the Soft For Humans CMS Designers. Subscription rates or *RIAS* are included along with the Association's annual dues as specified in the "Membership" section of the Association's website (www.iasaweb.org).

All topical manuscripts should be directed to the Editor via online submission forms available at *RIAS* website (www.iasa-rias.org). General correspondence and matters concerning the functioning of RIAS should be addressed to *RIAS* Editor-in-Chief:

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AMERICA/AMERICAS: CULTURES, CANONS AND COURSES

The advent of Inter-American Studies has not only opened up an alternative discourse in the study of 'American' culture; it has also produced a discourse that suggests an alternative practice, through the struggle to address the numerous questions it raises concerning issues as diverse as language, translation, transnationalism, immigration, race, ethnicity, national identity, gender, cultural inclusion vs. exclusion, politics, geography, history, economics, and a whole host of other topics. As an approach that speaks not to one discipline but many—and whose primary emphasis is this interdisciplinarity—Inter-American Studies addresses a way of understanding that, because it suggests a radically different geo-political mapping at its core, demands a concomitant alteration in any disciplinary approach to the study of American culture. In its hemispheric re-articulation of the notion of America, it points to all that is silenced within singular conceptions of American culture. Such conceptions would often seem to imply the construction of a hegemonic and all-important United States, while denying or eliding all consideration of the socio-politico-historical interrelationships that pertain between the United States and its hemispheric neighbors. But because these interrelationships also form the central foundation of Inter-American Studies, no recognition of their importance can take place without a concomitant transformation in perspective with regard to the mode by which American culture is to be studied. In most disciplines, this transformation must, necessarily, entail an engagement with what Masao Myoshi has called the myth of the nation state, a 'nostalgic' and 'sentimental' understanding of the state that 'offers an illusion of a classless organic community of which everyone is an equal member', in the spirit of Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities' (744).

When considered in the context of the Americas, such a view of the nation-state becomes immensely problematic. Viewed in terms of the historic economic, cultural and linguistic hegemony of the United States in relation to its hemispheric neighbors, or the oppression of various indigenous populations in many nations throughout the hemisphere, such considerations of the nation-state may often serve to camouflage the underlying cultural tensions existing below the surface to which the hemispheric approach can provide access. Through the process by which 'America' becomes 'Americas' then, all that is implied in this reconfiguration must come to the table and be counted. Yet, despite its insistence on the plural, the hemispheric study of American literature, history and culture does not seek to deny the importance and value of American Studies, conventionally conceived. Rather, it seeks a reconsideration of the terms upon which American Studies has been founded, something that would allow

for a complementary give and take between the two perspectives, in the interests of a certain enrichment of both.

It is with the terms of this reassessment that the current issue of *RIAS* is concerned. What does it mean to consider the object of study, America, in the plural, as 'Americas', rather than 'America'? What issues of language, translation, history, politics, culture, nation, ethnicity, race, gender, identity, geography, etc. are at stake in this transformation? How are these issues to be understood and accounted for? More fundamentally, how do these issues reflect on the current state of knowledge and knowledge production regarding the study of America? What problems will need to be addressed as a result, and what changes will need to be made in order to do justice to their implications? How does consideration of the United States in relation to its hemispheric neighbors change our understanding of both the US *and* its neighbors? How might studying the United States in relational context alter our understanding of the United States and our conceptions of 'America' and 'Americanness'? Finally, what does it mean to study 'America' in the plural? What changes must be made in the object of study?

These are just a few of the questions that come to the fore when considering the larger intellectual significance of Inter-American Studies as an approach to the study of 'American' culture. But their implications are clear: they move toward a conception of the field that is radically different from many disciplinary perspectives, and one which ultimately begins to question even the method and manner in which knowledge itself has traditionally been organized. As a result, developing as it has either within or in relation to the more established institutional context of American Studies, one of the most important challenges of Inter-American Studies has been to reconfigure the object of study—American culture—in relation to that discipline. What this means is that Inter-American Studies has been called upon to consider its relation to American Studies—where it differs, where it is essentially the same, in what ways it might interrogate and in what ways it might appropriate the canon of American Studies, in whatever discipline. One of the most important questions for Inter-American Studies is, then, what of cultures, canons and courses? What is the relationship between Inter-American Studies and the cultures it recognizes, its own or already existing canons, and the courses in which the knowledge it organizes may be disseminated?

The contributors to this issue have all sought in some way to speak to these problems. In his address to the IASA Congress in Lisbon in September, 2007, Paul Giles considers the notion of 'America', how this must be fundamental to our understanding of the object of study, and all that this implies. Outlining the coming into being of IASA, Giles offers an understanding of the pivotal role it plays (and has played) as an organization singularly placed to participate in the continued institutional development of Inter-American Studies as a new discipline, and to foster the ongoing conversation about the relation between Inter-American and American Studies.

The issue's forum',Institutionalizing Americas/American Studies' features Americanists from all over the world who are engaging with the relation between Inter-American and American Studies in a variety of geopolitical climates and contexts. Mary Louise Pratt offers an overview of the global political significance of American Studies, considered between its relation to the Cold War period's institutionalizing of area studies and the new cultural realities of the post-9/11 global community. Seyed Mohammad Marandi, Patrick McGreevy, Liam Kennedy, Li Jin and Sun Youzhong offer perspectives on American Studies in the Mid-

dle East, Europe and Asia, emphasizing the politics often involved in doing American Studies in countries where the political relation to the US may be strained, and where hemispheric considerations may be overshadowed by the ascendancy of the United States in articulations of America and 'Americanness'. They describe the parameters of their various programs in the context of, or despite, such politics, analyzing the role of US governmental funding of American Studies organizations outside its borders.

In 'Finding the Americas in American Studies', the current issue's feature articles set the stage for debate on these and other topics. Earl Fitz explains in detail one way of envisioning what a doctoral program in Inter-American Studies would/should look like, as well as the difficulties in implementation that such a program might face. First and foremost, Fitz discusses the importance of language to the effort to embark on Inter-American Studies as a serious undertaking. Silvio Torres-Saillant cautions against a too hasty embracement of pan-Latino identity within a hemispheric frame, examining intra-Latino racial and ethnic tensions that may be obscured and/or silenced when a hemispheric perspective of Latino identity is adopted. Finally, Djelal Kadir and Paweł Jędrzejko offer a dialogue on the future of American Studies as it grapples with the advent of the Inter-American approach to the study of American culture. For Kadir and Jędrzejko, American Studies sees not its demise in the emergence of the Inter-American perspective, but rather a rich and productive expansion, one that takes it far beyond what it has been into the realm of what it can be. In their rich and wide-ranging encounter, they affirm that the future of American Studies is one to which all can look forward.

Cyraina Johnson-Roullier
Co-Editor

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CONVERGENCES: IASA IN 2007—PRESIDENT'S REPORT LISBON, SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

Paul Giles
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The first thing to report about the International Association of American Studies is that the Association has now consolidated and stabilized itself. There are nearly 300 participants here at this Congress in Lisbon, a slight increase from the numbers in Ottawa two years ago and also from Leiden two years before that. We are very grateful to João Ferreira Duarte, Elena Buescu, and the organizing committee here in Lisbon for all of their splendid efforts. IASA has also been active in producing publications, both in the two impressive volumes of conference proceedings edited by Theo d'Haen and Patrick Imbert, and in the excellence of the new online journal, the *Review of International American Studies*, or *RIAS*, edited by Michael Boyden, Paweł Jędrzejko and Cyraina Johnson-Roullier. All of those involved in these undertakings deserve our profound thanks, but the success of IASA has, I believe, derived fundamentally not just from the efforts of individuals, but from a larger sense of its being the right project for the right time. The story of its provenance is outlined on the IASA website, with the Association having been formed initially out of discussions held in Bellagio, Italy, in June 2000. I myself was not present at that meeting, but rumours about its contentious and combustible nature have been circulating ever since. The point I would make, however, is that the growth and development of IASA has been at heart not a question of personalities or professional feuds, but of what Fredric Jameson would have called historical necessity. When future chroniclers of academia look back in 50 or 60 years time, they will surely see that the shift to an international version of American Studies around the turn of the 21st century was brought about by a change in social, economic and cultural conditions that facilitated a convergence of three academic disciplines: Comparative Literature, Area Studies, and World History. Fifteen months after Bellagio, the jolt of 9/11 brought the conditions of globalization into more immediate and urgent focus, so that by the time the first world congress of IASA assembled in the Netherlands in May 2003, the intellectual landscape of American Studies had changed dramatically.

When IASA first appeared, some, particularly in the traditional American Studies community, asked where on earth it had come from. In fact, the organizational model for IASA had been drawn clearly from that of the International Comparative Litera-

ture Association, founded at Oxford in 1954, which was designed to act as an umbrella or partner for many comparative literature associations around the world; thus, on the ICLA website today, the American and the Indian and the German Association and so on are still rather patronizingly designated as 'regional associations'. The ICLA has held regular congresses every three years, starting in Venice in 1955, though these rotated on an exclusively European and North American axis—Montreal, Budapest, New York, Paris, and so on—until 1991, when the ICLA first went to Asia—to Tokyo—since when it has convened in South Africa, Hong Kong, and Rio de Janeiro. The transition here from being merely a European and American to being a global organization is significant; as Rey Chow has observed, the old version of Comparative Literature tended to privilege European languages and literatures and to marginalize the rest as a mass of undifferentiated others, but the field itself has gradually evolved from being one driven from a universal center to one more respectful of alterity. Nevertheless, the specter which still haunts Comparative Literature is that of a top-down system of philosophical idealism, within which local or regional variations are referred back to some central point of theoretical authority. We see this in Pascale Casanova's recent book *The World Republic of Letters*, with what seems to me its most peculiar assumption that Paris is what Casanova calls 'the capital of the literary world … the chief place of consecration in the world of literature' (127). Although Casanova's theme is the way in which Paris functions institutionally as a symbolic center through which authors are 'made universal' (127), there is, as the author herself observes uneasily, something 'paradoxical' about adopting such a 'Gallocentric' position to describe how literary capital circulates (46). We also see such centripetal inclinations further back in the religious propensities of comparatists such as Northrop Frye, who sought in the 1950s to dissolve material difference into ordered mythical archetypes. Such nostalgia for universal order also manifests itself in the hub and spoke organizational model of the ICLA, which in the period after the Second World War fitted well with the scholarly impetus of Comparative Literature to assimilate itself within universalist paradigms.

This Neoplatonic idiom of essence and accident is, however, much less obviously compatible with the phenomenon of area studies, which is where IASA has sought to make its intervention. Area studies, which emerged in the geopolitical circumstances of the Cold War with the aim of fully comprehending (and therefore containing) particular, bounded areas of the world, is much less amenable to any kind of universalizing temper. In addition, since area studies had succeeded in establishing and institutionalizing itself so firmly within the academy in the second half of the 20th century, this meant that the idea of an International American Studies Association in the year 2000 was bound to be more controversial and difficult to countenance than the idea of an International Comparative Literature Association had been in 1954. Fifty years ago, the field was, comparatively speaking, a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate; but recently there have been many more entrenched professional investments to negotiate.

One of the best discussions of these issues in recent years has been Gayatri Spivak's book *Death of a Discipline*, published in 2003. Here Spivak charts the strengths and limitations of both Comparative Literature and Area Studies, and she calls for a new form of intellectual dialogue between them. In Spivak's eyes, the specificity of area studies, its close attention to foreign language and social context, might help to rein-

vigorate comparative literature, which is the dying discipline of the book's title, since in her eyes 'Comp. Lit'. is in danger of being reduced to the empty homologies of global literature or of world literature in English translation. At the same time, the systematic commitment of comparative literature to theoretical issues, to tracking undecideable meanings and irreducible rhetorical figures that confound notions of 'immediate comprehensibility by the ideological average' (71), might help to renovate what she calls 'the arrogance of Area Studies where it retains the imprints of the Cold War' (70), that in-built conservatism within the area studies community which would seek to exclude anything threatening the bounded circumference and secure platform of its own power. This idea of an interface between comparative literature and area studies seems to me a much more promising direction for IASA than the old centrist hub and spoke model. Such a direction is commensurate as well with recent developments in world history, a subject which until recently tended to be dismissed by academic historians as genteel and amateurish—recalling, for example, the attempts of Arnold Toynbee and others 100 years ago to encompass all of history within a grand narrative sweep—but which is now again becoming increasingly important, as scholars recognize the ways in which national histories necessarily intermesh and overlap, so that the description of any tightly circumscribed field risks appearing simply delusory. Thomas Bender and others have written well about the need to recontextualize American history, to position it within a wider global framework, while for example Ian Tyrrell's work on environmental history, a field that by definition crosses national boundaries, has traced the constant contacts between California and Australia in the second half of the 19th century over irrigation issues, thus raising the question of how uniquely 'Western' the California experience really was. To rotate the old maps on a transpacific axis so that the American West becomes an American east, or to re-examine slavery on a hemispheric basis by juxtaposing Mississippi with Brazil so that the Old American South becomes the new American north, would seem to me precisely the kind of provocative perspective that an International American Studies Association should be raising.

Internationalization is now of course a buzz word in many scholarly organizations, as well as in many Dean's offices on university campuses throughout the world. Within the mobility of the new global economy, international students have become a prized commodity. There are all kinds of problematic ethical and political issues associated with this kind of fluid movement across national borders, and quite how internationalization will play itself out within an academic framework will, I think, continue to be a matter for intense scholarly debate. Indeed, one of the interesting things about being involved in the administration of the last three IASA Congresses is to see the disjunction between what the organizers have conceived of as the central theme of the event and what participants have actually wanted to talk about. These disjunctions and contradictions are creative, I believe, since no Association of this kind can or should seek to be excessively prescriptive or programmatic about the nature of its agenda. The field itself is much too wide for what Haun Saussy, in his excellent essay in a recent report on the state of Comparative Literature, called 'delusional questions of identity' (22). Rather than seeking prescriptively to lay down the proper object of study, argued Saussy, we should acknowledge the pragmatic and experimental qual-

ity of our comparative critical engagements, the kinds of things we might learn that would have remained obscure to us if we had continued to regard individual objects within the conventional frame of a traditional discipline.

The crucial questions here are strewn throughout this conference: what does 'America' mean, how does the idea of a nation intersect with the idea of a continent, how can American Studies interface with globalization—or 'planetarity', as Spivak calls it (71)—how do transnational issues of ethnicity, race and gender interact with the national idea, how do controversies around the environment and global warming factor into this equation, how is history to be reconceptualized within an international framework, what is the role of language in foregrounding questions of difference? This last issue of language is, I think, a particularly thorny one: there was a very good issue of our online journal *RIAS* a few months ago devoted to the question of 'American Studies and the Dilemmas of Multilingualism', with contributions from Doris Sommer, Patrick Imbert, and others, and I want to acknowledge in passing how this is an important but complicated question which IASA will certainly have to grapple with long into the future. On one hand, of course, the idea of close reading in original languages could be said to open up the possibilities of recognizing otherness in ways that translation cannot, as Spivak among others argues; on the other hand, as David Ferris observes, there are always too many languages to learn, and a quest for pure authenticity can sometimes be intellectually counterproductive, particularly in a situation where, as David Damrosch puts it, world literature can be known intensively as well as extensively, through theoretical juxtapositions as well as ever-expanding circles. I'm more than aware of my own scholarly limitations in this regard—I can read ancient Latin and Greek, two of the very few languages which are not of much use within the world of IASA, and I have a smattering of French and German—but I always advise my graduate students these days that they will be entering an Americanist academic world where languages will be of considerably more importance than they were for my generation, and I hold up Werner Sollors's Longfellow Institute at Harvard and the Oriental School at Naples, which specializes in bringing together Eastern and Western languages, as admirable models to follow. But I don't feel it would be right that language should become a coercive instrument or political tool within IASA, or that it should put people off engaging with cultures which are not their own and of course never will be. Many of the languages within the continent of America have always functioned in a double or hybrid context, and, to take just one example that David Shields remarked on recently, examining the complex interactions between Dutch language and English writing in 17th and 18th century New York is a scholarly project that is long overdue: why is early New York culture still generally represented as monolingual, when it manifestly was not? There are, in other words, many different scholarly contexts within which multilingualism can function, and I believe it can be employed usefully as a nexus to facilitate dialogue and exchange, rather than in order to set up standards of authenticity that might be used, even if inadvertently, for intimidatory purposes. The scope of international American Studies is quite daunting enough as it is: on a lecture tour of the American Midwest a couple of years ago, I talked of Frederick Douglass's interest in the German Biblical Higher Criticism, philosophers such as Ludwig Feuerbach and David Friedrich Strauss, and was met with

an aghast response from some graduate students who seemed to have opted for American Literature as their chosen field precisely so they would not have to get entangled with all these different languages and difficult foreign stuff. But Douglass himself of course read Feuerbach and Strauss in translation, encouraged by his German-born mistress Ottilie Assing, and I don't think it helps to be too purist about our international engagements.

IASA has been a difficult organization to be president of for lots of reasons. Bringing people together from all different parts of the world, whether for actual conferences such as this one or merely telephone conference calls, is always an expensive operation, much more so than an equivalent meeting of a national committee; moreover, disparities in wealth and gross national product have made subscription levels within the Association difficult to standardize, since demands of outreach always have to be balanced against questions of financial sustainability. The Internet has helped immeasurably in all this, of course—indeed, I doubt that IASA could have been brought into existence in its current form without it—but again gross discrepancies in access to information technology always have to be taken into account in formulating IASA policy. What I feel, though, is that the inchoate administrative structure is in some ways an interesting reflection of the current inchoate state of the scholarly field of American Studies. While the first IASA Congress in Leiden unfolded in 2003 against the shadow of the invasion in Iraq, the second Congress in Ottawa in 2005 took place one week before Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans, and both events might be seen in different ways as symptomatic of a disturbing lack of legibility in 21st century America, the ways in which politicians and administrators on all sides have found it hard to comprehend how America is now interwoven inextricably with a complex global environment. The disaster of Iraq bears witness to how the old Manichaean axis of evil, which would seek to divide the world into fixed zones of good and evil, is no longer viable in an age when boundaries have become more constitutionally amorphous and when nation-states can no longer be regimented in the way they used to be fifty years ago, while Katrina brought to light a drastic failure of political intelligence as well as of planning. If for example there had been a prospect during the Cold War of a missile attack on New Orleans which would have destroyed the city's infrastructure and killed 2,000 people, I think it's safe enough to assume that the White House would have been concerned enough to take precautions against this; but faced with the less visible threat of warming sea temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico, the US government was, and continues to be, completely clueless. One of the challenges for international area studies is to trace phenomena which impact upon discrete areas without being exclusively confined to them, and this crucially differentiates the subject from the old American Studies models that grew up in the 1960s, when it appeared to be much easier to categorize what was specifically 'American'. This old-style method led, of course, to all kinds of sentimental projections about American national ideals, but it also led to successful reifications—often around romantic notions of Civil Rights, Beat writing, and so on—which made it relatively easy to draw students into an American Studies orbit, one centered almost exclusively around US interests. In today's world, however, part of the problem is that American narratives are everywhere—in the mass media, in popular culture, in strategic studies, in global finance, and so on

—so that it is naturally harder to cordon the field off and demarcate it as 'American Studies'. Indeed, students, always cannier than we think about their future economic prospects, find it difficult to see any clear rationale for attempting to do so, and in many cases they have simply voted with their feet and left the subject behind.

Quite apart from anything else, then, there is a clear practical and pedagogical need for American Studies to evolve into an international framework, something that is related to, but not reducible to, the urgent theoretical and political business of figuring out how lines of US power and influence circulate globally. IASA can, I think, play a leading role in rising to this intellectual challenge; indeed, a lot of the hand-wringing in Europe over falling enrollments in American Studies can be attributed directly to the way the subject became institutionalized there during the years after 1945, when it was organized on a doggedly nationalistic basis, and when the European Association of American Studies was not even permitted to have a scholarly journal for fear that such a move might diminish the power and prestige of its constituent national associations. There have of course been many outstanding individual scholars within EAAS, but the organization as a whole has always been wary of transnational perspectives, so that the impulse to modernize American Studies within Europe has tended to come from other pressures of a more marginal kind: cultural studies, postcolonialism, media studies, and so on (Paul Gilroy has never been a member of the British Association for American Studies, for example.) IASA has been called a lot of things over the past few years, many of them derogatory, and in general I've tried to assume the persona of a soccer manager turning up his trench coat in the face of a hostile crowd and have just ignored them; but one charge that I was surprised to hear levelled against IASA by a well-known European Americanist was that it was an 'elitist' organization. Maybe such an idea derives again from the implicit association with Comparative Literature, a field which has frequently been charged with elitism on the grounds that you need to have fluency in at least three languages before you can begin working in it. But so far as political elitism goes, given its scarcity of resources, the absence of a national base and its consequent lack of weight within the murky power politics of academia, it would surely be hard to find a less elitist association than IASA. The Association is also deliberately anti-elitist in the way its flat membership structure makes its resources openly accessible to all via the web, including the opportunity to participate in open web forums, thereby circumventing the rigid bureaucratic structures of authority in some of the more venerable American Studies associations, which still insist on preserving for the elders the right to grant a license to speak. Nor does IASA seek a position of imperial hegemony: much as I would like to be emperor of the world, I can assure anyone who might be interested in running for IASA president sometime in the future that this position, exalted as it is, is by no means a sure gateway to global dominance. Affiliation to IASA, which is currently offered at the rate of 10% of a national association's subscription base, was humorously described by another European Americanist a few years ago as 'an invitation to a tithing', as though this were an old feudal system of governance with the lord of the manor intent upon simply raking in the proceeds; but I'm glad to say that the Italian Association for American Studies has signed up for this arrangement, whereby 10%, 4 euros out of their 40 euros annual membership fee, is passed to IASA. Four euros per head per year rep-

resents a tremendous bargain for the Italian members in relation to their access to the Congress, to the online journal and so on, and it's certainly much lower than the individual subscription rates, even if 4 euros a year is not something, alas, that is likely ever to keep me comfortably furnished as lord of the manor, nor to make IASA itself rich. My purpose here is not to insist on a particular formula for how IASA should operate, but to emphasize how there are many kinds of local arrangements which could have practical benefits for all concerned, and that such agreements should be seen as mutually constructive rather than as part of some grand global conspiracy. Local interests will always have an important part to play within professional organizations, in terms of the protection of programs and so on, but, as I've suggested, the capacity to deal with these specific pressures will never amount to very much if the overall conceptual framework for the subject is defined too narrowly. In some parts of the world, American Studies has not been well represented at all through professional organizations—Africa is the obvious example of this, though there are others—and these are areas that IASA can (and should) work on in the years ahead. One of the reasons we have kept *RIAS* as an online journal is to keep down the costs of distribution and printing, to ensure that particular regions are not denied access on a cost basis, and thus, hopefully, to increase the presence of IASA as a clearing house for ideas in many different parts of the world.

Given that IASA encompasses such a broad conceptual scope, one of the fascinating things about its World Congress is the way it changes shape every time, partly on account of the theme, of course, but also because of the different location. Some conferences tend to be pretty much the same every year, and you know in advance, often with a sinking feeling, what is likely to be said there. But IASA perhaps mutates more radically than any other conference of its kind. In Leiden in 2003, the primary focus was on origins, with the contested inauguration of the Association running in historical parallel both with the exodus of the Puritans from Leiden to New England in the 17th century, and with the apocalyptic fervor of Bush's war in Iraq. In Ottawa in 2005, the emphasis was more on inter-American relations, the dialogue between francophone, Latino and English versions of a hemispheric America. Here in Lisbon the discussions have been centered around the black Atlantic, the triangle between Africa, America and the Iberian peninsula, the tensions around contact zones which the work of Mary Louise Pratt, one of our plenary speakers, has done so much to illuminate. In Beijing in 2009, the globe will rotate again, and the perspective that emerges will no doubt be different, foreshadowed here perhaps by Takayuki Tatsumi's fascinating pioneering work on Asian-American cyberpunk and the ways in which what Spivak calls 'the immensely changeful and vast scenario of the evolving Asia-Pacific' (84) is setting a radical new challenge for American Studies in the 21st century. In part, of course, these shifts in balance are impelled by a different clientele among those who attend the Congress: because of travel costs, any conference of this kind is bound to get a higher percentage of local or regional participants, and this is one reason why I think it is only equitable that IASA should be prepared to move around worldwide. But I also think such constitutional variety is good for the Association: it ensures that every conference has a slightly different feel and make up in terms of personnel, and it helps to ensure a kind of heterogeneity within an overall pattern of continuity.

The US scholar Eric Sundquist once remarked that he tended to prefer going to conferences in History, rather than in his home field of Literature, because that was where he was more likely to find out useful things that he didn't already know, and I think the formal organization of IASA, despite or perhaps because of its lack of the kind of corporate structure so beloved of some other organizations, is particularly conducive to this kind of intellectual curiosity and element of surprise. One of the things we've tried explicitly to do in the program for this Congress is to make sure the different regions of the world are not kept segregated: we didn't want just to have a Latin American session with only Latin Americanists speaking, or a transpacific session with just Asian-Americanists, and we've tried as far as possible to mix these up with perspectives from other continents. The axiom in relation to gender studies in a 1998 issue of the journal *American Literature*, 'no more separate spheres', might be redefined here as 'no more separate continents'.

No professional organization can substitute for the finished product of scholarly endeavour, nor can its logistical matrix ever do the thinking for you, but such structures can certainly facilitate that intellectual labour by opening up lines of inquiry that might otherwise have remained occluded. This, I think, that IASA, with all of its multiple dimensions and even its potential forms of incoherence, is particularly well placed to do. I have found that IASA discussions and controversies have fed productively into my own new work on the global mapping of American literature, and I'm pleased to have followed on from the pioneering work of Djelal Kadir and to have enjoyed the honor of being this new Association's second president. But, like Lyndon B. Johnson before me, I have always felt that one two-year stint as president was enough, and in LBJ's immortal words 'I will not seek, and I shall not accept, the nomination' for a second term. I am, however, delighted to pass on the baton to Jane Desmond, who has been heavily involved with the internationalization of American Studies for many years through her work with Virginia Dominguez on the International Forum for US Studies, which started life at the University of Iowa, and which has now moved along with Jane to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I know that she will do an outstanding job as the next IASA president. I shall continue to be interested and involved in the Association, and I wish it well in the years ahead.

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A CONTRAPUNTAL READING OF AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE 'AXIS OF EVIL'

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Although interaction as well as conflict with the United States is definitely not new to Iranian politics and society, the idea of American Studies as a university degree program is surprisingly rather new in the country. The idea is only six years old and the North American Studies department itself was established at the University of Tehran in 2005.

For those closely involved with the program, the last few years have been eventful to say the least. Many American and European colleagues are often surprised that there actually is an American Studies program in the country and they often assume that our main problem with the program would be with Iranian government officials or, alternatively, that the students in the program are fed with anti-American rhetoric, perhaps in accordance with the constructions of Iran predominant in the Western media. It should be noted that despite its financial restrictions, the University of Tehran has been particularly supportive towards the Institute for North American and European Studies and its North American studies program in particular. In reality the easiest part of our journey was the establishment of the department within the Institute.

The academics involved in the program, who are largely adjunct professors, consist of some of the best and brightest in the University of Tehran. As our MA program is interdisciplinary, our professors have backgrounds in Cinema, Social Sciences, Literature, Economics, Women's Studies, and Politics. With their help, over the last two years we have enrolled three groups of MA students and by April 2008 we hope that our first group of students will have graduated from the University of Tehran.

However, there are a number of issues with which we continue to struggle. The most important is bringing together academics who have both the ability to and interest in working in this particular field. Their linguistic competence must be good enough for them to teach in English, as from the very start we decided that all courses in the Department of North American Studies must be taught in the English language. The second problem is that of limited library resources and the limited opportunity for students and even scholars to travel to the United States, Mexico, or Canada to gain a better understanding of North America. Of course, the main focus of our

department is currently the United States, because of its global influence, as well as its cultural, economic and military hegemony.

The fact that we do not have an adequate number of academics to teach and to supervise our students has actually benefited the department in some ways. A number of academics who work in the field of American and Canadian Studies from the University of Birmingham, Northwestern University, the American University of Beirut, UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, and New York University have supported our program through traveling to Tehran, despite an acute shortage of funds, to give lectures to our students. Not only does this further exempt us from accusations of feeding students anti-American propaganda, but far more important is the fact that such interaction allows our students to gain greater insight into their field of study.

Interaction with our students and academic staff has also allowed visiting scholars in American studies, in their own words, to develop a far more realistic understanding of the role that the United States plays in today's world. To be more precise, American Studies in Iran provides the format for a contrapuntal reading of America as an object of study. Not only does it have the potential to create a better understanding in Iran of the United States, but it also provides a unique opportunity for a different and somewhat distinctive understanding of the United States. This makes the program beneficial for Iran as well for American Studies in general.

Of course, there is no innocent way to approach American Studies in the world today. However, as Iranian academics as well as visiting professors have discovered, while almost all students are highly critical of the United States as an empire, attitudes towards the United States are extremely complex and diverse. For example, some of our students who are outspoken critics of the United States would like very much to have the opportunity to do a PhD in American Studies at a high-ranking American university.

However, the fact that the American government has formally set aside an enormous yearly budget of nearly $100 million to increase cultural and academic exchanges in order to bring about what it calls 'regime change', has muddied the waters and complicated American Studies in Iran. It is difficult for Iranian scholars and universities to retain their independence and to be seen as doing so, when cultural warfare is being carried out by the US state-private network. Indeed, such irresponsible behavior basically serves to intensify suspicion and in reality decreases the opportunity for real and meaningful dialogue.

Hence, as a result of this overt politicization of cultural exchange, to cite an example, even a long-planned nine-month trip to the United States that six of our students were to take part in has been cancelled. Through US funding, the students were to teach Farsi at different American universities for nine months and then return to Iran, presumably to inform their peers about their experiences in the so called 'Free World'. Nevertheless, it was hoped that this opportunity could be used for the students to do research in American Studies. This cancellation was largely a result of the American side having rejected three of our top students who were known to be vocal critics of the US government. Despite the fact that the American partner was eventually forced to change its decision and accept the students, this aroused suspicion in different parts of the University of Tehran and the Ministry of Higher Education. Eventual-

ly the Minister withdrew his support for the program. This chapter in American public diplomacy has done little but to intensify the sense of mistrust and decrease opportunities for cooperation in the near future.

Despite these problems and the harm they have caused to our program and, more importantly, to our students, it seems that American Studies as an independent academic program at the University of Tehran is making headway. Our academic staff and our students, with the support of American Studies scholars abroad, continue with their endeavor to enrich the field through their own research in comparative American Studies.

AMERICAN STUDIES FROM THE ANTIPODES?

Patrick McGreevy

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What does it mean to do American Studies in a place that has often been at the wrong end of the stick of US hard power and that is now the object of a kind of full-court press of public diplomacy efforts? The US State Department has directly supported many of the newly-established American Studies programs in the Middle East as part of its endeavor to win hearts and minds. The Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) at American University of Beirut (AUB) has a very different genesis. Shortly after the World Trade Center attacks, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal of Saudi Arabia offered New York City ten million dollars in aid, but when the Prince suggested that the United States should have a more balanced policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Mayor Rudy Giuliani turned down the offer. A few weeks after the US invasion of Iraq, in response to what he referred to as a growing 'gap' between the US and the Arab world, the Prince then provided funding to establish CASAR as well as a second center at the American University in Cairo (See *Main Gate*). Edward Said had repeatedly recommended that AUB institute and American Studies program and urged other universities in the Arab World to do the same because 'the United States is by far the largest, most significant outside force in the contemporary Arab world' (Said, 1994: 356). Such programs have indeed proliferated in recent years: there are eight less than a decade old.[1] AUB's center came into being as a response not to the events of 9/11 but to US actions in the wake of them—and in particular to the heightened projection of US power in the Middle East. In a discussion of US continental expansion in the mid-nineteenth century, the historical geographer Donald Meinig argued that 'as the United States became a powerful, expansive force, every Indian society caught within its bounds was eventually plunged into crisis over how best to respond' (Meinig, 1993: 182). Today the projection of US power—political, economic, and cultural—into the Middle East and beyond, means that people nearly everywhere must confront what we might call the American question (McGreevy, 2006).[2]

[1] These include degree programs or centers at the University of Bahrain, American University in Cairo, Al-Quds University in the West Bank, the University of Jordan, Georgetown University in Qatar, the University of Tehran, Queen Arwa University in Yemen, as well as the American University of Beirut.

[2] The American question is a matter of perception; some argue that the United States is simply the largest among a network of entities that currently dominate the globe; see, for example, Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004).

The American question has certainly propelled the expansion of American Studies in the Middle East, even as it has led to the decline of American Studies in Britain. In Lebanon, like many nearby countries, the current atmosphere is polarized. In such a context, the challenge of teaching and research in American Studies is distinctive in several ways. Let me briefly outline how we have responded to this challenge at the Center for American Studies and Research.

First, we have felt compelled to focus on issues of public moment and to ignore what seems trivial. This does not mean that we avoid the analysis of popular culture, sports, film or literature, but that we constantly connect them to matters of political, economic and cultural power. While this approach certainly characterizes much American Studies work in places like the United States, the exigencies of our immediate situation give it an insistent urgency.

Second, in the face of polarizing pressures—pro- and anti-American—we have prioritized academic values. Since we cannot be a mouthpiece for US public diplomacy, nor for any ideology, our commitment is to thinking and questioning. We can accept no excuse to close off thinking and questioning, to evade that responsibility (see in this regard Readings, 1997).

Third, we cannot help but think about how the Middle East is related to what George Bush calls the 'Homeland'.[3] During the 2006 Summer War, when US-made bombs pounded Lebanon, President Bush repeatedly stated that it was too soon to stop the asymmetrical violence which Condoleeza Rice named the 'birth pangs of a New Middle East' (Rice, 2006). Such experiences led us to focus our thinking on the relational dynamics by which a certain vision of our region serves to help constitute the 'Homeland'. More fundamentally, these experiences teach us to question the processes that project a bifurcated world, a world of homeland and antipodes.

Finally, the experience of thinking about America from a place like Beirut can lead to basic questions about the way things work, the value of the current world order. How much violence, how much injustice, must we accept in the name of maintaining that order? On a rafting trip, one can steel one's self while passing through rapids in anticipation of calmer waters ahead, but when it is whitewater all the time, one may begin to question the journey itself. In a place that is unmoored, that the world order consigns to disorder and destruction, one cannot help but wonder why this disorder has become necessary for world order.

The fact that attempting to do American Studies in the Middle East precipitates such fundamental questions is hardly a promise that answers will come from such a place. To be honest about the situation, we must admit that because we are understaffed and isolated from the places where American studies has its institutional centers of gravity, the intellectual firepower to produce sustained new perspectives is sadly lacking. What we can offer are questions. And we can offer them relentlessly.

[3] The idea of relational dynamics has been developed by critical human geographers; see, for example, Massey (2005).

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THE CLINTON INSTITUTE: DOING AMERICAN STUDIES IN IRELAND

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The Clinton Institute for American Studies was established at University College Dublin in 2003 with the support of the Irish government to promote academic research and public discussion about the United States in Ireland and beyond. In the last four years the Institute has developed Masters and PhD programs in American Studies, working closely with allied departments in the humanities and social sciences so as to maximize teaching potential, and has supported several dedicated research projects which promote collaborations between Irish-based and international scholars in American Studies. It also runs a program of outreach activities—including public lectures, exhibitions, workshops for teachers in Ireland, and an international Summer School aimed at graduate students from across the world (for details on the Institute's programs and activities, see www. ucd. ie/amerstud).

Under conditions of globalization the meanings of 'America' circulate widely today and there is a mass-mediated common knowledge about American life spreading across the world. Yet, wherever we are in the world, we perceive and understand the United States from regional and local perspectives, and in response to cultural, political and economic imperatives of our own locations. We are conscious of this as we develop teaching and research programs at the Clinton Institute, and we place a strong emphasis on viewing the United States from the 'outside', situating it in relation to comparative, transnational and geopolitical frames of study. Core strands of teaching and research focus attention on transatlantic issues, including US relations with Ireland and Western Europe. A key aim in the Institute's mission statement is to provide students, researchers and policy-makers with a forum for understanding changing relations between the US and Atlantic nations in their historical complexity and in relation to contemporary ideological, political and intellectual debates.

Ireland's relationship with the United States is a long and complex one. The history of Irish immigration to the US has proved the foundation for vital cultural, political and economic relations today, and strong bonds of shared identity—almost 40 million Americans cited Irish descent at the last census. At the same time, Ireland has rapidly emerged in recent years as one of the wealthiest economies in the European Union and a key political presence in the shaping of the 'new Europe'. Today, there is pub-

lic discussion of whether Ireland should follow 'Boston or Berlin' as symbolic models for policy-making or for imagining the future. Ireland's contemporary struggle with its own identity and its symbolic transatlantic position make it an ideal vantage point for the study of past, present and future relations between Europe and the US. It also acts as a constant reminder of the dialectics of that study—in Ireland, as in so many other parts of the world, 'America' functions as a vanishing mediator of more localized issues of social change and national identity.

Being responsive to distinctive local contexts of doing American Studies in Ireland in the twenty-first century does not inhibit our intellectual perspectives or practices as Americanists; rather, it stretches these as we are challenged to develop our research and teaching accordingly. This is manifested, for example, in several of our research projects which counterpoint the US role in local/global dynamics involving Irish culture and politics. A project on photography and international conflict, which I direct, examines the role of photojournalism in framing understandings of war, conflicts and human rights issues. While the US is at the heart of the global dimension of the project, the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland provide a local case study. Another project, directed by a colleague at UCD, examines how the Irish Peace Process has been understood from an American foreign policy perspective and considers how this example of conflict resolution has shaped policy in relation to other global conflicts. Such projects have a strong local impetus and the benefit of rich local resources, but also have the potential to enrich the methods and practices of American Studies by developing fresh interdisciplinary frames (e.g. combining foreign policy and cultural inquiry) and pursuing fieldwork (e.g. oral history) in local environments. This is a form of American Studies research that is becoming more and more common with the 'internationalization' of the field and doubtless also reflects the unipolar prominence of the US on the global stage since the ending of the Cold War.

The internationalization of American Studies is only partially an intellectual endeavor. It also refers us to the emerging institutional roles of American Studies within university systems where internationalization is a buzzword for entrepreneurial developments. The Clinton Institute reflects this. It was created following competitive tender among Irish universities for government funding to create a center devoted to study of the United States, and named for President Bill Clinton to symbolically recognize his role in the Peace Process. The funding awarded to UCD was in part used to furbish a dedicated building for the Clinton Institute and a large portion of the Institute's funding has continued to come from external sources. The Institute was conceived, in part, as a strategic vehicle to promote the university internationally. American Studies in this context is not so much a field of interdisciplinary studies as an investment in the symbolic capital Irish-US relations (and the name of 'Clinton' in particular).

Such symbolic investments are apparent in other American Studies centres across the world and all have origin stories that reflect the particular cultural and political contexts of their moment of formation. In Europe, for example, the Salzburg Seminar in Salzburg, the John F. Kennedy Institute in Berlin and the Roosevelt Center in Middelburg all have origins in Cold War paradigms. In more recent years, the seeding of American Studies centers in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Middle East reflect post-Cold War geopolitics and regional relationships with and perspectives upon

the US. Indeed, the dissolution of the Cold War paradigm has reshaped both the field imaginary and the political economy of American Studies internationally. The results are mixed and conflicting, differentially located and articulated across regions, but there are certain tendencies that may be mapped and analyzed. Across much of Europe, for example, these tendencies include: the promotion of comparative programs and frames of study that seek to conceptually deterritorialize 'America'—the transatlantic, the Black Atlantic, the circumatlantic; the embrace of entrepreneurial models of activity, brokering American Studies as a contact zone with overseas students or as a focus for 'research institutes' which can lever external funding; the reconfiguring of American Studies within national reformations of higher education funding and state support. If all of these activities suggest a symptomatic responsiveness to transnational energies and deregulatory demands of globalization, they are also indicative of ways in which the meaning and value of American Studies are constantly under negotiation, and bartered in broader strategies of academic politics and entrepreneurial activity.

AMERICAN STUDIES ON THE CHINESE MAINLAND

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OVERVIEW

American Studies is the most prosperous area of international studies in China. As in other countries, universities constitute the major force. In most universities, American literature and culture are researched and taught in English departments, American history in history departments, Sino-US relations in political science departments, and so on. This means American Studies is usually conducted in separate university departments and is not treated as an independent discipline.

Some important universities, however, do have research centers that are entirely devoted to American Studies. The major ones include Fudan University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Nanjing University, Nankai University, Xiamen University and Northeast Normal University. American Studies centers in these universities offer both Masters and PhD degree programs that generally take interdisciplinary approaches in their curriculum and research. The American Studies Center at Beijing Foreign Studies University is a good example. The following is a list of courses offered by the Center:

Philosophy	Western Philosophy, Western Thinking and Academic Writing, American Philosophy, Western Civilization with Chinese Comparisons
History	Survey of American History, Important Issues in American History, Post-war American History, Social History of the United States, American Diplomatic History, Post-war American Diplomatic History, American Intellectual History, Approaches of American History, American Religion
Political Science	American Political Institutions, American Government, Current Issues in International Politics, US-East Asia Relations, International Relations, American Constitution, Cross-Border Issues, Social Legislation, American Foreign Policy, Constitutional Law

Sociology	American Culture and Society, Post-war American Society, American Social Institutions, Social Theory, American Social Problems, Myths of America, American Social Movements, American Ethnicity, Comparative Social Institutions, Chinese American Experience, Technology and American Society
Literature	American Literature, Afro-American Writers, Asian-American Writers
Economy	Issues in American Economic Development, American Economic History
Interdisciplinary	Sociology of American Literature, Language and Culture, Understanding America, International Relations and Media, American Education, Women's Studies, Post-colonial Culture, Popular American Culture, Myths in American Culture
Methodology	Introduction to American Studies, American Mass Media: Issues and Methods, Research Methodology

Besides universities, American Studies is also an important area for many provincial academies of social sciences. The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is home to an independent and influential American Studies center. American Studies scholars on the Chinese mainland have established their own research organizations, the most important four being the American History Research Association of China, the China Association for the Study of American Literature, the Chinese Association for American Studies, and the Chinese Association for Sino-US Relations Research. Each of these organizations hosts a conference every year or every two years.

American Studies in China concentrates on US history, literature, foreign diplomacy (including Sino-US relations), politics, media and culture, economy and trade. Interests in other fields such as US philosophy and religion are also growing. Research papers in American Studies are published in university journals, specialty journals such as *World History*, *Modern International Relations*, and *Foreign Literatures*, etc. , and comprehensive humanities or social sciences journals. The only journal that is entirely devoted to American Studies is the *American Studies Quarterly,* sponsored by the Institute for American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

STUDY OF AMERICAN LITERATURE ON THE CHINESE MAINLAND

1) HISTORICAL REVIEW

The study of American literature in China has made great strides during the last three decades. The serious study of American literature was marked by the establishment of the China Association for the Study of American Literature in 1979 in the wake of the Cultural Revolution. Since then, there has been a national conference held every two years and many symposiums held between, drawing thousands of scholars and students from all over China.

The flourishing of the field can also be seen in the following aspects. First, American literature courses have appeared in almost every curriculum of English departments both on the undergraduate and graduate levels. If before the 1980s Chinese scholars

and students of American literature only studied mainstream white male writers, they now began to explore the real meaning of being an American. In that sense they began trying to understand the issue of American identity, or rather the many identities that make up a diverse and complex history and nation. Therefore, especially on the graduate level, courses covering various periods, themes, and genres began to be offered. These courses invite students to view the American experience through the eyes of Americans of different birth, color, sex and religion. A more comprehensive picture of American literature is now presented to Chinese students and readers. Second, in the last three decades, a great number of works of American literature have been either reprinted or translated. In the early 90s, Chinese students often had to share books in class. The situation has now greatly improved. In bookstores nowadays, works and anthologies of American literature in both English and Chinese are no longer a rarity, providing Chinese readers with an overview of the evolution of American literature and culture and enhancing their understanding of the United States. Third, what is most remarkable about the discipline is the mushrooming of American literary scholarship. During the last three decades, a large number of monographs and articles on American literature have been published. Compared with the publications of thirty years ago, studies in American literature have shown considerable improvement both in scope and depth.

2) CURRENT SITUATION

The following characteristics mark the study of American literature in China today. First, even with the flourishing of the field, Chinese scholars (especially those in provincial universities) are often restricted by limited sources in their study and teaching of American literature. This explains why many scholars there would concentrate in their study on certain areas of American literature, for example 20th-century American writers instead of those from the 19th or 18th centuries, canonical writers instead of those less well-known to Chinese scholars. Even though the study of ethnic writers has become the trend, Chinese scholars tend to focus on the famous few, whether these be authors from the white mainstream or various ethnic groups. For instance, writers like Hemingway and Toni Morrison have received much attention, while some other writers are not studied adequately. Second, many Chinese scholars of American literature are professors in Chinese departments. A large number of them do not have a good command of English and depend on the translation of foreign literary works. Since not all the translations are in high quality, these scholars are, if I may say so, twice removed from the original texts. Finally, global cultural and economic systems have brought a rethinking of the traditional themes and texts and a redefinition of traditional notions of literature and culture. The very way that meaning is made is changing, and this change is reflected even in the basic academic disciplines. New critical methods and new theories of literature and culture have appeared and are transforming literary and cultural studies. There have been more dialogues between Chinese scholars and the outside academic world and Chinese scholars have benefited from the continuing interaction. In a period of thirty years, Chinese scholars have

made great progress in these fields and Chinese scholars are becoming more integrated into the literary world outside of China.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

With the rapid development of the study of American literature in China, the following two cautions are suggested. First, interdisciplinary study in China should be promoted and emphasized. Chinese scholars of literature should read more about American history, society and culture in addition to works of American literature in order to have a better understanding of that literature. It is the trend now that disciplinary boundaries are being redrawn, and new kinds of material enter traditionally well-defined fields. Literary texts are studied in relation to texts from popular culture, and both are studied in relation to the cultural conditions that they reflect and to a broad range of philosophical theories. We hope to envision a new future for the reading of texts of all forms: theoretical, poetic, narrative, dramatic, artistic, cultural, historical, religious, and technological. In this way, scholars of American literature can exchange views with scholars of different disciplines and their horizons can be further broadened. Second, the study of American literature in China should be placed in the context of Chinese culture. A Chinese perspective should be developed gradually and the mere imitation of American scholarship should be avoided. Some of the issues that could be raised are: How are familiar texts of American literature and culture to be read in the new context of 21st-century America and China? What are the common concerns of literary and cultural scholarship in China and the United States? What are the differences? How have literatures, arts, and thought been conceptualized and taught across cultures? What perspectives on these issues might scholars from China offer to the world?

We hope to open new avenues of cooperation and mutual understanding between Chinese scholars and scholars of other countries. It is time for us to share our findings toward a more comprehensive mapping of the American literary and cultural landscape.

AMERICAN STUDIES AND ITS GEOPOLITICAL HABITATS

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Seyed Mohammad Marandi, Patrick McGreevy, Liam Kennedy, Li Jin and Sun Youzhong have written four illuminating accounts of the state of American Studies in Iran, Lebanon, Ireland, and China. Most striking, perhaps, are the contrasts among the expansive exuberance and optimism of the picture from China, the sense of isolation, marginality and beleagueredness expressed by the contributors from the Middle East, and the slightly jaded pragmatism of the account from Ireland. The contrasts can be traced in part to the same historical process: the geopolitical shift marked by the end of the Cold War, the emergence of the US as a monopolar superpower, and its creation of a new imperial enemy in the Islamic world. China, Lebanon, Ireland, and Iran occupy different places in this narrative. American Studies, according to Li Jin and Sun Youzhong, took off as China's isolationism began to dissolve after the cultural revolution. Its status today as 'the most prosperous area of international studies in China' is surely linked with China's full-fledged move into the global consumer economy and its new status as the industrial competitor of the US, its supplier of cheap goods, and its principal lender.

This extraordinary shift offers at least one encouraging message for struggling colleagues in the Middle East: a lot can change in a very short time. In the present, however, these colleagues find themselves located not on a wave of expansiveness, but at a crux of collision, suspicion and antagonism. Fascinating in Seyed Mohammad Marandi and Patrick McGreevy's accounts are the multiple paths by which American Studies programs are coming into being in the Middle East. Some, like the center Seyed Mohammad Marandi describes at the University of Tehran, are established by national governments seeking to create scholars who can engage with a manifestly hostile power. Others, mentioned by Patrick McGreevy, are being established by the US government itself, apparently to gain an academic foothold for its own interests, while others, including the one at American University in Beirut where McGreevy works, derive from the critical and often anti-imperial academic programming developed in US universities in the 1970s and 80s (Kennedy offers yet another narrative of origins from Dublin). McGreevy's fascinating story of the origins of his own program illuminates the choices presented by the post-9/11 moment. Supposing Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal's gift had been accepted with an agreement that he and Giuliani would agree to disagree about US policy on the Palestinians? Supposing New

Yorkers had been asked to debate the issue and inform themselves? How quickly and forcefully the extraordinary openness created by the disaster of 9/11 was corralled into stark dramas of good and evil, and into the scenario McGreevy notes: zones of chaos that legitimate particular concepts of order.

Such polarities, however, neither foster nor survive serious academic inquiry. This is an irony I have observed over 30 years of engagement with another cold-war driven academic field, Latin American Studies. Left to their own devices, area studies programs will attract a lot of people who are actually interested in the areas under study. Some of them will have significant life experiences or historical connections there. These obvious facts make area studies fairly inefficient at sustaining relations of confrontation and enmity, as they have often been asked to do. Axes of good and evil are held in place by ignorance, not curiosity-driven learning.

In his account of the Clinton Institute at University College Dublin, Liam Kennedy invokes another key dynamic shaping the institutionalization of knowledge and inquiry today: the entrepreneurial vision of the corporate university. The Clinton Institute was founded by a competitive bidding process in which universities competed for both money and prestige. It is 'an investment in the symbolic capital of Irish-US relations'. The term 'symbolic capital' helpfully links the generative energies driving the internationalizing trend in American Studies with the single fact of the emergence of the US (and self-promotion) as a lone global superpower, the only bandwagon in town. How to operate with a modicum of authenticity in this instrumentalized, entrepreneurial environment? By devising research projects attached in significant ways to local reality and history, Kennedy argues, projects arcing out through the relationship with the US bring students into new relations with the home environment. This is an approach that to a degree seeks to de-center the 'area' of area studies.

The fairly benign scenario Kennedy describes is itself a product of the history of Irish-US relations. The two have never been enemies. Where enmity is involved, as in the other contexts described, area studies tends to occupy an edge between political expedience (a policy mouthpiece) and inexpediency (a thorn in the side of empire). One common response to the political inexpediencies of area studies is to prevent these fields from developing freely, by policing them from the outside. Practices of this kind have gained ground under the current US administration. As I prepared this text in late January 2008, for instance, a summary of 2007 allocations for foreign language and international education in the United States arrived by e-mail. Programs within the Department of Education received tiny increases in some cases, and cuts in others.[1] The significant increases went to education programs run by the State and Defense Departments, where access is often tied to citizenship, security clearances, or government service, particularly in security agencies.[2] The figures were sympto-

[1] For example, funding for the Foreign Language Assistance program increased from $23.8 million to $25.7 million, while International Education and Foreign Language Studies grew from $105.7 million to $109 million.

[2] For example, the State Department's Education and Cultural Exchange programs grew from $445.3 million to $505.4 million, and the National Security Education Program increased from $16 million to $44.7 million. The National Endowment for the Humanities, incidentally, lost funding, from $140.9 million to $132.5 million.

matic of what has come to be called the 'securitization' of international and foreign language education.[3]

Such efforts are often opposed vigorously by universities and educational officers within government. A day later, for example, I received another message: the National Research Council, a body of senior officials with both government and academic experience, appointed by the National Academies, published a report condemning the securitization of academic inquiry. The limitations being imposed on university research by the current administration in the name of national security are, they said tactfully, 'unnecessarily closing [us] off from the world in a futile effort to protect ourselves [and] will only isolate us from an increasingly integrated and competitive global community'.[4] May these and other clearer heads prevail in the days to come. Both inside and outside the US, American Studies has a stake in the outcome.

I cannot end without mentioning an experiment in which American Studies recently engaged at my own institution, New York University. Wherever it exists, American Studies often occupies vulnerable institutional structures—centers, programs—that lack the stability of university departments, and are unable to appoint their own permanent faculty. Five years ago, six such programs at NYU began a conversation to join together and form a new university department. Among other things, the change would enable them to make their own faculty appointments instead of relying on the appointment powers of traditional departments (which by definition favored more traditional disciplinary fields). The new department, called Social and Cultural Analysis, brought together programs in American Studies, Metropolitan Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Africana Studies, Asian-Pacific American Studies, and Latino Studies. Some thirty-five faculty have all or part of their academic line in the department, and, thanks to supportive deans, the department has appointed two new professors each year since it came into being. The graduate program in American Studies is one of the jewels in its crown. Our experiment has been successful so far, and we are finding real enjoyment in the challenging process of making everything up as we go along. We look forward to reporting on our experiment as it unfolds.

[3] Equally worrisome, probably, was the paltriness of the amounts on all fronts. Announcing a bold new initiative in foreign language study, the president requested $114 million in funding, a sum that has no significance alongside the deficiency in language expertise in the United States. How, one wonders, do such sums compare to China's investment in language and international studies? Or to a day's expenditures in Iraq?

[4] The council mentioned specifically, conditions on some government-funded research that forbid foreign nationals from participating or stop the publication of university research results, and 'export controls' rules that restrict the kinds of technology and information that can be sent to foreign scholars overseas or be accessed by those working in this country.

INTER-AMERICAN STUDIES AS AN EMERGING FIELD: THE FUTURE OF A DISCIPLINE [1]

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Inter-American Studies is an exciting and fast developing new field, one that has the potential to revolutionize not only how we think about the Americas (including their relationships with Europe [Morency, 1998] and Africa and their pre-Columbian worlds) but about the various disciplines—from literature to economics, from politics to law, and from anthropology to music—that link them together. Although we must credit historians like Herbert E. Bolton with having charted the original conceptual framework for this undertaking early in the twentieth century, and though we have seen interest in the Inter-American project wax and wane through the years, we are now living in a time when, for a variety of reasons, interest in Inter-American relations suddenly looms larger and more urgent than it ever has before. Concerned with a wide range of issues and agencies, such as NAFTA, popular music, literature, and law, the Americas have become, in the early years of the twenty-first century, a deeply interconnected site of tremendous energy and potential. And of conflict.

However, as an emergent (and therefore disruptive) intellectual discipline, Inter-American Studies must also be considered part of the larger process of 'globalization' that, like the arrival of the banana company train in Garcia Márquez's *Cien ańos de soledad* [*One Hundred Years of Solitude*], is causing so much upheaval and consternation in so many places. Major players in this vast international game, the Americas are taking note of each other as never before, and the Inter-American paradigm (understood as involving both Francophone and Anglophone Canada, the United States, Spanish America, Brazil and the Caribbean) offers an excellent, though by no means foolproof, method of ensuring that this difficult process of rediscovery and reconsideration proceeds with fairness and accuracy. This is our challenge.

But nowhere is the pressure of change being felt as acutely, perhaps, as in the closely related fields of American Studies and American literature, mainstream academic areas involving vast numbers of students and where 'a broad critique of the narrow, nationalist conflation of the Americas and the United States has sparked vig-

[1] This essay previously appeared in the *Vanderbilt e-journal of Luso-Hispanic Studies*, Vol. 1 (2004) 13–28. http://ejournals.library.vanderbilt.edu/lusohispanic/index.php. Reprinted with permission from the editors and the author.

orous efforts to resituate the study of United States literature and culture in a hemispheric or Pan-American context' (Jay, 2001: 45). Although our understanding of what it means to speak even of the literature of the United States has, since the 1970s, itself been steadily evolving, Inter-American Studies is fast becoming an integral part of this process and, as such, seems certain to change the ways traditional units, such as Anthropology, English and American Literature, African American Studies, History, French, Economics, Law, Spanish and Portuguese, and Comparative Literature, envision their missions, their subject matter, and their relationships with each other.

Rather than trying to sum up what we already know about Inter-American Studies as an academic discipline—that it is appealing to some and subversive to others and that it is both immensely complicated and, quite often, contentious, for example—I would like, in this essay, to enumerate what I take to be the five major problems that eventually have to be confronted and dealt with before even a well-intended program in Inter-American Studies can flourish—in any discipline. Some of these issues deal with course content and orientation while others deal with philosophic and methodological matters, but all are crucial, I believe, to the healthy growth and development of this field. It is my hope that by raising these issues at the outset, they will serve as a kind of theoretical and procedural backdrop against which the reader can better consider the particular issues they address.

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

Perhaps the greatest obstacle we must confront is what some are terming the 'language problem', the fact that in order to perform teaching and research that engages even two or three of our American cultures, we need linguistic competency in, as I will argue, at least three of our New World languages, a grouping that includes our numerous Native American languages as well as our European-based tongues (in alphabetical order): English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. This issue is a problem because many of us simply have not had extensive, serious linguistic training in our own doctoral programs. Those who would like to get into Inter-American Studies are all too often mono-, or, in some cases, bilingual, simply ill-equipped, in terms of language preparation, to do so. But, in truth, we cannot allow ourselves to be derailed by this problem, which, if it cannot be quickly overcome, can certainly be mitigated.

In the short run, the easy solution is to use translations. While this is not an altogether adequate solution, especially when issues of style, authorial development, or cultural context are involved, it does have the advantage of getting more scholars immediately involved in the Inter-American project. And it is a realistic recommendation since many of us will simply elect to use translations anyway. Then, too, the question of whether to rely on translated material or not is more of a problem for some disciplines than others. Speaking from the perspective of a literary scholar, I see little value in arguing that we should remain totally ignorant of great New World writers like Guimarães Rosa, Clarice Lispector, Nicole Brossard, Maryse Condé, Neruda, or Borges simply because we feel we cannot—or should not—use an existing translation. We should take some care, of course, with the particular translation we use (the Scott-Buccleuch/Penguin translation of Machado de Assis's great *Dom Casmurro* sim-

ply omits certain key chapters from the original, for example), and we should always be cognizant of what inevitably 'gets lost' in even the best translations, but, in the end, we should feel that it is better to know an author even partially via a good translation than not to know her at all. A similar argument pertains for other disciplines as well, I believe, though its particularities will certainly vary.

In the long run, however, we need to change the ways we train our graduate students. Specifically, we need to require them to have real proficiency (if not necessarily native fluency) in at least three of our American languages. This is absolutely imperative for the long term development of Inter-American studies as a field because of the growing pressure of what might be termed the 'binary model', the methodological approach that I fear is fast establishing itself as the norm in Inter-American Studies (which, even in its incipient form, is coming to be dominated by what some in the academy, in a moment of high irony for Latin Americanists, are now referring to as the 'imperialism' of both English *and* Spanish), and that calls for linguistic competence in only two languages, and then perhaps only minimally. To be able to work only in, say, English and Spanish, is simply unacceptable because it ignores the profound linguistic diversity of our Americas while at the same time restricting the greater scope of the overall Inter-American initiative. Methodologically and conceptually, two languages simply constitute too narrow a perspective for this project. We know only too well that people in the United States have never been much interested in serious language training, but the signs are all around us that the times are indeed changing, and that this old isolationist and parochial attitude is dying out. We can only hope so. And, as a new field of intellectual inquiry (one that both relates to and connects many different disciplines), Inter-American Studies could well play a major role in its demise.

In practical terms, however, to demand that our doctoral students in Inter-American studies must be able to work in at least three languages means, of course, that not everyone who applies will have the requisite background and training necessary to enter into this type of doctoral program. We will have to be very selective, therefore, choosing only those students who are naturally bi- or trilingual or who have studied enough language in undergraduate school (and, if we are serious about this, in elementary and secondary school as well) that they could pick up at least their third (or, depending on their areas of interest, perhaps fourth) required language as part of their doctoral course work. Given the extreme importance of verifiable language competency, then, to our project, the selection of students for advanced study in Inter-American Studies will thus be a most painful one, with many otherwise excellent candidates not being chosen, but if we are to properly chart our discipline's future course of development, it is absolutely essential that we maintain the highest entrance requirements. To fail here will be to fatally imbalance the development of Inter-American Studies as a methodologically valid field of intellectual inquiry by allowing it to become the near exclusive province of only one or two languages. This scenario, which privileges certain languages (and their cultures) while relegating others to second- and third-class status, must be avoided at all costs.

As they are currently configured, many departments of English and American literature (to speak of the obstacles one particular—and absolutely essential—unit will have to overcome very quickly) are finding themselves in an unexpectedly precarious

situation in this regard. Unless they are rash enough to 'confuse', as Stephen Greenblatt observes, 'the globalization of literary studies' with 'American triumphalism and an insurgent English-language parochialism' (Greenblatt, 2001: 59) programs in American literature are finding it necessary to confront and deal with the fact that the United States is itself deeply and irrevocably pluralistic, that it is only one of several, interrelated Americas, and that, replete with their own voices, histories, and cultures, these are now demanding recognition and attention, acknowledgement of their rightful places in the New World sun. Innovative, engaging literature has long been written throughout North, Central, and South America in languages other than English, and if English department faculty and students do not know at least two or three of these hitherto 'Other' tongues they run the very real risk of being left behind, limited to texts originally written in English or to what they can glean from what translated materials exist. How large, influential units like English accommodate this sea change in our approach to the entire concept of what it means to be 'American' constitutes a great challenge for our traditional programs in American literature (as it does for a great many other disciplines, history, for example, or political science), and their response to it will almost immediately emerge as one of the decisive factors in the development of Inter-American studies generally.

It must be said, in this same regard, that, at least initially, bi- or trilingual Canadianists and Latin Americanists could enjoy distinct advantages as the field of Inter-American Studies develops since, in terms of the requisite language preparation, they are also natural and experienced comparatists, having long studied their literatures (those of English- and French-speaking Canada, Portuguese-speaking Brazil, and Spanish America) in terms of other, more 'canonical' texts and literary traditions. Something very similar can be said of scholars working in a variety of other disciplines as well, I suspect. What this means, in realistic terms, is that Latin Americanists and Canadianists have long had to know more—much more—about the literature, culture, and history of the United States and Europe than students of European and 'American' literature (meaning that of the United States alone) have traditionally had to know about Canadian or Latin American literature, culture, and history. Thus, another problem we face here (one well known to the comparatists) is that of balance, of knowing one thing very well but another, closely related thing not at all, and feeling compelled to examine them both together.

Beyond this issue (daunting as it is), it is interesting to consider the 'language question' with respect to Canadian and Latin American literature and culture themselves. Nowhere in the Americas, perhaps, has language been more viscerally connected to issues of cultural identity than in Québec, though giant Brazil, too often overlooked even within the larger context of Latin America, has long defined itself on the strength of its mellifluous and quirky language as well, though perhaps not as militantly. Indeed, interest in Brazil/Québec studies has been steadily rising in recent years (as work by Zilá Bernd, Yvan Lamonde, Gérard Bouchard, and others admirably demonstrates),[2] with some scholars coming to regard these two very unique New

[2] For information regarding Professor Bernd's CD on Inter-American literature, go to the following address: www.ufrgs.br/cdrom. See, also Lamonde and Bouchard (1997).

World cultures as the most marginalized of all, the two cultures most consistently—and most conspicuously—ignored in the Inter-American purview. Yet on balance it also seems likely that there has been closer linguistic and literary interaction between England and France in Canada than between Spain and Portugal in Latin America, a cultural and historical setting in which Spanish America and Brazil have evolved separately and 'apart, since the first days of the discovery and conquest of the New World' (Monegal, 1984: xii).

In sum, one must conclude that, as the complex and demanding field of Inter-American Studies continues to develop, we will need to think in terms not of the past, and the ways we were trained as doctoral and professional students in our respective disciplines, but of the future and the new kinds of training (particularly linguistic training) that we want our graduates to have. If we are to make them successful Inter-Americanists, we must train them better than we were trained,[3] and we must remain steadfast in insisting that certain standards be met (foremost being the linguistic requirement). This, I believe, is essential for in truth we are preparing a new generation of scholars for a multi-dimensional, fluid, rapidly evolving new field, and we must ensure that they are prepared to deal with it fully and properly, to become, in short, leaders in the field.

PROGRAMMATIC COHESION

Since I am adamantly in favor of requiring our doctoral students in Inter-American Studies to work with at least three separate languages, I also favor requiring them to work with the three culture groups associated with them. The goal here, I believe, is to help our students select courses that will allow them to develop, semester by semester, a coherent, logically unified program, one that, with careful planning, will enable the student to develop a primary area of specialization (out of which a dissertation might well arise) as well as secondary and tertiary areas of teaching and research interest. Advising will thus become of paramount importance, as will the issue of the course selection for each student's program. For the student, then, as well as for the advisor, the goal, always, must be the creation of a unified, cohesive program of study, one that coalesces in meaningful, professional ways, that avoids being merely a conglomeration of disconnected courses, credits, and topics, and that clearly features the student's primary area (or areas) of interest. But until Inter-American Studies develops as a separate field to the point that it begins to produce a job market calling, specifically, for Inter-Americanists, I also believe that we must insist that our students ground themselves in the requirements of a traditional doctoral program. This, for me, would reflect the student's primary area of specialization, though, this, too, would have a clear and fundamental Inter-American dimension to it. For the time being, at least, I therefore feel we should be training Inter-Americanists who can compete successfully in the job markets that currently exist for more traditional PhDs in these same areas. Inter-American literature, for example, enjoys a close affinity with Comparative Literature in that both require that work be done in more than one language and both rest

[3] This is a point that Robert K. Martin has made as well. See Martin, 1993.

on issues of methodology, on how and why certain texts can be brought together for study (by genre, theme, period, or movement, for example). Yet as we have seen, Inter-American scholarship is also very germane to the type of work being done by Latin Americanists, by Canadianists, and by Caribbeanists, all of whom possess particular areas of expertise and specialization that could be of keen interest to a wide range of academic units, including some not normally considered in this context, such as law, education, and medicine. In contrast to trends and developments in the job market, the academic structure of the university changes very slowly and so we would want our fledgling Inter-Americanists to be trained so that they would be immediately attractive to a college of Law, Medicine, Music, Business, or Education as well as to a typical department of History, Comparative Literature, English, French, Ethnomusicology, Political Science, Economics, African American Studies, or Spanish/Portuguese.

There are at least two reasons why they should be: first, our students would be prepared to teach the traditional courses required of such a department and, second, they would also be prepared to offer new courses in a vibrant and rapidly evolving new field—Inter-American history, literature, anthropology, politics, law, education, and music, to mention just a few of the most immediately promising possibilities. Such a person will, I think, be highly desirable for any department seeking to remain current and up to date or to forge ahead into new areas, which, as we all know, is a worthy goal of nearly every college and university.

COURSE COVERAGE AND FACULTY EXPERTISE

Operating, once again, at the level of the practical, my concern here is with how an actual Inter-American course is structured, how it is organized, and how it selects certain texts and readings and not others. My comments here stem from my own experiences in designing and teaching courses in Inter-American literature, which I have done now for nearly twenty-five years. Although the same organizing principles may not work for every discipline when it comes to the construction of Inter-American courses, I am strongly in favor of breadth rather than depth, excluding, of course, graduate seminars that focus on more limited or specific Inter-American issues. At all levels, however, I advocate courses that have representation from all five of our New World literatures (English and French Canada, the United States, Spanish America, and Brazil), and including both our Native American heritage and the Caribbean, a region rightly understood by many people as the 'crossroads of the Americas' and one fully emblematic of both the potential and the challenge of the entire Inter-American enterprise. The responsibility of the professor is to demonstrate to the students that the very concept of Inter-American Studies necessarily involves all of the Americas and not just a few selected parts of it. Research papers and areas of future specialization can certainly be scaled down to reflect each student's linguistic preparation and area of interest, but a basic conceptual and organizing principle of each Inter-American class should be a commitment to inculcating in the student the need to reach beyond narrow, binary thinking, the kind that produces the two-sided, two-language scholarship that, unfortunately, we are seeing more and more of in this type of study. It is, I believe, critical that in our courses we expose our students to issues that man-

ifest themselves, often in very different ways, in all our New World nations and cultures and that we continuously remind them of the Americas' extraordinary diversity as well as of their common (but not identical) heritage.

In doing this, however, I am not claiming that everyone needs to be an expert in everything, for to do so would be fatuous in the extreme. Rather, I am claiming, via the inclusiveness of our courses, that to be a properly trained Inter-Americanist of any particular stripe (literature, history, economics, law, religion, music, etc.) it is necessary to possess at least a rudimentary understanding of how any given topic plays out in the rest of the Americas. To do anything else, to organize courses only centering on, say, certain English- and Spanish-speaking sectors of 'nuestra América' (as Martí put it in his seminal 1891 essay), is to fatally undercut the very argument of hemispheric commonality that we use to justify the entire Inter-American outlook. While the primary thrust of the course may well be limited to three of our New World cultures, we, as faculty, should take the time and trouble to ensure that our students at least consider, if only in passing, how the topic under consideration relates to the other American cultures, the ones not being focused upon in more detail. To be sure, this is never an easy task, and few (if any) of us were ever trained to do it. And, it must be said, to gain even this minimal level of knowledge about our sister American cultures means that we must commit to doing a lot of reading and research, to educating ourselves about the histories, traditions, and cultures of hemispheric neighbors we have hitherto known little or nothing about but whom we should know much better. In short, we must show our students (and ourselves!) that, for all their very real differences and for all the ways they can be compartmentalized into separate, isolated classes and programs (this being the typical model in most universities), the Americas share a common historical background, one that, to paraphrase Herbert E. Bolton's famous argument (Bolton, 1933: 448–74), continues to dramatize the interconnectedness of our often fractious but ongoing epic experience.

But while it is one thing to stretch one's intellectual horizons and organize a course that involves texts from the other Americas, it is quite another thing to try and teach these texts (which, per force, will often be in translation), or, at least, to do so in a way that connects them, in meaningful ways, with their often very different social and cultural contexts. The obstacle here that must be overcome is, once again, the nature of the graduate training that most of us received, linguistic and otherwise. Since most of us were not taught to think about our disciplines in broad, Inter-American terms (indeed, many of us were taught to think only in terms of narrow specializations), we must rethink and retrain ourselves as Inter-Americanists, and this is not easy to do, even if we are inclined to do so.

One very effective way to do it, however, is simply to commit large amounts of time to reading in the areas in which we find ourselves insufficiently prepared. For me, this was chiefly the literature of Anglophone and Francophone Canada, and I spent the better part of twenty years putting myself on a rather rigorous reading program in Canadian literature. This was great fun and I gained immensely from the experience (my reading skills in French grew exponentially, for example), but it was time-consuming in the extreme. And it was often difficult to maintain in the face of the many other demands made upon our time. Still, to be able to read deeply and systematically in

other of our New World literatures was an invaluable experience, and I recommend it to everyone.

A second possibility is to establish funding for some sort of 'release time' program that would enable faculty to study, to take classes, or to travel to places where more specialized training could be gotten. Although more dependent on institutional largess and foresight, the 'release time' method has the advantage of structure, control, and, above all, focus, all these being critical for a time-pressed faculty member seeking if not thoroughgoing expertise then at least basic competence in some important and hitherto missing aspect of the Inter-American course that is being envisioned.

Finally, faculty wishing to begin participating in an Inter-American studies program might well wish to organize team-taught courses, or courses organized by a single person but built around a series of carefully integrated and coordinated guest speakers. The team-teaching approach is becoming increasingly popular, at least at universities in the United States, as faculty realize that no single person has the full expertise needed to develop an Inter-American course with both the breadth and depth it should have. The flaw to be avoided here, however, is, once again, the binary approach, the urge we seem to have to seek only two professors to constitute the 'team' rather than the three, or even the four, that are really needed. To go beyond four to five, however, is to begin to risk the loss of control, focus, and integration that are nearly always the hallmarks of a successful course. Thinking, again, of the need always to engage at least three of the New World's languages and cultures, it is easy to see how a team-taught course involving faculty from three interlocking areas, programs, or departments could be very successful, however, especially if it were able to take advantage of the new technologies, such as video conferencing, that are available.

The development of an entire Inter-American program is always greatly aided by an administration open to the suggestion that, in order to avoid the problem of having to ask people to take on overloads, all participating faculty be given credit for teaching a full course. If such an agreement could be worked out, and if the faculty member charged with actually writing the syllabus and organizing each day's session could rely on the cooperation and flexibility of the other participants, perhaps, this triadic approach (with occasional forays into the other New World cultures) will eventually emerge as the most efficacious model, the one that best serves the needs of the successful Inter-American seminar, its students, and its faculty.

COURSES, NEW AND REVISED

As Inter-American Studies evolves into an organic and definable field of study, new courses will have to be developed while many existing courses will have to be modified to fit the demands of a changing curriculum. In order for Inter-American Studies to develop into a full-fledged discipline, however, it seems likely that the creation of new courses will prove to be the more crucial undertaking, the one that will have the greatest impact in the years to come. While courses that are currently on the books can often be modified at least somewhat in order to cultivate their Inter-American connections and relevancies, it is not easy to do this without sacrificing much of the

course's original intended purpose. Still, with careful planning, it can be done successfully, and when it is, it adds a great deal to the intellectual scope of the course.

As an example, I offer my own course on Brazilian literature from its origins through the 19th century. Traditionally, I have taught this course by focusing only on Brazilian authors and texts. These days, however, I have sought to expand the cultural context of the course to include references to and, on occasion, brief discussions of literary issues pertinent not only to Brazil but to Brazil's hemispheric neighbors as well. In short, I now teach this course by focusing, clearly and consistently, on Brazil's literary development but also by calling attention to the many parallels and differences that link it to its New World neighbors. Because many of them are already familiar with the literatures and cultures of both Spanish America and the United States, I consistently find that my students greatly appreciate this comparative and Inter-American perspective and find it exciting. As many of them have said, it helps them see the uniqueness of Brazil, its literature and culture, and at the same time to see it in a larger international perspective, as part of the world's community of nations.

Some examples of topics that have lent themselves to this type of comparative discussion include the following: the famous and very different 'cartas' written by Christopher Columbus, Pęro Vaz de Caminha, and John Smith; the Jesuit Catholicism of New Spain, New France, and Brazil (and the differences within these) versus the Protestant Puritanism of New England and the nature of the societies these founded; race relations and contrasting views of miscegenation; the oratory and political thought of such individual figures as Vieira, de Las Casas, and Mather; Romanticism in the Americas (including the Confederation Poets) and the figure of the Indian (the pairing of Alencar and Cooper make for a fascinating paradigm in this respect, particularly as this issue relates to nation building and national identity in the nineteenth century); Machada de Assis, Henry James, and the development of the novel in the New World; and the as yet unexplored question of the 'new novel' in the Americas of the 1960s, a subject that, in addition to the United States and Latin America, must include both the English Canadian production of the period (Leonard Cohen's extraordinary *Beautiful Losers*, for example, Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, or Sheila Watson's *The Double Hook*[4]) and the French Canadian tradition of the same turbulent era, which features such culturally volatile and technically iconoclastic 'texts' as Hubert Aquin's *Prochain épisode* [Next Episode], Réjean Ducharme's *L'Avalée des avalés* [*The Swallower Swallowed*], Marie-Claire Blais's *Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel* [*A Season in the Life of Emmanuel*], and Jacques Godbout's *Le couteau sur la table* [*The Knife on the Table*].

In a more contemporary context, one might also wish to argue that a new literary genre is rapidly emerging in the Americas, a form that we might well wish to term the 'Inter-American Novel', a type of extended narrative that is being practiced in very distinctive fashion by such New World masters as Carlos Fuentes (*La frontera de cristal/The Crystal Frontier; Gringo Viejo/The Old Gringo;* and *Los ańos con Laura Díaz/The Years with Laura Díaz*), Isabel Allende (*Hija de la fortuna/Daughter of Fortune* and *El plan infini-*

[4] *The Double Hook*, first published in 1959, is often referred to as the first Canadian novel to break free of the strictures of rote realism and regionalism and to create an intensely symbolic and mythically grounded new narrative.

to/The Infinite Plan), Alberto Fuguet (*The Movies of My Life*), Silviano Santiago (*Stella Manhattan* and *Keith Jarrett no Blue Note*), Ann Patchett (*Bel Canto*), Margaret Atwood (*Surfacing*), Harriet Doerr (*Stones for Ibarra*), and Jacques Poulin (*Volkswagen Blues*), among many others. What we need here is something akin to what Ralph Freedman did for the 'lyrical novel' (Freedman, 1963), that is, to recognize it, define it, and then to carefully discuss the texts that most prototypically manifest it, showing, in the process, how it differs from other sub-categories of this most protean of literary genres, how it developed, and why it is so endemic to the American, or New World, experience.

While I do not have enough time in a typical class session to do much more than bring these issues up with my students, this is often sufficient to at least whet their interest and allow them to see that the nations of the New World are linked together in many more ways than they had originally supposed. Indeed, these Inter-American connections often generate very interesting research papers and presentations at the end of the semester, projects that permit the students to delve much more deeply into these issues and which they seem to find quite fascinating. And for graduate students, courses structured in this fashion can become career-altering experiences, involving choices about subjects and areas of interest that perhaps had never before been considered. We cannot, of course, even pretend to be authoritatively knowledgeable in everything germane to the Americas (nor should we), but, by dint of extensive reading and research, we can most certainly call certain issues to the attention of our students, to help direct their own investigations, and, in the process, to aid them in their breaking of new scholarly and disciplinary ground.

The alternative to modifying long-standing courses is, of course, the creation of new ones, and, as I suggested earlier, this would seem to be the undertaking that will, in the long run, most facilitate the development of Inter-American Studies as a coherent field of study, one replete with its own methodologies its own bibliographies, its own theoretical issues and traditions, and its own identifiable areas of specialization. To this end, I have created, for Vanderbilt University's Program in Comparative Literature, a series of three interlocking new courses which, if taken in sequence or in their totality, will provide the student with a complete overview of Inter-American literature. The first course discusses the nature of pre-Columbian Native American literature (as well as its force as a constant factor in New World literature up to the present moment), the literature of the Conquest, and the development of colonial literature in the Americas; the second course, more chronologically limited, examines nineteenth-century literature in the Americas and begins to follow some of the lines of influence and reception that are already developing; the third deals with New World literature in the twentieth century, when Inter-American literary studies really comes into its own as a viable academic discipline. Additional courses are envisioned on such topics as the New World novel, Modernism in North, Central, and South America, a history of drama in the Americas, and Inter-American film, poetry, and music. Methodologically, the constant for all these courses is breadth of coverage; the reading list for each one carries at least one work from each of the New World's major linguistic and cultural groups,[5] and they are to be selected because at least some of them deal with

[5] This means, normally, that each course features at least one text from each of the following

the same topic or engage each other in different ways.[6] The creation of new, distinctly Inter-American Studies courses will, I am sure, become the key element as Inter-American Studies continues to evolve and develop as an academic field. Whatever the discipline, the need for new courses that, through their content and structuring, tie the Americas together will only grow.

As we have seen, more traditional courses can, to some extent, be altered in order to at least recognize their relevance to the Inter-American enterprise, but care should be taken that they not be changed so much that they lose their originally intended focus. Inter-American Studies cannot succeed unless, at the same time that it sees its new and intrinsically comparative courses becoming available, it can also rely on the student's ability to take courses that focus intensely on issues germane to particular countries. To be well-grounded (and therefore well-trained) Inter-Americanists, our students will need a mix of courses, some exclusively (or primarily) national in nature, others more deliberately Inter-American in design and coverage. And, by requiring our students to be registered in a traditional department or program and that they develop specialties and sub-specialties within these traditional academic units, we help ensure that they will be well prepared not only for the current job market but for its future permutations as well. We must not allow our programs in Inter-American Studies to be synonymous with superficiality or vagueness, for to do so would be disastrous, and we are best able to obviate this potentially ruinous problem by insisting that our students ground themselves in a standing discipline.

THE INTER-AMERICAN DISSERTATION

The culmination of a carefully constructed Inter-American doctoral program, the dissertation must, like the program that engenders it and the committee that oversees it, involve at least three New World language groups and must advance an argument, or thesis, that is truly Inter-American in terms of its argumentation, structuring, and cultural grounding. That these requirements are met must, ultimately, be the responsibility of the thesis director and/or the chair of the thesis committee. Inherently comparative in nature, the Inter-American dissertation must establish the salient similarities between its constituent parts while also undertaking a detailed explication and analysis of the many differences that distinguish them and that make them unique. In order to avoid the problem of 'homogenization' that plagues so many studies of this type (that is, of seeming to regard very different texts or issues as exactly the same thing

groups: English- and French-speaking Canada, the United States, Spanish America, and Brazil. In certain cases, the Caribbean, arguably the epitome of the Inter-American experience, may be considered an additional group and therefore merit a text on its own. These numbers are often somewhat adjusted in accordance with a particular theme or issue that the professor in charge might wish to feature in the course. Thus, there might be more than one text from a single country, though, again, balance is what we are seeking in these courses.

[6] For example, a recent Honors Seminar that I gave at Vanderbilt (Spring, 2002) featured Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*, Faulkner's *The Bear*, and Alejo Carpentier's *The Lost Steps* (*Los pasos perdidos*), along with four other novels, because these three works all deal, in different ways, with the symbolism of the land in the New World and with the conflict between the wilderness and what we normally think of as civilization. The entire course could have been developed around this theme, though I wanted to pursue other issues with the other texts..

and to be too quick to reach exactly the same conclusions about them), this step is absolutely critical, whatever the discipline involved. It cannot be successfully taken, however, unless the student is prepared linguistically to read her texts in their original language and to discuss them in the full range of the historical, social, and cultural differences that pertain to the issue being focused upon. As in any good comparative study, these essential and distinctive differences must be carefully and accurately accounted for while also maintaining the more comprehensive and international perspectives that tie our texts together and that manifest and validate the larger critical contexts in which we are able to compare and contrast them. In Inter-American work, then, as in Comparative Literature scholarship generally, the differences between texts are often more important, more revealing of a particular text's uniqueness, than the similarities that connect them, and we must be careful to give these essential differences their full critical due.

The goal of the Inter-American dissertation, again following the model of the Inter-American doctoral program, should also provide clear evidence of expertise in a subject that is of direct value to a traditional academic program while also demonstrating that the candidate in question truly has a larger, Inter-American perspective, one that would allow her to create new courses for a program or department that wished to develop Inter-American Studies as part of its regular curriculum or as part of its regular degree tracks. The potential to do this should be clearly apparent in the dissertation, which should also reflect the student's primary and, perhaps, secondary areas of specialization and interest.

The properly done Inter-American dissertation should therefore also provide the student with a sense of direction for the writing of the publications that are so crucial to success in the academic world. Reflecting the nature of the dissertation itself, the student will be prepared to publish in at least two complementary fields, the traditional area of expertise and the newer area of Inter-American studies, however this latter field comes to be defined in the context of the student's particular discipline. This, too, is an area in which the student's doctoral committee can be of special importance and utility, providing advice and counsel that is invaluable to the young scholar who is preparing to enter the not infrequently arcane academic world. Thus, even at this late date in her graduate school training, the fledgling Inter-Americanist can be alerted to the need to publish both as a traditional scholar in a particular discipline might and as a pioneer in a new field, someone anxious to help an established discipline connect with a fast evolving and multi-disciplinary new enterprise. Such advice, especially if framed in the context of the standard demands of academic tenure and promotion procedures, could be invaluable to our Inter-American students.

We who seek to investigate it recognize that for however much Inter-American Studies is a compelling and fascinating new field, it is also one that, for a number of reasons, will not reach its full potential without overcoming some formidable obstacles and without our remaining vigilant with respect to the basic requirements we deem necessary. At the same time, I have every confidence that it will. Indeed, it is already doing so. Our task, then, as teachers, researchers, and mentors is to facilitate this process, to consider both the exciting possibilities and the daunting problems inherent in Inter-American scholarship and, by coming to grips with these in a logical, co-

herent way, to help shape its growth and development as a vital, new academic discipline.

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PROBLEMATIC PARADIGMS: RACIAL DIVERSITY AND CORPORATE IDENTITY IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY [1]

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BORDERS THAT EXIST

The presumption of a seamless, unproblematic Latino identity militates against the unity that US Hispanic communities could and should forge in order to increase their levels of empowerment in American society. The potential for building coalitions, fashioning collaborative agendas, and joining forces in causes of common interest can become a reality only through serious reflection, inclusive dialogue, and tactful planning. Simply to assume Latino unity is to forgo the hard work, long time, and deep thought that bringing it about will take. A good number of scholars and intellectuals have already warned against the danger of uncritically embracing homogenizing discourses in defining the Hispanic subsection of the American population (Klor de Alva, West and Shorris: 1998, 180–89; Oboler: 1995; Flores and Yudice: 1993; Davis: 2000). Juan Flores and George Yudice have described Hispanics in the United States as a 'very heterogeneous medley of races and nationalities', composing not 'even a relatively homogeneous 'ethnicity' (199). These authors and many others have abundantly shown that promoting totalizing representations of the Latino community overlooks the differentiated cultural contributions and the particular social legacy that each individual subgroup has brought to the large canvas of American society. The disadvantages have thus far been articulated in terms of the levels of material or symbolic power that a homogenizing representation can cause Hispanics to lose or fail to acquire vis-á-vis American society's non-Latino political and economic mainstream. But no one, to my knowledge, has alerted us to what is perhaps an even graver danger: the debilitating impact that such representations can have on the ability of individual subgroups to fend off intra-Latino injustices.

Given the varied circumstances under which the various subgroups entered the United States, as well as the differing 'ages' of their relationships with this country, at

[1] This essay previously appeared in *Latinos: Remaking America*, eds. Marcelo Suarez-Orozco and Mariela M. Paez, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, The Regents of the University of California (Los Angeles and Berkeley: U of California P, 2002) 435–55. Reprinted with permission from the author and the editors. http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/9812.html.

least these subgroups' economic and political leaderships differ in visibility, access to resources, and levels of empowerment. Differing levels of empowerment imply, of course, unequal degrees of vulnerability. Divides may exist even within Latinos of the same national origin if obstacles such as race and class intervene. Narrating his experiences in Tampa, Florida, in the 1930s, the US-born black Cuban Evelio Grillo recalls that 'black Cubans and white Cubans lived apart from one another in Ybor City' (Grillo, 2000: 9). Not only does Grillo not remember ever 'playing with a single white Cuban child' when he was a kid, but he, unlike his white Cuban compatriots, also had doors of opportunity slammed on him by Jim Crow America because of his color. 'I don't know of any black Cuban college graduate of my generation, and of all the generations preceding desegregation, who is not a graduate of a historically black college', says Grillo, who recalls that even in matters of carnal love, the racial difference between black Cubans and white Cubans outweighed their shared national origin. Thus for black Cubans, dating almost exclusively involved 'eligible black American counterparts' (9–12). A Cuban American scholar who has studied this period notes the irony inherent in the fact that Círculo Cubano and Unión Martí-Maceo, the mutual aid societies that serve Tampa's white and black Cubans, respectively, both engaged in centennial celebrations in 1999–2000 as both approached the hundredth anniversaries of the 'respective clubs (and their memberships' [racial] separation) in significantly different ways' (Dworkin y Méndez , 2000: xii). That is, they reflect even today their unequal condition, an enduring legacy of the fact that one group had to bear the brunt of Jim Crow policies while the other did not. Clearly, these examples of inter- and intra-group divisions among the multiple segments that make up the Latino community argue that we should apply a measure of caution when formulating claims about pan-ethnic Latino identity.

With this background in mind, I would like to suggest that current assertions of a harmonious pan-ethnic Latino identity have the potential to perpetuate intra-Latino exclusions and injustices, thus preventing the emergence of a genuine sense of community among the various Hispanic groups that form part of the US population. A corollary to this critique will be an argument against locating Latino identity in the obtuse vastness of pan-hemispheric or intercontinental cultural spheres. I argue that borders exist, the global economy notwithstanding and despite the transnational dynamics that self-proclaimed postmoderns point to as indicative of the demise of the nation-state. I insist on the need to separate Latin American from Latino identity, especially given the legacy of racial inequality in countries south of the Rio Grande. In so doing, I reject the seductive fusion of the Latin South and the Latino North encouraged by the Hispanic subsection of corporate America.

IMPERIAL CONTIGUITY AND LATINO UNITY

Like any other minority, Latinos lack the freedom to choose the way the larger society configures their ethnic affiliation. Richard Delgado is not far off the mark when he says that 'membership in a racial minority can be considered neither self-induced, like alcoholism or prostitution, nor alterable' (Delgado, 1995: 159). We do not need to repeat the work of documenting the process whereby people with disparate Lat-

in American origins gradually fell under the single homogenizing label of Hispanic or Latino, which Suzanne Oboler has done remarkably well in her *Ethnic Labels, Latino Lives* (1995). But preceding the history of the nomenclature that Oboler maps in her study, there is an earlier imperial history that describes the expansionist imperative of the United States. The logic of self-defense sounded by President James Monroe in his 1823 speech evolved in time into a self-assured affirmation of America's right to expand by virtue of what eventually became known as manifest destiny. With the 1846 US invasion of Mexico under President James Polk, an action that would lead to the acquisition of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah two years later, American might proved its dexterity at gliding over coterminous nation-states. But the US defeat in 1898 of the older Spanish empire, which entailed the domination of several overseas territories, showed that irresistible power could make up for the inconvenience of great distances. In this sense, in a speech delivered on September 16, 1898, Indiana Senator Albert J. Beveridge resignified the idea of contiguity. He said, 'The ocean does not separate us from lands of our duty and desire—the oceans join us, a river never to be dredged, a canal never to be repaired. Steam joins us; electricity joins us—the very elements are in league with our destiny. Cuba not contiguous! Puerto Rico not contiguous! Hawaii and the Philippines not contiguous! Our navy will make them contiguous … American speed, American guns, American heart and brain and nerve will keep them contiguous forever' (Beveridge, 1971: 333).

The contiguity created by American imperial expansion, whether over coterminous territories or across transoceanic land masses, created the historical grounds for the presence of Hispanic communities in the United States. The awareness that one is in the United States today as a result of the defeat suffered by one's forbears, or the understanding that one's original homeland has existed for over a century in a position of subservience vis-á-vis American power in the hemisphere, does seem to create a sense of commonality. Latinos in the United States are a composite of diverse historical realities, national experiences, and collective existential traumas.[2] Before entering American society from the native land, which for each distinct group corresponded to different socio-historical and geopolitical events, one did not see oneself as Latino or Hispanic but as Puerto Rican, Cuban, Colombian, or Dominican, to name only a few of the Latino groups that are most visible in my current base of operation, New York. As members of a diaspora, however, we have become unified in significant ways. We share the experience of having been uprooted by large socioeconomic forces from our original homelands. We come from societies with a history of unequal association with the United States, a country that has influenced and sometimes even dictated political behavior in Latin America. The image of 'backyard', often invoked by US policy makers to identify Latin America's geographic proximity to the United States, entails a qualitative view that construes the region not as partner but as subordinate.

By the third decade of the twentieth century, a good many Latin American nations already had experienced, through the incursion of US armed forces into their terri-

[2] The remainder of this paragraph and the four that follow reproduce almost verbatim the second section of my essay 'Visions of Dominicanness in the United States', in Borderless Borders: US Latinos, Latin Americans, and the Paradox of Interdependence, eds. Frank Bonilla, et al. (Philadelphia: Temple, 1998) 139–52.

tory, the concrete inequality of their relationship with their North American neighbor. They had also become acquainted with the views that often informed these military invasions. For instance, Senator Beveridge, speaking before the US Senate in 1901, had declared, 'God has made us the master organizers of the world to establish systems where chaos reigns … He has made us adept in government that we may administer government among savages and senile people' (Welles, 1996: 916). Similarly, President Theodore Roosevelt is known to have publicly decried the Cubans', Dominicans', Haitians', and Nicaraguans' conduct of their political lives. The famous 'corollary to the Monroe Doctrine' in Roosevelt's annual message to Congress in 1904 hints at the US sense of moral and political superiority to the peoples of Latin America: 'Chronic wrongdoing or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power' (Black, 1988: 23).

The preceding background largely explains the political, economic, and cultural 'otherness' to which US Hispanics typically find themselves relegated with respect to the dominant social structure. The awareness of this otherness leads us to assert our commonality with those who share our history of defeat, particularly when we can claim linguistic, religious, and regional links among our various national groups. The experience of diasporic uprooting and the sense of living outside the dominant realm of the receiving society permeate our Latino identity. For even though Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Dominicans became ethnic communities in the United States through profoundly different processes, we are bound by political imperatives to see ourselves as one. Ironically, Simón Bolívar's desideratum of a unified Latin American nation and the ideal upheld by Eugenio María de Hostos of the Antillean federation find in us a strange kind of fulfilment. We have come to articulate a collective identity not in our native homelands, as Bolívar and Hostos had dreamed, but within the insecure space of the diaspora. The feeling that ours is a contested terrain—that we do not inherit our social space but must carve it out for ourselves in the face of adversity—leads us to lift the banner of our oneness despite differences in the circumstances under which each of our distinct groups became part of the United States. The language of unity in this case functions as an instrument of survival.

LEVELS OF LATINO MARGINALITY

The foregoing emphasis on the historical, contingent nature of the presumed Latino unity seeks to suggest that the need for unitary political practices does not translate automatically or unproblematically into ontological sameness. The distinct subgroups that make up the US population that is labeled Hispanic are neither identical nor equal. Let us, for argument's sake, concentrate on the dynamic of epistemological inequality among the various subgroups. Dominicans provide an illustrative case. A disdain for Dominican knowledge is evident in several of the overviews, surveys, and compilations that purport to cover holistically the history, culture, and contributions

of Latinos in American society. Because such panoramic vistas are normally penned or coordinated by authors who belong to the Latino subgroups that enjoy greater socioeconomic and political empowerment, it makes sense that they should either omit any mention of the Dominican portion of the Latino experience or dispatch it briefly and superficially. The same logic applies here as with the rapport between dominant and dependent nation-states. Studying the experiences of the larger and better-positioned portions of the Latino population—the 'meaningful' parts that can stand for the whole—seems to lessen the need for complex and in-depth coverage of the smaller and weaker portions.

Witness the coverage that Antonia Darder and Rodolfo D. Torres pursue in their collection *The Latino Reader: Culture, Economy, and Society* (1998). The book includes no chapter on, and no extended consideration of, the Dominican experience. The editors proceed as though they deemed knowledge about the life of that subgroup irrelevant to understanding the Latino community. The exclusion of Dominicans, as authors and as subject matter, from the 94-chapter anthology *The Latino/a Condition: A Critical Reader* (1998) edited by the scholars Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic seems to say no less. From the perspective of the major Latino subgroups, then, the experience of the lesser groups does not promise to yield knowledge capable of transcending the limits of such a community. We see here a case of what could be called intra-colonial epistemological inequality that leaves Dominicans out of the master narrative of the Latino experience. In addition to omitting Dominicans, the dynamic also manifests itself as a casual treatment of the lesser group. When *Washington Post* journalist Roberto Suro writes a book on Latinos, his Dominican chapter is devoted to rebuking the community's leaders for not attacking with sufficient energy the drug problem in their midst and for not being proactive in circumventing the limits of the enclave economy (Suro, 1998: 197,202–03). Exhibiting a similar sense of superiority, Univisión anchorman Jorge Ramos assigns himself the poetic license to coin his own genteelisms to name Dominicans: 'Portodominicans' (portodominicanos) for those living in Puerto Rico and 'Neodominicans' (neodominicanos) for those living in New York (Ramos, 2000: 179–85). I cannot help but conjecture that if this Mexican brother had been writing about a group with a greater degree of power vis-á-vis the other Latino subgroups, he would have consulted appropriate sources to find out what the members of the community actually call themselves, instead of inflicting on them his own flair for neologistic acrobatics.

By the same token, *New York Daily News* journalist Juan González, the author of the book *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in the United States* (2000), does not invest in Dominicans anywhere near the intellectual labor apparent in his coverage of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans. For Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, González draws amply from the existing scholarship on the lives of those communities in the United States. As a result, he writes competently on them. But in the case of Dominicans, he seems to have felt no compulsion to consult the bibliography that US Dominicans have generated, most of which has been annotated by Sarah Aponte (Aponte, 1999). Apparently confident that he could discern the intricacies of the Dominican experience without the aid of the work done by Dominican American scholars, and disdaining the archival resources of the City University of New York's Dominican Studies Institute,

González proceeds to explain the community *ex-nihilo*, basing his account largely on scanty reading and several interviews with Dominican New Yorkers. Not surprisingly, his Dominican chapter is fraught with intellectual poverty. A Dominican reader would indeed find it very hard to concur with Juan Flores's assessment of *Harvest of Empire* as 'no doubt the most wide-ranging, engaging, and critically reflective book about Latinos to date' Flores, 'Review', 2000: 43). A piece of irony here: *Magic Urbanism* (2000), an overview of Latinos written by the distinguished Anglo author Mike Davis, stands out as the only one among such efforts that shows an interest in accessing the knowledge produced by Dominican scholars and integrating it into the larger pan-ethnic conversation. Perhaps Anglo colleagues, unencumbered by membership in any of the individual subgroups, have at present a better chance than Hispanics to look panoptically at Latinos, ensuring that no subgroup is left out of the picture.

WHITE-SUPREMACIST HYBRIDITY

The reiterative musings about borderlessness, hybridity, and transnational dynamics that pervade recent scholarly production on the Latino experience have only ostensibly celebrated diversity. The exclusionary ideological structures that lie at the core of corporate identity formulations in the community remain virtually unchallenged. The academia, the media, and the consumer market for the most part have rallied around the consensus that promotes the notion that US Hispanics constitute a seamless unit. Few have stopped to consider the resonance of that view with the elitist, Eurocentric, and white-supremacist ideas on *hispanidad* that cohered in the minds of the Latin American intelligentsia of the generation that witnessed and mourned the change of imperial guard that took place in 1898 in the Western Hemisphere. Although they paid lip service to the virtues of *mestizaje*, the celebrants of *hispanidad* or (*latinidad*) in practice supported negrophobic and anti-Indian regimes. José Martí may have denied the existence of 'races' in an often-cited 1894 essay, arguing for the essential, unquestionable humanity of all peoples, but to think of his view as common to many Latin American intellectuals at the time would be erroneous.

This warning matters especially, given the present context in which, spurred by the recognition of a certain geopolitical and economic interdependence between the United States and Latin America, many Latino scholars find it natural to proclaim their intellectual kinship to a history of ideas rooted in the Iberian side of the hemisphere. The distinguished scholar Frank Bonilla, who has himself invested enormous energy in creating bridges of intellectual communication between Latin Americans in the south and Latinos in the North, has borne witness to serious obstacles that have emerged at given moments, sometimes even connected to our varying ways of understanding key concepts such as ethnicity, culture, and racism (Bonilla, 1998: 224). Many colleagues accept too quickly the view that the Spanish-speaking world has a less racialized and more humane understanding of the difference among human beings. A 1996 conversation on the topic of race relations between Latino scholar Jorge Klor de Alva and African American essayist Cornel West, moderated by Earl Shorris, left little doubt that Klor de Alva felt that his privileging linguistic background and culture to define US Hispanics constituted a more accurate rendition of social identity than

his African American colleague's focus on blackness to speak of his community (*Harper's* 1996: 55; Klor de Alva, West and Shorris, 1998). Latino colleagues at times can hardly conceal their pride at the thought that their culture is less racist than that of the Anglos. As Nicolás Kanellos would put it, '[Although] 'race' distinctions and prejudice exist in Spanish America, they do not take, nor ever have they taken, the form of institutionalized discrimination as in the United States; they are more subtly expressed (some glaring exceptions are to be found in the history of Cuba and Puerto Rico under US domination)' (Kanellos, 1998: 178).

I would be less sanguine about exonerating Latin America of official, institutionalized racial misconduct, especially in light of the many countries in the region that at various points in history specified a preference for whites in their immigration legislation. Jorge Cañízares Esguerra has even advanced the idea that modern racism originated in Latin America. He contends 'that the science of race, with is emphasis on behavioral-cultural variations, and its obsession with creating homogenizing and essentializing categories, was first articulated in colonial Spanish America in the seventeenth century, not in nineteenth-century Europe' (Cañízares Esguerra, 1999: 35). At any rate, without clear, tangible institutional barriers exacerbating the subjugation of particular racial communities, one would be hard put to explain most of the violent racial clashes that Latin America has witnessed (the 1912 uprising of blacks and their subsequent mass killing in Cuba stand out as a particularly glaring example.)

The following incident comes to mind. In the evening of Thursday, February 25, 2000, a Haitian-descended Dominican woman named Sonia Pierre suffered abuse upon entering the United States through JFK Airport in New York City. She had traveled to the North in her capacity as head of the Santo Domingo-based Dominican-Haitian Women's Movement (MUDHA). A guest at a national conference organized by the group Dominicans 2000 at City College, which featured First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton among the keynote speakers, Pierre had come prepared to enlighten the audience regarding the plight of Dominican-born children of Haitian parents whom Dominican government authorities have thus far denied the right of citizenship on the basis of their ethnicity. She came loaded with data to show the extent to which the intellectual heirs of the Trujillo dictatorship would go in publicly declaring Haitian ancestry to be antithetical to and incompatible with the very concept of Dominicanness. She could not possibly have imagined that the affronts she suffered daily as a member of a despised community in the Dominican Republic would follow her all the way to JFK. After all, what do 'Americans' know about ethnic tensions in the Caribbean island of Hispaniola? However, Pierre had the misfortune to be received at the immigration checkpoint not by an Anglo but by a Latina INS agent, a Dominican-descended US citizen with the name Goico on her tag. When Pierre presented her passport and other qualifying papers, Ms. Goico challenged their authenticity and accused her of forgery. She felt confident that from a look at Sonia's 'Haitian appearance' (that is, her coarse hair untamed by relaxers and her negroid facial features), she could tell that the passenger was a Haitian trying to pass for Dominican. The last name Pierre did not help, of course. The letter of invitation from the conference organizers did not suffice. An overwhelming amount of documentation, a close examination of the papers suspected to have been forged, and lengthy interviews with several INS officers ensued

before Pierre, after nearly two hours of excruciating detention, was allowed to proceed without receiving an apology from Ms. Goico.

Ms. Goico's anti-Haitian antipathy corresponds to a pre-diasporic experience of Dominican society, dating back to an earlier milieu that encouraged hatred for the neighbors on the other side of the island of Hispaniola. Dominican anti-Haitianism gradually fades in the diaspora, especially among people with some community involvement. Community activism brings Haitians and Dominicans together as they, free from the supervision of the State that fueled their ethnic antipathy, learn to recognize each other as allies in a common struggle for survival as minorities of color. The affirmation of her difference as a person of color who recognized herself as an 'other' with respect to the Anglo norm would have fostered in Ms. Goico a sense of kinship with other Caribbean people, Haitians included, as well as with African Americans and other nonwhite ethnic groups. Apparently having been deprived of such an enlightened background, Ms. Goico clung to the negrophobia and anti-Haitian sentiments that formed part of her 'education' on matters related to nation, cultural identity, and Dominicanness in the home country during the Trujillo and Balaguer regimes. Importing her original homeland's racial hang-ups, she forgot herself. Entrusted, as an INS officer, with the task of guarding the US statutory border against illegal entrants, she instead spent nearly two hours trying to bar a Haitian ethnic from entering the space of Dominicanness. She thus trampled the civil rights of a human being and momentarily deprived her victim of the protection that US law guarantees.

I believe this incident illustrates the extent to which blurring the boundaries between the Latin American South and the Latino North can complicate the process of cultural and political self-definition of US Hispanics. Should that blurring take place, the Latino community would abdicate its position as a vanguard committed to the further democratization of the United States. For we can play that role creditably only when we free ourselves from the influence of those aspects of our Latino American background that militate against equality and justice.

I do not see Ms. Goico as a unique or isolated case. Her ethnic antipathy matches that of a good many individuals in the Latin American population. Nor is she alone in importing to the Latino North a hatred that belongs in a specific part of the Latin American South. I see a parallel in the racial misconduct of the business executives who control the TV programs that Spanish-speaking Hispanics watch. Just as Ms. Goico has not rid herself of a deleterious racial ideology she inherited from her home country, so do the corporate leaders behind Univisión and Telemundo resist allowing black and Indian faces to appear before the cameras even in these post-desegregation United States. One could surmise that in an applicant's effort to land a job as a newscaster on a Spanish-speaking TV station or network, Scandinavian ancestry would be very helpful. Conversely, displaying the Indian features of nineteenth-century Mexican president Benito Juárez or the black features of Cuban independence leader Antonio Maceo would seriously reduce the applicant's chances. Anyone who watches Hispanic TV in the United States will easily recognize the white-supremacist value system that governs the way mass-media corporations promote the collective visage of the Latino community. It is through the white faces of our anchor-persons

that Hispanic TV networks have chosen visually to represent the homogeneity that our corporate identity is supposed to embody.

I argue against embracing uncritically the notion that US Hispanics are unified by the all-powerful bond of a shared linguistic heritage and a common culture, precisely because such a view impairs our ability to combat the anti-Indian and negrophobic traditions we inherit from Latin America. The claim that Latinos constitute one big happy family conceals the tensions, inequities, and injustices in our midst, contributing to a conceptual ambience that legitimizes the absence of black and Indian faces and voices from Latino fora. The operating logic seems to be that, because everyone in our polychromatic community is really the same, everyone is inherently represented even when only one color continues to peer out at us from the tube. Public visibility translates into intellectual representation. In a related observation, individuals with pronounced indigenous features seldom appear in Latino academic forums, speaking as producers of knowledge and as the intellectual equals of their colleagues. To enjoy such a privilege, an Indian would normally have to achieve a distinction comparable to that of Nobel Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú. Characteristically, the Mexican American essayist Richard Rodriguez, the one Latino thinker with perceptible Indian features who enjoys intellectual prominence, has attained his celebrity through Anglophone mainstream media venues such as PBS, not through the Hispanic venues of Univisión or Telemundo. He begins one of his essays by evoking a time when he 'used to stare at the Indian in the mirror. The wide nostrils. The thick lips … Such a long face—such a long nose—sculpted by indifferent, blunt thumbs, and of such common clay. No one in my family had a face as dark or as Indian as mine' (Rodriguez, 1991, 1998: 535).

The Univisión TV station Channel 41, which serves New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, has lately been airing a well-orchestrated publicity campaign that sings the praises of our common *hispanidad*. The campaign features many popular entertainers from the music industry. Their song insistently dwells on the language, the culture, and the traditions that make us *una sola familia*. Although I am intellectually skeptical about the views propounded by the whole campaign, I have reacted most viscerally to the one spot that in my view most abusively mocks historical truth, scoffing at the suffering of the conquered. The spot I have in mind features an Andean band made up of *indios* who enthusiastically sing the praises of *hispanidad* and our shared Spanish heritage. The spot displays utter disregard for the grief of the indigenous populations of South America and the rest of the hemisphere who fell under the genocidal hand of the old Spanish empire that invaded their land. Such historical amnesia also has the effect of completely exculpating the Latin American ruling elites responsible for perpetrating great evils against Indians since independence from Spain. At least from the time of Argentinean statesman Domingo Sarmiento onward, anti-Indian scorn has too often entered the official discourse of Latin American nations and influenced public policy, with dire consequences for the indigenous populations. The moving story told by the film *El Norte*, which dramatizes the plight of aboriginal peasants who have to flee their native Guatemalan home in order to save themselves, testifies to the resilience of anti-Indian violence in contemporary Latin America.

For Univisión to have Indians appear on TV praising the glory of our presumably common Spanish heritage is to mock the victims of a continuous five-century genocide in Latin America. By the same token, when the aforementioned publicity campaign has the late Afro-Cuban star Celia Cruz adding her voice to the praise of the common culture, traditions, and Spanish language that make all Hispanics *una sola familia*, one wonders whether she was aware of the negrophobic and anti-Indian project she legitimized. As *Washington Post* journalist Michael A. Fletcher has noted, Afro Latinos or indigenous people are rarely cast in Spanish-language television shows in the United States, and the few that are 'most often play demeaning roles'. In the widely popular 'telenovelas', the soap operas, 'darker skinned people most often play maids, gardeners, chauffeurs or dabblers in witchcraft' (Fletcher, 2000). Because of her blackness, the popular New York-based radio personality Malín Falú, producer of a long-running talk show on WADO, has confronted insurmountable barriers in her attempts to land jobs in Spanish-language television in the United States. The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute surveyed 4,000 Latino members of the Screen Actors Guild to learn that the majority of the respondents thought dark skin was a liability for any Latino actor who hoped to get opportunities in Spanish-language television productions (Fletcher, 2000).

I had occasion to raise the issue of race with the former president and CEO of Univisión, Henry G. Cisneros, when he, in the role of keynote speaker, addressed the participants in a major Latino studies conference held at Harvard University in April 2000. At the end of his speech, I courteously asked him whether, from his influential position in the network, he 'envisioned a time in the near future when one would not have to be *güero* to serve as an anchorperson in Univisión'. After much circumlocution, Cisneros did not really commit himself to an answer, but he did reassure his audience that network managers had been looking seriously into the issue of representation. He urged us to look for evidence of their concern in the composition of the live audience that appears in the very successful *Show de Cristina*, which is hosted by the Cuban Cristina Saralegui, the author of a memoir significantly entitled *Cristina! Confidencias de una rubia* (1998) [*Confessions of a Blond*]. Cisneros also said that the cast in the early-morning variety show 'Despierta América' reflects a concern with representing diversity, a clear allusion to Rafael José, a Puerto Rican mulatto featured among the hosts at the time. Clearly, I had posed a difficult question, and the answer Cisneros gave was no more satisfactory than that of Telemundo spokesperson Ted Guefen, who, fumbling for evidence to show his network's concern for racial inclusiveness, cited the case of the successful show 'Xica', a soap opera based on the life of a nineteenth-century Afro-Brazilian slave who used her sexual prowess to earn her freedom and climb socially. The Brazilian-made program, noted for risqué love scenes, features the hyper-sexualized young actress Tais Araujo, reportedly the first black actress ever to land a leading role in a Latin American soap opera.

Cisneros trod on firmer rhetorical ground in answering the second part of my question, wherein I inquired whether Univisión was planning to change the objectionable scenario depicted by the telenovelas, which invariably present blacks and Indians as housemaids or servants. He immediately absolved his network of any responsibility for those portrayals by quickly responding, 'We have no control over what goes

into the telenovelas because they are made in Mexico'. A natural follow-up question would have demanded further satisfaction; as the telenovela producers' client, the network ought to have the power to influence the merchandise it purchases. But the follow-up became unnecessary as Cisneros proceeded to expound on the importance of the telenovelas as the network's number-one revenue-producing venture. Thanks to the telenovelas, Univisión has often gotten a greater share of the national market than the major English-language television networks. 'Without them', the former HUD Secretary said, 'we would be out of business', emphasizing that Univisión has to see itself first and foremost as a profit-making enterprise. Cisneros unambiguously pointed out that because the telenovelas bring in such great profits the way they are currently made, the network could not take any chances by altering the nature or the texture of the shows. His answer also reflected the conviction that Mexican society is less preoccupied with racial sensitivity than the United States.

LATINO CORPORATE IDENTITY AND THE CORPORATIONS

Whether Latino scholars and artists know it or not, their remaining loyal to a holistic view of Latino identity perfectly serves the economic interests of the Latino portion of corporate America. When over 30 million people can see themselves as a unit, sharing values, language, culture, and aspirations, capital can accumulate more rapidly. Businesses can target their publicity campaigns and marketing strategies with greater precision. The 17. 3 million Spanish-speaking Hispanics willing and able to watch television, listen to the radio, and read newspapers, are a gold mine that business is eager to tap into. Spanish speakers in the US population outnumber speakers of the most numerous among other 'foreign' language speakers ten times over. Hispanic buying power by 1999 had reached $348 billion a year, up 65 percent since 1990, according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth of the University of Georgia (Sleeper, 1999: 10). One can therefore understand the insistence with which Univisión and Telemundo promote the idea of US Hispanics as an ethnically and culturally homogeneous people. The premise clearly informs Univisión's extremely successful variety program *Sábado Gigante,* hosted by the Chilean TV announcer Mario Kreuzberger, who is popularly known as Don Francisco. The same applies to the talk show *Cristina*, hosted by Saralegui. Vigorously embracing the view that US Hispanics have a common heritage that makes them one people, these shows also exhibit the all-encompassing hemispheric notion that Hispanics North and South share one worldview. The most successful of the shows air in almost every city of Latin America as well as in the United States, and some, such as 'Sábado Gigante', are produced alternately in Latin America and the United States (Fox, 1997: 47–49).

Media executives have a huge stake in ensuring that US Hispanics see themselves as one, for these executives can use their power over the community's perceptions and opinions as a bargaining tool in their competition with their corporate counterparts. Raúl Alarcón, president of the Spanish Broadcasting System, and Jesus Chavarria, publisher of *Hispanic Business*, have complained about major advertisers who in their view distribute advertising dollars unfairly to the advantage of Anglo companies. They cite such examples as the 'Miami Univisión TV station Channel 23, which is

ranked number one in terms of ratings but receives considerably less advertising revenue than other TV stations in its market' (Dougherty, 1999: 26). In response to that perceived unfairness, Hispanic media executives have joined their African American counterparts, with the support of political leaders and legislators, in creating the Madison Avenue Initiative to advance the interests of minority-owned media companies. They can wield no greater weapon, however, than the assurance that they have a unified Hispanic community backing them. The corporate leadership gains a competitive edge when Latinos subscribe to a corporate identity. Counting on a homogeneous community supportive of their business interests, the Hispanic media executives can then exert greater pressure as they step up their demand for a larger piece of the economic pie. They can invoke 'the community' to advance their ends. They have even gone as far as threatening to 'engage in boycotts', as was made clear by a New York Latino legislator who, siding with the Hispanic media executives, asserted that advertisers that 'continue to ignore' our community 'can suffer economic casualties' (28). Nor do these Hispanic media executives have any doubt about their own ability to forge a sense of pan-Latino identity, because, in the words of the publisher of *The Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*, Alberto Ibarguen, 'technology and economic forces' have the power to define 'community identity' (Sleeper, 1999: 3). Also, in as much as, for them, North and South have fused into one market, it is in their best interest to promote pan-hemispheric visions of Latino identity. As Ibarguen has said, 'Miami is the central communication point for all of the Caribbean and much of South America … Television, ad agencies, banks, music recording companies all have their Latin American headquarters here' (3).

RESTORING BORDERS TEMPORARILY

I hope the foregoing makes clear that both the homogenizing views of Latino identity and the pan-hemispheric compulsion to erase the dividing line between the Latin South American and the Latino North coincide with the figurations promoted by powerful economic interests in the mass media and other market forces, as well as with political structures. Latin American governments and corporate leaders have become cognizant of the growing economic value of keeping their diasporas loyal to their lands of origin in order to preserve the constant flow of remittances. They may also hope to prevail on diasporic communities to advocate in favor of the interests of the ancestral country in the context of US foreign policy. Those governments and corporate sectors will certainly encourage consolidation of pan-hemispheric Latino/Hispanic identity. These governments, along with corporations on both sides of the Rio Grande, are likely to relish an idea of Hispanic/Latino identity akin to that proposed by Cuban-born philosophy scholar Jorge J. E. Gracia, which is not only pan-hemispheric, spanning both North and South, but also transatlantic, covering practically the entire globe. Gracia describes Hispanics as 'the people of Iberia, Latin America, and some segments of the population in the United States, after 1492, and the descendants of these peoples anywhere in the world as long as they preserve close ties to them' (Gracia, 2000: 52). I believe that this formulation confounds rather than clarifies the issues involved in the debate on Latino identity. Gracia concerns himself with what he calls

'the total Hispanic/Latino population in the world', as well as by shared 'origin, culture, and values' in the context of a long history of *mestizaje* (ix, 128–29). Yet the debate in the US academy has been predicated on an understanding of Latinos as a US ethnic minority, the only conceptual location where it could possibly make sense. It is only in the United States that Dominicans and Guatemalans can come to see themselves as Hispanics or Latinos. In that respect, we can say, with Harvard political scientist Jorge Dominguez, that 'Latinos are a problematique of Americanness'.[3]

However, despite his unfortunate thesis, Gracia insightfully construes the notion of Hispanic as one that refers to 'a group of people who have no common elements considered as a whole' and justifies their 'unity' as 'not a unity of commonality' but 'a historical unity founded on relations' (50). Similarly, although he describes Hispanic unity as resembling that of a family, a figure that he draws from Wittgenstein, he cautiously explains that 'the metaphor of the family must be taken broadly to avoid any understanding of it as requiring genetic ties … Indeed, the very foundation of a family, marriage, takes place between people who are added to a family through contract, not genesis' (50). Here Gracia allies himself conceptually with what is arguably the most sober approach to defining the nature of ethnic identification. Many scholars today would agree that 'it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificial, that inspires the belief in common ethnicity' (Weber, 1965: 306–07). This understanding of ethnic identification corresponds almost entirely with the idea of a minority group, which, one might recall, does not necessarily depend on numbers. As Louis Wirth argued decades ago, a group may outnumber another and yet remain a minority by virtue of its social, political, and economic subordination (Wirth, 1965: 310). A minority defines itself by its unequal status vis-á-vis 'a corresponding dominant group enjoying higher social status and greater privilege' as well as by its 'exclusion from full participation in the life of society' (309).

In keeping with Gracia's useful caveat, then, and focusing strictly on the historical relations—that is, the material conditions, the social forces, and the political dynamics that frame the experience of Latinos—one might perhaps explore ways of speaking about US Hispanics holistically without imposing a priori notions of homogeneity. As in the case of Dominicans discussed earlier, essentialistic claims will not take us very far in this conversation. Definers of the essential features 'shared by most Hispanics independent of their national background, birthplace, dominant language, or any other sociodemograpic characteristic' have placed too great a demand on our imagination (Marin and Marin, 1991: 2). To claim, for instance, that Rosa, a descendant of Spanish settlers in New Mexico who no longer speaks Spanish, is ontologically indistinguishable from José, an undocumented Nicaraguan who has just arrived in the United States, is to rely unduly on the power of so-called cultural values (2). Scholars Gerardo Marin and Barbara VanOss Marin speak unambiguously of 'the common cultural values that remain strong and personally significant across generations and that may lead both Rosa and José to think of themselves as sharing "something" that they do not share with non-Hispanic residents of the United States' (2)

[3] Comment made as part of his remarks when he served as discussant to a panel in the April 2000 Latino Studies conference at Harvard.

Marin and Marin attribute to Latinos the quality of 'familism'—a 'strong identification with and attachment to their nuclear and extended family' which these theorists regard as one of the most important culture-specific values of Hispanics (13). Such arguments would be stronger if these authors were to supplement their findings with comparative data that would show whether Latinos in fact cherish their relatives appreciably more than other groups, such as Irish Americans, Italian Americans, African Americans, and Jews. Indeed, a number of scholars have argued that immigration and displacement are highly stressful to Latino families (Suárez and Páez, 2002: 274–88, 289–301). David Abalos, for example, has argued that the disquieting levels of disruption affecting the Latino family are a consequence of migration, displacement, and the trauma that ensues (Abalos, 1993: 54). Most disconcerting among the sources of stress affecting the family unit is a variable that one could describe as 'cultural' because it is grounded in the place of male authority in the traditional Spanish family (Suárez and Páez, 2002: 274–88). Abalos highlights the place of male privilege and the patriarchal system that informs the politics of sexism in the Latino family with dehumanizing consequences for both men and women (Abalos, 1993: 53). Given this scenario, rather than highlighting 'familism' as a special quality of the community, we might more convincingly assert that the institution of the family may be in no better shape among Latinos than among any other subsection of the country's population.

THE TENUOUS TIES THAT BIND

We can rest assured that, whatever its problems, the idea of a pan-Latino community with a claim to some kind of wholeness is here to stay (Torres, 2000 and Oboler, 2000). We therefore face the challenge of articulating an all-encompassing narrative that might historicize the US Hispanic experience, all national groups and ethnic constituencies included. But we must remain acutely aware of the problematic paradigms that inform our effort. Perhaps we ought to start by avoiding any query that might point to the interstices of the Latino soul. Essentialistic claims will take us nowhere, as Klor de Alva warned over a decade ago, urging us to reflect on the importance of class differences within the Latino community. Equating 'class' with 'culture', he questioned the very existence of 'such a thing as *the* Hispanic family' because in his view family, kinship, and gender roles all vary along socioeconomic and generational lines (Klor de Alva, "Telling", 1988: 116, 122). It follows, that 'the poor inhabit a different cultural and socioeconomic world' from other strata of society among Latinos as among any other portion of the US population (116). Along with many other colleagues from colleges and universities throughout the United States, I have joined the Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage Project, an effort spearheaded by Nicolás Kanellos at the University of Houston that seeks to map the literary and intellectual presence of Hispanics in this country from the beginning of the conquest in the early 1500s to 1960. But I would caution against letting white-supremacist instincts shape the contours of the totalizing narrative we construct.

No doubt we could benefit from devising a historiographic model that enables us to claim a North American heritage that goes back to the colonial period, spanning the exploits of explorers such as Juan Ponce de León and Hernando de Soto, along

with literary and historical texts produced by the likes of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá. But we might wish to think twice before concurring with Carlos G. Vélez-Ibáñez in accepting Cabeza de Vaca as 'the first Chicano' writer (Vélez-Ibáñez, *Border,* 1996: 213). The basis for this rather rapid affirmation is the author's understanding of the sociocultural sameness of the conqueror and the conquered. He asserts, for instance, that the majority of the 'Hispanos/Mexicans who migrated north from New Spain after the post-Pueblo Revolt of 1680 were primarily crafts people and agropastoralists who had more in common with the Pueblo peoples than they did with the upper reaches of the peninsular caste/class sector' (266).

One wonders whether such a view of the fundamental similarity between the native peoples and the invaders during the colonial transaction in what is now the Southwest of the United States might not lie at the core of the practice of erasing difference when imagining Latino history. One thinks of examples such as a 1972 overview that closed with sixty biographical sketches of Hispanic individuals from Juan de Oñate to Herman Badillo and mentioned not one Indian or black, not even Estevan, the black Moor who came in the expedition that brought the author of *Naufragios* to the North (Alford, *Proud*, 1972).

Clearly, we must come to terms with our traumatic past. We must also acknowledge as cultural progenitors the indigenous population who suffered the consequences of that early Hispanic presence in what is now the United States. We inherit a racist imaginary from both Latin and Anglo America, and we must try to keep it from dictating the logic of our remembering as we construct a Latino history. Given the pervasiveness of that pernicious imaginary, I propose that we protect ourselves by instituting analytic safeguards in our models. Specifically, I recommend that we once and for all admit the utility of borders—those confines that initially at least, enable people to recognize one another in their difference. I would urge us temporarily to erect intra-Latino borders so that the differentiated experiences of specific national groups can come to light. I believe it is as wrong to demonize borders as it is to pastoralize the common linguistic heritage that by some unexplained mutation turns all our disparate national and ethnic groups into one big happy family. We need to pause for a moment and begin to train our eyes on unearthing the distinct histories of all the Latino subgroups that make up the US Hispanic population, going beyond the exclusive focus on Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans. A serious effort also needs to be made to determine the exact location of Brazilians within the larger spectrum of US communities sharing a Latin American heritage. Even if the term *Hispanic* would tend to leave Brazilians out, the term *Latino* would seem to allow for their inclusion (Margolis, 1998: 103–04).

Similarly, I can see great utility in isolating those ethnic identity zones that trespass the boundaries of what David A. Hollinger calls 'the ethnoracial pentagon', the five communities of descent into which the US population is divided for census purposes (Hollinger, 1995: 8). I think we can learn a great deal by looking closely at the differentiated experiences of white Latinos, Indian Latinos, Asian Latinos, and Afro-Latinos. I find no mere coincidence in the fact that the blacker components of the US Hispanic population have recently become more visible in Latino forums just as initiatives have emerged for highlighting the Afro-Latino experience. In mid-September 1999,

the White House hosted a program aimed at addressing the concerns of the African-descended portion of the Latino community. Concurrently with the White House activities, and extending through October 12, the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery also devoted its Latino Festival Program to the differentiated experience of Afro-Latinos. As a result, Dominicans, who seldom get invited to national conversations about the Latino agenda, enjoyed inclusion in panels and had a chance to participate. This example suggests to me that by creating structures designed to examine intra-Latino difference, we can achieve greater inclusiveness than we have at present. Such structures can help us counteract the omnipresence of our white-supremacist education. I believe that temporarily erecting intra-Latino borders can lead to our self-recognition in our complex diversity. These borders can help us discern our own internal oppressions, making us accountable for the same principles of equality and justice by which we purport to judge the behavior of Anglo society. Recognizing our differences and understanding the tensions that often mark our rapport, we might develop the skill to see one another clearly, protect ourselves from too facile an identification with one another, rectify our tendency to stand in the way of one another's progress, and come to respect one another. With that goal securely achieved, it will then be realistic for us to aspire to federate our distinct constituencies and communities with the purpose of actually becoming, eventually, that one big family striving together in pursuit of common happiness.

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AMERICAN STUDIES AT THE CROSSROADS: A DIALOGUE [1]

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1. TOWARD DECENTRALIZED AMERICAN STUDIES

American Studies does have a future. It is an inexorable future dictated by historical necessity. When necessity dictates, the outcome is not necessarily any more predictable than when the results might be dictated by chance or contingency. While human ingenuity has attained some success in preconditioning results, the law of unintended consequences is far from being domesticated to suit human intention, however.

While a future for American Studies may seem to be inevitable, then, the shape of that future is far from certain. A modest quotient of certainty in this regard might consist in the plausible likelihood that the future of American Studies will be different from what its past has been. The measure of this difference can be attributable to two factors: 1) the transformations in the object of study and, 2) the transformative character of the disciplinary and discursive instruments with which American Studies carries out its labors as scholarly and pedagogical institutional formation. The changing morphology of the first (America) outpaces the morphing parameters of the latter (the Studies).

Academic endeavors have tended to be in a reactive mode, devoted as they are to diagnosing phenomena after these manifest themselves in their particularities as subjects of diagnostic observation and analysis. The case of American Studies is doubly imperative in this regard, because the object of observation not only precedes the analytical, scholarly, and pedagogical labors of those who study the American phenomenon. In addition to this traditional primacy of the object of study, in the case of American Studies that object has historically determined the parameters, focus, language, and ideological determinants by which it has been studied. Thus, American Stud-

[1] This dialogue first appeared as a part of the debate on 'The Politics of American Studies' in: *The Americanist: Warsaw Journal for the Study of the United States*, Vol. XXIII, eds. Agnieszka Graff, William Glass (Warsaw: The American Studies Center at Warsaw University). We wish to extend our warmest thanks to the Editors of *The Americanist* for their kind permission to reprint the 'Dialogue'.

ies have been foremost American more than anything else. It is here, in this anomalous relationship that trumps the scientific and analytical *modus operandi* of scholarly investigation and pedagogy, thereby making the primacy of the object of study doubly primal and determinative, that the future of American Studies will undergo the greatest transformation.

This transformation has, in fact, already begun in earnest with the founding of the International American Studies Association in 2000, with the Association's first world congress in Leiden, the Netherlands, in May of 2003, and with the galvanizing effect IASA's endeavors have already had on the field of American Studies. The symptoms of those effects can be documented in the defensive reaction-formations of already existent organizations such as the USA's national American Studies Association (ASA) and its 'International Initiative' launched in 2004, as well as in the activities of the European Association of American Studies (EAAS) toward consolidating its hold on its affiliate national American Studies associations in Europe, as well as in its energized campaign to ensure the incorporation of the new national associations in post-Soviet eastern Europe.

IASA, constantly challenged to justify its existence and to differentiate itself from already existent and officially sanctioned American Studies associations, views these reactions to its own endeavors to redefine the field as a scientifically more credible and analytically more rigorous international field of investigation in historical perspective. It would appear that it is an automatic reflex for such defensive action on the part of existing institutions whenever a paradigm shift appears on the horizon. Historically, the tendency in these reactions has been retrenchment, 'circling the wagons' as the American saying goes, or a rearguard reaffirmation of jurisdictional authority over turf that such entities have traditionally considered exclusively their own. This reassertion of territorial claims reiterates the unquestionable legitimacy of the existing structures and their institutional power as beyond question and as the privilege of priority, of having already been in existence no matter the changing character of reality. Simultaneously, this defensive self-assertion aims to de-legitimize and de-authorize any new formations—discursive, institutional, organizational, ideational, intellectual—that emerge as part of new realities.

This, then, is the current status of American Studies as the old formations try to fend off the reformations represented by the new. The end result of such counterpoint between vested interests of the already existent and exploratory ventures of the newly emergent tends to be some form of accommodation by which the old organizational structures and their discursive formations undergo certain inevitable adjustments necessary for survival in a new environment. The emergent structures and new paradigms slowly suffuse and transform the old. The International American Studies Association finds itself at the forefront of this counterpoint as harbinger of a changing reality and, at the same time, as target of those existing interests that inevitably feel threatened. The best course for a new organization such as IASA under these circumstances is constancy in adherence to rigorous intellectual standards, an unyielding congeniality and collegiality toward those who feel on the defensive as a result of its activities, no matter the slurs, barbs, vilifications, and rudeness those defensive reactions may direct at the new endeavor.

The future of American Studies, once these rearguard actions have burnt themselves out, will more than likely be less American, which is to say, they will be transnational and hemispheric, with the parameters of the object of investigation extending beyond the national borders of the USA. American Studies will also be multilingual, with the other major languages of America—that is, Spanish, Portuguese and French—as well as principal indigenous languages emerging as indispensable instruments for archival research and for diagnoses of cultural practices in the Western Hemisphere. The future of American Studies, as heralded by the International American Studies Association, will also be international. This means that the fulcrum and compass point of encompassing the parameters of what constitutes American Studies, as well as the perspectival focus from which America is observed and studied will no longer be exclusively America itself, or situated in the USA, as hitherto has been the case, with the object of study having been setting the intellectual agenda and investigative parameters of its own investigation. In this regard, organizations such as the US national American Studies Association will come to realize that no matter its good intentions for internationalizing American Studies, as a US institution and itself an object of case study, its efforts will succeed not in internationalizing American Studies, but its success in this regard will only mean the further Americanization of the international community of Americanists. Likewise, the European Association of American Studies, in re-drawing its parameters as a contained continent of Americanism, will only succeed in reiterating its morphology as a product of American history in Europe following World War II and now, as an emphatic reiteration of that history as sequel to that War and as a consequence of America's Cold War with the former Soviet Union. The incorporation of those post-Soviet national formations, in other words, re-define Europe's official American Studies as instituted within the fortress of EAAS as an American extension of American history in Europe in a post-Cold-War New World Order.

It is important to understand that the future of American Studies as announced and practiced by the members of the International American Studies Association are not anti-American. They may well be considered 'un-American', but this is part of their virtue, not a shortcoming, unless the infelicitous history of US persecution of what is deemed 'un-American' should resurface as revenant of the McCarthy Era that indelibly marked the mid-twentieth century. Intelligent human beings as serious professionals and committed intellectuals do not commit themselves to what they hate. There may well be pathological cases of obsessive-compulsive engagements with what certain individuals abhor, but these are decidedly aberrant instances of pathology. In fact, far from being anti-American, the emergent International American Studies takes America seriously enough to do more than serve as sycophantic echo, celebratory mirror, or acclamatory resonance of what America itself thinks it is.

The future of American Studies will have greater intellectual honesty and scholarly rigor than to succumb to the promptings of its object of study, whether these promptings be in the form of materials, money, access, or political validation. The emergent international American Studies, in fact, is already wary of such emoluments and of the validation that comes from America itself, whether through such American institutions as the US American Studies Association, or historically US-engendered

formations such as the EAAS. This is not to say that the International American Studies Association cannot engage productively in collaborative efforts and constructive cooperation with colleagues from the ASA or from the EAAS. It simply means that IASA must operate independently and as a self-critically alert intellectual agency outside of the aegis or hegemonic embrace of its object of study and its governmental institutions, including the ASA.

The future of American Studies, especially as a studiously un-American intellectual enterprise, will not be easy. The measure of the difficulty and the impediments put in front of that future, however, will be an index of the significance of that very future. Intellectual independence and professional integrity are not a concession. They are to be constantly attained through perseverance, commitment, and through the solidarity of the field's practitioners. While academic solidarity has often been considered as just that, 'purely academic', American Studies will be realizing more and more in the future that it is more than an 'academic' discipline in the pejorative sense. American Studies is already consequential in the sense that how America is investigated, taught, and written about matters very much to the reality of the world and to the world life not only of Americans, but of the rest of the world. Thus, the future American Studies particularly as envisioned and already practiced by the International American Studies Association, is not only international, it is worldly. It is worldly in the sense that the disciplinary hierarchies that have hitherto defined the field, with the humanities and cultural studies taking precedence over the analytical social sciences and the critical natural sciences, are already being subjected to a readjustment. The future American Studies is also worldly in the sense that America will not be dealt with as isolate, as exceptional, as incomparable. Rather, America is already being subjected to a relational treatment, in juxtaposition with historical realities and contemporary dynamics of realpolitik that circumscribe and define America as much as being defined by America. The International American Studies Association, as international and as global, occupies an optimal position for this relational and comparative treatment of the object of study. As the only global association of American Studies, IASA occupies a unique position from which an American Studies of the future can continue to be redefined as new realities emerge and as the transformations in the world require commensurate transformations in the discipline itself. This is the openness of the International American Studies Association as an intellectual enterprise, an openness that extends to its receptivity and inclusiveness of the diversity of practices among Americanists around the world.

Djelal Kadir

2. TRANSFORMATIONS OF AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE POLISH CONTEXT

It is impossible not to notice that the stance worked out by the founders and leading ideologists of the International American Studies Association characteristically inscribes itself into the discourse of decentralization, rooted in the tradition of post-structuralist thought. Likewise, it comes as no surprise that, while retaining intellectual consistence, such a stance assumes the necessity of revaluating the paradigms of

thought. Such a revaluation would respect not only factors sanctioning existing organizational structures, but also the character of a wide variety of disciplines of research, of which the common founding principle is most frequently the decentralization of discourses traditionally determining frames of research and its objects. (Such is the case of the discipline called 'Cultural Studies', from which domain the majority of original IASA membership derived).

Such a 'deconstructive' self-consciousness would not probably be considered unique if not for the fact that in most (if not all) activities endeavored by IASA it is the basis of the implemented and constantly corrected research perspective. Hence, such a framing has an immediate bearing upon the shape and direction of research practice. It seems that it is this perspective that accounts for the attractiveness of such organizations, especially for Americanists from outside of the United States, and particularly for researchers of the more junior generation. Still, to attempt an explanation of this phenomenon as pertaining to the context of the evolution of Polish American Studies, it seems useful first to illustrate some of the assumptions presented in the first part of the present dialogue with reference to concrete examples drawn from cultural practice—and then to offer a critical juxtaposition of the vision of the future of American Studies as offered by IASA against the developmental potential of the Polish American Studies in the light of factors conditioning everyday work of a Polish Americanist. This, also, is the central objective of the present reflection, which, perhaps, ought to begin with the clarification of elementary terminological distinctions: it is the popular usage of defining terms of the discipline that indicates the uniqueness of the perception of what 'American Studies' is in Poland.

As in the case of many Americanist discourses in Europe, in the Polish context 'American Studies', if not attributed specific qualifiers, would be predominantly (albeit in many cases incorrectly) associated with studies dedicated to problems related solely to the United States. American Studies understood 'hemispherically' is still a budding discipline. The reasons underlying such a state of affairs could be traced to a few complex phenomena, partly rooted in the history of Poland, partly related to the country's geopolitical location, largely dependent on the shape and evolution of Polish system of higher education and largely stemming from economic relations of the past and of the present. In a nutshell, American Studies in Poland is an academic discipline which evolved from the domain of English Philology (with which it is still frequently associated, both conceptually and institutionally) and from such disciplines as political science, history, art history, law and economy (as it is in the case of American Studies Centers in Łódź, Warsaw, or Cracow). Nonetheless, even though American Studies Centers in Poland (all of which are university-based) more and more frequently involve in their projects research done by scholars and scientists representing disciplines other than philology, the focal point of their activities remains, predominantly, the United States.

Also, the common usage of the term of 'American Studies' ('amerykanistyka') in Poland seems to indicate that in the Polish cultural practice the concept itself is synonymous to that of 'US Studies' rather than 'Studies of the Americas'. It is easy to observe that such disciplines as 'Canadian Studies', 'South American Studies', or 'Latin American Studies' still tend to function as 'separate', and that research on languages/cul-

tures of Polynesia, done by a handful of individual scholars, is usually developed within the structures of departments of Oriental, not Occidental, Studies. This conceptual (and cartographic) separation of fields testifies to the uniqueness of the 'optics' of the overall Polish scholarly perceptions of where America 'begins' and where it 'ends'. This perspective becomes comprehensible when one realizes that the majority of Polish Americanists—mostly associated with the Polish Association of American Studies (PAAS), which in itself is institutionally tied to the European Association for American Studies (EAAS), supported by the US administration and concentrating primarily upon research respecting the United States—are almost exclusively English philologists. The majority of Polish Americanists resort to various forms of research support offered by American or Polish-American institutions, such as the Batory Foundation (financed by the George Soros Foundation), the Kościuszko Foundation, or the Polish-American Fulbright Commission. At the same time, it is important to realize that in recent years, a group of Polish scholars specializing in American Studies understood broadly, have joined IASA, and that their numbers increase from year to year. At that, it must be noted that in their work most of these scholars focus upon problems related to the US and Canada and, not unlike their American or Western European colleagues, most of them usually retain double or multiple organizational membership for reasons to be addressed in detail in the end of this part of the present dialogue.

Bearing in mind the essentially US-focused orientation of the Polish American Studies, it is obvious that the problems emerging as an effect of the conceptual crisis resulted in a breakthrough in the ways of thinking about the United States. The crisis, which gained a global dimension and certainly exerted tangible impact upon the transformations of the conception of American Studies in the West, seems to be of central importance in the context of the evolution of this discipline in Poland, too. The above notwithstanding, the particularity of circumstances in which Polish American Studies evolve might decide about the fact that the future of the discipline, although it may unfold along the same general lines as has been that of American Studies in Western countries, may still take a unique evolutionary path. To shed more light upon these phenomena, it seems worthwhile to return to problems sketched out in the first part of this dialogue and to illustrate them with particular examples.

There is no doubt that the vision of the future projected by IASA and aspired to by its members became especially attractive when the Americanist world was left with no other option but to face a serious ethical choice. After September 11, 2001 it was no longer possible to retain a neutral stance with respect to the foreign policy of the United States, or not to reflect upon the status of Americanist institutions, whose activities have for years been legitimized by the American administration. The Americanist milieux were placed in a position in which they had to resist the rhetoric of polarization, especially that a vast majority of intellectuals in the US shared (and continue to share) a strongly critical understanding of the discourse of the 'ethical United States' as created in the media by a variety of institutionalized factors. Yet, the urge to take a stance and declare one's allegiance to one of the camps, the separation of which became especially clear in the light of the rhetoric fostered by the US administration, proved burning. The American government, reverting to the well-tested lan-

guage that largely resembled that of notorious totalitarianism,[2] officially redefined the historical concept of patriotism.[3] After the tragedy of the World Trade Center, the 'exiling' of the awareness of dangers resulting from the American foreign policy into the soothing sphere of 'potentiality' as well as the retention of the idealistic (or comfortable) faith in the essential correspondence of the values preached by the American political elites and their practice became too difficult, since both demanded from individuals and groups an intellectual and moral compromise of an unacceptable scale. The gaping abyss between the 'good America' and the 'evil America' could no longer be 'discursively liquidated': the wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq have become tangibly real. When their 'pretextual' character eventually became publicly known, the long-shaped model of thinking, talking, and writing about America, preferred and fostered by the official factors, collapsed. It was no longer possible to read the self-deconstructive, yet evidently harmful game of appearances, upon which the broadly propagated 'mediatized vision' of American international relations (i.e. that in which other countries were presented as US partners and in which the world was not located in the periphery of the United States), as a discursive strategy alone.

The first armed conflict, resting, as may be suspected, upon economic foundations (to which the maps of natural resources and the geopolitical location of Afghanistan seem to testify) began as a political act of retaliation: it served the purpose of satisfying the demand of the American public anxious to see the success of an immediate counterstrike against the terrorists responsible for the attacks of September 11, 2001. And even though according to official declarations the military action in Afghanistan was supposed to mark the beginning of the war against terror, it is difficult to resist the impression that it served as a political ersatz, a substitutive gesture. In terms of international relations, the aggressor in the conflict was, in fact, the world's superpower, while the object of the attack (and of long-lasting political manipulation before it) was a destitute, desert country, exhausted by guerilla wars, a state whose citizens were suffering extreme poverty and in which (possibly) the Al Qaeda terrorists found their shelter. The second conflict, also economically driven, and also transmuting into a war waged against an opponent incomparably weaker in terms of affluence or military power, escalated soon afterward. The war was declared without the acceptance of the United Nations, beyond the structures of NATO and on the excuse of the prevention of the development of the alleged Iraqi mass-destruction arsenal. This time, however, the war was 'marketed' with the use of a catchy slogan of 'Iraqi Freedom' and, in the tone of the propagandist lingo adopted thrice before, as 'war on terrorism'. Still, to most specialists and many non-specialists it is clear that even though the two military acts failed to efficiently counteract the actions of terrorist organizations responsible for the attacks against the US , they allowed America to gain and keep control of the vital energy resources, to fortify its military outposts in the strategic points of

[2] I developed this concept in a short popular article 'The 2004 Election—Opinion', Newsday, Tuesday, November 2, 2004.

[3] See, for instance, a controversial piece of legislature, the USA Patriot Act, whose full title reads: 'Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act of 2001'. Especially important is the debate the passing of the Act triggered in various milieux, as documented in numerous Internet forums and websites.

the world and facilitated the efforts the US administration would take to retain public support and to pass laws severely limiting the civic freedoms constituting the ideological foundations of its own country.

The costs, as is always the case in the time of war, continue to be paid by countless innocent people on both sides of the conflict; the profits, as one can imagine, are becoming the share of corporations. The world confirmed its doubts as to the real significance of the United Nations and, consequently, lost its sense of safety as soon as it realized the non-existence of efficient mechanisms to control international affairs within the geopolitical structure of the dynamics of power after the downfall of the Soviet Union.

It came as no surprise, however, that the image of the 'good America', the America unblemished by any serious errors in the long-term practice of its foreign policy, 'America-the Partner' fighting for the 'common good cause', continued to be fostered in the media and through the political rhetoric employed by the spokespersons and leaders of the administration of the United States. Still, even though this image has become by far the most popular object of critical analyses, it is because it has been institutionally sanctioned and legitimized by the military and monetary power of the state that it has come to constitute an important component of one of the most easily predictable (and, in the context of a military conflict, the only efficient) strategies of shaping the international and internal reception of the United States. The strategy employed by the US government seems to be deeply rooted in the philosophy of political realism, which, exploiting the efficiency of the idealist propaganda, departs from the ideals themselves. It rests exclusively upon the relations derivative of the economic and military power of the country, as well as upon the effectiveness of lobbying and of the overall home policy as measured by the number of votes. The rather blatant legibility of the principles of 'Realpolitik' introduced into the public space, however, deepened the already profound dilemma of world-wide Americanists, whose activities suddenly gained additional, thus far unnoticed or neglected, ethical and methodological dimensions.

Undoubtedly, the breakthrough that affected the public discourse of America caused a serious crisis in the Americanist *Weltanschauung* as well, which not only yielded results in terms of the increase of membership of the organizations independent of US financing and offering a vision of reality wherein the discourse of values is no longer an effect of the central position of the United States in the world, but also produced a crisis of self, that affected predominantly researchers affiliated with ASA, EAAS and other 'established' organizations institutionally supported by the US administration. The doubts were inevitable: is it possible to foster scholarly activities which would not be ethically dubious while financing them from the purse of the American governmental institutions, whose long-term political strategy seems to question the values preached and results in conflicts bringing death and suffering to thousands of innocent people? How far would the intellectual and ethical compromise have to go if one were to logically assume that the financing institution might not be interested in the promotion of stances critical with respect to itself? How can one be sure that America as an institution funding research dedicated to itself will not tie its granting policy to methodologies with which it prefers to be researched and to the language

in which it chooses to be described? Would such a policy not disqualify or stall alternative approaches? Ultimately, would it be realistic to hope that the 'established' organizations may become internally transformed in a way which would allow their members to eventually bring about a real, tangible change in the styles of thinking of America and, finally, in America herself?

Answers to these and similar questions, however, are rarely simple. Most importantly, it is clear that the Americanist organizations funded by US institutions are bodies associating thousands of more or less influential intellectuals, of whom a grand majority refuse to accept the principles of the US foreign policy adopted by the administration. It does not seem unusual, then, that many of them, declaring themselves as opponents of the militaristic politics fostered by George W. Bush's administration, have taken action leading toward the reform of the 'old' established institutions, which is facilitated by the fact that these institutions, as 'democratic' bodies, are capable of self-transformation and constantly evolve. Owing to the fact that these organizations have developed a complex infrastructure, they are also influential enough to be able to exert impact upon the consciousness of younger generations of Americans as well as, to a degree, upon the current actions of politicians.

Initially, however, in order to keep functioning within the frames of the government-subsidized organizations without ethical misgivings, it seemed inevitable to develop a unique, theodicy-like discourse, which would explain and justify one's own presence within the structures funded by a state perceived as a rogue state. This, in turn, triggered the necessity of solving more complex dilemmas of methodological nature, concerning primarily the consequences of the traditional assumptions of a) the central position of the United States in Americanist research and, in effect, the marginal position of remaining countries of both American continents; b) the central position of the English language as that in which scholarly reflection finds its expression, in which most Americanist studies are published and from which texts are translated into other languages, and c) the relationship of primacy between America as the institution financing research and America as the object of such research.

The task of seeking and arriving at convincing solutions to thus- formulated problems is not a simple one. Therefore, it is not surprising that many scholars, both within and outside of the US , often long-term members of the 'established' organizations, have chosen parallel membership in the independent organizations, such as IASA, whose assumptions, at least today, do not require of their members any ethical compromise and warrant the freedom of conscience. Importantly, these scholars have usually never ceased to be members of the US-centered organizations: the majority of the members of the IASA Executive Council are not only members, but also high officers of the governing bodies of such associations as ASA. As such, their *Weltanschauungs* are central in the process of shaping and transforming these organizations, as is clearly visible in the ASA Resolutions signed on October 12, 2006, sent out to participants of the ASA Annual Meeting entitled 'The United States from Inside and Out: Transnational American Studies', which was held in Oakland, CA. The text of both documents is quoted *in extenso* below:

RESOLUTION ON THE IRAQ WAR
(Adopted by the National Council of the American Studies Association on October 12, 2006)

WHEREAS the American Studies Association is an organization dedicated to the preservation of free academic inquiry for peoples the world over; and

WHEREAS the US invasion of Iraq and the consequent stifling of civil liberties threaten academic freedom and compromise scholarly integrity; and

WHEREAS the American Studies Association is committed to promoting education opportunities for all students here and beyond our borders; and

WHEREAS military recruiters are disproportionately enlisting working-class students and students of color, and interfering with their completion of secondary and higher educations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the American Studies Association calls for the end of the war and the withdrawal of all US troops from Iraq.

Resolution on Intellectual Freedom in a Time of War
(Adopted by the National Council of the American Studies Association on November 14, 2002)

As teachers and scholars of American culture and history we are deeply concerned about the storm of attacks on intellectual freedom and the ebb of open public debate, in the name of patriotism and a war on terror.

Free and frank intellectual inquiry is under assault by overt legislative acts and by a chilling effect of secrecy and intimidation in the government, media and on college campuses. This atmosphere hinders our ability to fulfill our role as educators: to promote public debate, conduct scholarly research, and most importantly, teach our students to think freely and critically and to explore diverse perspectives. Democracy is predicated on the right to question our government and leaders openly and to express dissent without fear. We are told, in fact, that our nation is ready to go to war to protect this precious freedom. The threat of war should not restrict public debate, as it often has in our nation's past. Vigorous debate and the widest possible discussion are crucial to the health of our democracy.

We would like to draw attention to the following developments since September 11, 2001:

*The FBI and INS are asking universities and colleges to monitor and provide information about students from countries outside the US. This creates a climate of intimidation and suspicion inimical to free participation and exchange of ideas. Government contracts for scientific research now specify that international students be excluded from funded projects. Such conditions discourage international students from participating in our long tradition of international academic exchange crucial to the development of US higher education. We applaud those universities that turn down these contracts and challenge the legality of FBI collaboration, and we encourage all administrations to follow suit. Denying equal rights and due process to foreign students creates an atmosphere of suspicion and fear for all of our students and drastically limits their intellectual universe

*The justice department's new limits on the Freedom of Information Act jeopardizes our rights as scholars and citizens to have access to government information. For scholars seeking to understand our nation's history, this law has been profoundly important in providing documents from all branches of government. These documents have shed especially important light on the history of movements for social change and American intervention abroad, histories which can better help us understand our own times. Access to documents also helps citizens make informed decisions about current policy and keeps government accountable. The FOIA was intended to reverse what now seems an alarming trend toward unprecedented government secrecy. It is imperative today that scholars and journalists in all fields have the widest possible access to information generated by our own government.

*The USA PATRIOT Act severely limits our most important tasks as scholars and teachers. Books and CD-ROMs are being removed from Federal depository libraries, and web sites are being closed for presumed terrorist ties. The ability of librarians to do their work is threatened by federal agencies that demand they turn over patron records. The rights of library users and book buyers are at risk when

federal agencies can request these records, and our right to privacy-even to our own thoughts-is at risk when the government can monitor what we read. We urge the repeal of this act, which threatens to erode the foundation of intellectual freedom.

*University administrations are under pressure to silence faculty and researchers who take unpopular political positions. Organizations such as Campus Watch publish lists of faculty and students critical of US foreign policy, especially vis-á-vis Israel. They represent a broad trend among conservative commentators, who call for the censorship of faculty dissent and equate criticism of the government with being anti-American and anti-patriotic. We call on colleges and universities to resist external pressure to curtail academic freedom and to stop aiding federal agencies in the surveillance of teachers and scholars with scholarly or familial ties to other countries.

History teaches us that we must reflect on who the 'we' of the American polity is and who the 'enemy' is, especially in a time of war when lives are at stake at home and abroad. As students of American history and culture, we hear disturbing echoes of World War I and the McCarthy era, when the government imprisoned its critics, and institutions of higher learning dismissed antiwar or 'subversive' professors. The presumption that foreign students and teachers and Americans of Arab, Muslim, and South Asian descent are either 'terrorists' or 'the enemy' evokes shameful memories of the deportation of political dissidents during WW I, and the internment of Americans of Japanese descent during WWII. The intimidation of political dissidents and those perceived as foreign threatens the right of free speech for all and debases our American traditions of civil liberty, tolerance and inclusion.

To avoid repeating that ignominious history, we urge our colleagues, university administrations and elected representatives to repeal those policies, laws, and acts of censorship that endanger intellectual freedom. We affirm our commitment to classrooms where ideas are exchanged freely; to libraries where scholars can work free from intimidation for their political beliefs; to laboratories where students and teachers are free from suspicion because of their ethnic affiliations; and to campuses open to the widest range of opinions. Intellectual freedom—the freedom to ask questions, to uncover facts, to speak independently without fear—is the foundation of our democracy and remains of critical importance, especially in a time of crisis.

The title of the Conference and the Resolutions quoted above evidently testify to the merit of the foresight informing the statement Djelal Kadir makes in the first sentence of his essay. American Studies does have a future, and the present day direction of the unfolding of this future seems to have largely depended on the catalytic activity of organizations such as IASA. Still, even before transformations of the 'established' organizations have achieved the moment, in which their membership declares non-ambiguously its dissent from the principles of the dominant policy, Polish Americanists, who, like other Polish scholars, have to function in the context of severely under-funded, or outright neglected system of education, have developed a rational stance with respect to the problems described throughout this bipartite reflection. As long-term members of the US -centered, 'established' organizations, they carry out research focusing on the United States, which in the Polish cultural context is of particular importance not only owing to the traditional pro-Americanness of the Polish cultural imagination, but also due to the recent transformations of the country, which used to look to America as it strove to retain its identity under communist rule and now must seek to reinvent many of its aspects in the context of its recent accession to the European Union. Bearing in mind the centrality of US studies in Poland, American institutions still remain invaluable as both catering to the intellectual needs of the Polish scholars and offering sources of funding, without which no Americanist representing a financially underprivileged country would be able to develop. Without intellectual exchange, access to libraries, exposure to American life, without up-to-date

knowledge of the practical functioning of the American language, generating valuable intellectual propositions seems to be almost impossible, unless these propositions should draw heavily on theory alone.

Still, even though the American-funded organizations understandably focus upon the USA and its relations, scholars often develop a dual perspective upon the object of their studies by becoming involved in the activities fostered by IASA and similar organizations, whose multilingual, hemispheric, transatlantic and transpacific projects offer 'a decentralized' alternative to centralistic Americanist discourses. In the light of such alternatives, the United States, being the object of research and providing a source of its financing, albeit understandably centralizing the focus of research, no longer imposes the discourse of centrality of American values upon academic reflection. Researchers often study America and its relations in a transnational perspective, which effectively decentralizes the object of research (as is the case in comparative studies) and, often, also the language in which this object is conceptualized and described.

Moreover, the milieux representing the 'established' organizations offer now what seems to be a highly unprejudiced reception of 'politically incorrect' propositions, often characterizing the non-American research perspectives. Texts expressly critical with respect to the US foreign policy receive unbiased reviews and become published in the volumes of proceedings as well as in academic journals maintained by these organizations, which definitely bridges what originally seemed to be an unbridgeable ethical and political abyss between the US-sponsored and independent Americanist discourses.

Although everything that has been written here belongs to the space of the obvious, the ultimate ethical argument against radical judgments concerning Americanist scholarship exercised within the frames of organizations sponsored by US institutions is the directionality of the transfer of values. Irrespective of the adopted research perspective, it is impossible to deny that despite the crisis, the advancement of the processes dubbed as Americanization is a fact. America still remains one of the most productive donors of values—and thus also the donor of language, under which a major (and constantly growing) proportion of the global society conceptualizes, describes, and understands the world. In the context of the cultural domination of the US , which manifests itself also in the almost exclusively centrifugal transfer of values, it is possible to hypothesize that the metanarrative will evolve in the direction of the decentralized polyphony on condition that the initial impulse comes from 'the inside', i.e. , from those Americanists' organizations which possess financial means and are politically influential, but which also acknowledge the global protest against the present day state of affairs. A scenario in which the values begin to flow 'from the outside' and America is their passive acceptor seems largely unrealistic; visions based upon such a projection border upon nadvete.

The 'external' stimulus, however, is the context in which the activity of independent organizations (i.e. , those which have not been called into existence or are financed by American governmental institutions) emerges as necessary. Independent, open, and unrestricted activity, translating itself into publications, conferences, modern channels of thought exchange, and syllabi, and influencing everyday academic practice,

may exert direct or indirect, tangible impact upon the development of modes of self-consciousness of organizations of 'central' status, and thus perform a unique 'catalytic' function. Competing with 'hegemonic' organizations, associations such as IASA generate the impulse stimulating transformations both at the global level (by propagating their own vision of the 'decentered' American Studies) and at the level of paradigms adopted by the 'old' formations (since, as 'new' and 'competitive' they motivate the 'old' ones to implement reforms and to acknowledge the need of intellectual revisions). By opening forums for thought exchange and encouraging their members to participate in debates organized by other (frequently those established) institutions, they dynamize the language and influence the direction of the evolution of discourse. Propagating multilingualism, they remove the English language from its unquestioned central position as the default language of research, as that which supplies the discursive *instrumentarium* and, eventually, as that which 'logically' appears the most 'convenient' and most 'practical' means of communication owing to its range determined by the tragic history of colonization and expansion.

In the light of the research carried out within the frames of IASA, America becomes a double continent: one inextricably linked with islands and archipelagos of the adjacent oceans and historically shaped by its relations to all other continents of the world. Informed by such a perspective, the United States no longer is synonymous with America, an entity somewhat automatically envisaged as a continent-state at the margins of which Canada, Mexico, Central and South American countries and the islands of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are located. Here, America is narrated in all dominant American languages—and these narratives undergo translation not only from English into other languages, but also from other languages into English. The necessity of translation is, however, moderated by the promotion of functional multilingualism among researchers and students. The traditional barriers of time and space have been bridged by the application of modern information technology: IASA has its own electronic journal, *The Review of International American Studies* (*RIAS*), its own Internet Center for Thought Exchange,[4] including chat rooms, forums, center for book exchange, interactive bibliography of Americanist publications by members, interactive hyperlink collection, member homepages, and workspaces for working groups. The technological basis of these tools was developed by CMS Design Company 'Soft for Humans'[5] specifically to cater to the needs of scholars involved in transatlantic, transpacific, and transnational projects. It allows the organization of workflow and real-time communication among collaborating individuals. Thus, the rhizomatic Internet not only helps the Association to eliminate high costs related to traditional forms of communication, but also, providing the virtual workspace and a digital meeting place for international scholars, it de-centers the perspective of Americanist research even further.

This corresponds fully to other epistemological assumptions of IASA leaders. Cultural and economic relations of the America(s) are demonstrated with full awareness of the importance of relational epistemologies and hence the perspectives adopted for

[4] http://www.iasa-rias.org
[5] http://www.softforhumans.com

the purpose of such studies range from hemispheric (meridian perspectives) to transatlantic and transpacific (parallel perspectives). Importantly, the 'center', characteristic for more traditional Americanist discourses, is not simply 'removed' from the US and 'relocated' somewhere else, but becomes permanently dispersed.

Still, it is clear that such a methodological stance is by no means anti-American. Conversely, by dethroning 'one and only' truth, it demonstrates a more complex, broader and more honest truth; a truth that is both changeable and evolving, prone to self-deconstruction and self-conscious of its dependence on the dynamics of the relational discourse. This is the vision of American Studies capable of shaping the generations to come: generations of wise individuals, communities and societies, cherishing the value of mutual respect, celebrating difference, abolishing prejudice, and thus building the world without wars. This is the vision of the end of the crisis that affected the United States, the Americas, and the whole Western world. That this vision has already inspired a group of followers within the most influential Americanist milieux is evident: the fact that Professor Emory Elliott, a member of the Executive Committee of IASA is now the President of ASA is symbolic of the increasing significance of the epistemological horizons worked out by IASA. The 'new' inspired the 'old' and thus the criterion of independence of the US financing is no longer necessarily valid as the basis for distinctions serving the purpose of the assessment of the character of contemporary Americanist organizations.

The transformations of the recent years allow one to harbor hope for further change. Poland, now a member of the EU and a co-signer of the Bologna Agreement, is now in the process of reconceptualization and consequent restructuring of its system of higher education. These developments serve to facilitate the functioning of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which will tangibly influence the formula of teaching American Studies to students, who, for instance, may choose to develop their knowledge of America through the medium of two or three languages simultaneously and may focus their research on any aspect of American culture, should they wish to take courses warranting their expertise in the field.

Such changes do not seem reversible: in their light, the condition of the ethical and epistemological 'dissociation' in American Studies seems to be coming to an end. Nonetheless, the transformations already ascertainable do not disqualify the validity of Djelal Kadir's warning and do not eliminate potential dangers related to the possibility of institutional manipulation of the honesty of the academic world. They do, however, awaken hopes deeply rooted in the idealistic faith in a better, post-nationalist world, from which nobody will exclude anyone else, in which no-one will exile anyone to its margins, in which otherness will not be the underside of sameness but an order of multiplicity and variation. One day, such a world must become a fact, and this vision will most probably be dear to any Polish Americanist, whose attempts at making sense of America attempting to making sense of itself directly influence the process of the revaluation of his or her understanding of the world with America and Poland in it, and of himself or herself in the world.

Paweł Jędrzejko

BOOKS

1

Cyril Dabydeen, *Uncharted Heart: Poems* (Ottawa: Borealis, 2008).

2

Cyril Dabydeen, *Drums of My Flesh: A Novel*, TSAR Publications, 2005. Nominee for the IMPAC/Dubvlin Prize and winner of the national Guyana Prize for Literature.

3

Cyril Dabydeen, *Dark Swirl*, London: Peepal Tree Press, reprint 2008. and *The Wizard Swami*, London: Peepal Tree Press, reprint 2007.

4

Emory Elliott, Jasmine Payne and Patricia Ploesch, Co-Editors, *Global Migration, Social Change, and Cultural Transformation*. New York : Palgrave MacMillan, 2007. Essays from a three-year Rockefeller Foundation project on immigration.

5

LE CANADA ET LA SOCIÉTÉ DES SAVOIRS. Le Canada et les Amériques.

Directeur Patrick Imbert. Textes de Robert Boily (Inforex) : « Problématiques et défis liés au savoir scientifique et technologique à l'aube du XXIème siècle.

Patrick Imbert, (Chaire de recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa : « Canada : enjeuxsociaux et culturels dans une société du savoir ») : « Société des savoirs et transformations culturelles ».

Pierre Lévy (Chaire de recherche du Canada en intelligence collective, Université d'Ottawa) : « Société du savoir et développement humain ».

Résumé : Dans le contexte de l'expansion de la société des savoirs, les innovations scientifico-technologiques et les transformations économiques et culturelles cheminent de concert. Elles favorisent l'essor du multiculturalisme dont il faut redéfinir les modalités et les limites en fonction d'un transculturalisme dynamique lié au libéralisme économique comme à la valorisation des protections sociales. Cette société des savoirs transforme le Canada et les Amériques, car elle déplace les rapports intérieur/extérieur et privé/public. Elle demande de participer au cerveau collectif réseauté mondialisé qui se met en place afin de communiquer efficacement dans divers contextes discursifs et culturels. Elle oblige à être un producteur innovateur et éthique pour être concurentiel localement et mondialement. Par la démocratisation de l'accès rapide à d'énormes sources d'informations, elle favorise des dynamiques qui accroissent l'expansion des potentialités individuelles de toutes et de tous.

Le Canada et la Société des savoirs (novembre 2007, 180 p.) est le 4ème volume publié par la chaire de recherche de l'Université d'Ottawa: « Canada : enjeux sociaux et culturels dans une société du savoir ».

Titre des autres volumes :

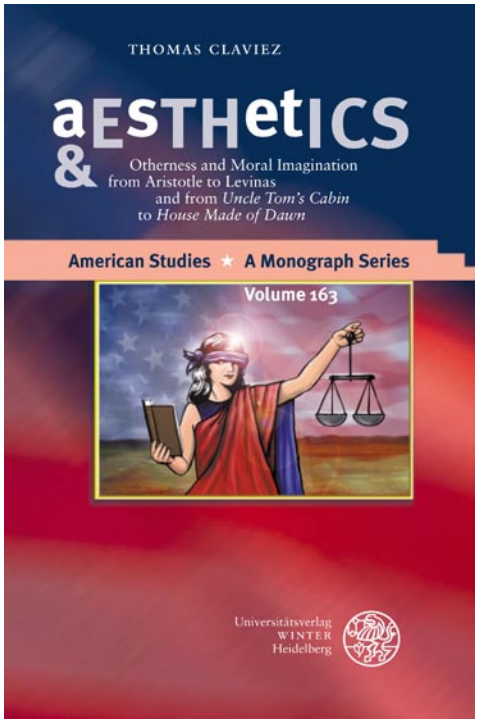
— Consensual Disagreement : Canada and the Americas, 2005, 104 p., (Épuisé).
— Converging Disensus? Cultural Transformations and Corporate Cultures: Canada and the Americas, 2006, 165 p.
— Les jardins des Amériques: éden, "home" et maison: le Canada et les Amériques,
— Ottawa, février 2007, 246 p.
— Pour obtenir ces livres, communiquer avec Patrick Imbert, Département de français.

Université d'Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1N 6N5
pimbert@uottawa.ca; www.canada.uottawa.ca/winwin

6

Forthcoming in April 2008: Thomas Claviez: *Aesthetics & Otherness and Moral Imagination from Aristotle to Levinas and from Uncle Tom's Cabin to House Made of Dawn* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2008).

In recent debates within American Studies, the concept of the 'Other' has played a major role; very often, however, reference to it hardly goes beyond a pathos of marginality that collides with both the theoretical assumptions of post-colonialism and the pragmatics of identity politics.



In a first, theoretical part, this study analyses what role 'otherness' plays in the most influential moral-philosophical approaches to date—from Aristotle and the Neo-Aristotelians (Alasdair MacIntyre, Martha Nussbaum) via Kantianism and its deconstructors (Jean-François Lyotard, J. Hillis Miller) to the works of Paul Ricoeur and Emmanuel Levinas—and sheds light on its highly problematic status in Western notions of justice and aesthetics.

Starting from a revised concept of the sublime, the second part uses the different theoretical approaches to interpret four American novels (Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, and N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*), and examines how far the respective moral-philosophical systems carry in elucidating these texts, as well as what role literary-historical and generic strategies play in dramatizing the encounter with 'otherness'.

7

Walter W. Hölbling and Justine Tally, eds. *Theories and Texts. By Students For Students*. Berlin etc.: LIT Verlag, 2007. 328pp. ISBN 978–3–8258–0809–9. American Studies in Austria, vol. 7.

Theories and Texts, a guide written by students for students, explores the critical ideas of twelve of the most influential philosophers of the last 150 years—Marx, Freud, Bakhtin, Lacan, Derrida, Barthes, Foucault, Bhaba, as well as a variety of feminist critics (Kristeva & the French feminists, black feminists, and the theological feminists), New Historicists, and Postcolonialists. Carefully 'digested' and then set out in lucid and easily accessible language, these essays explain major ideas of each critical approach and exemplify them through practical applications to altogether three contemporary novels—Toni Morrison's Beloved and Jazz, and Barbara Kingsolver's The Poisonwood Bible. At a time when 'theory' is on everybody's lips and yet is often more of a deterrent than an attraction for students of literature and culture, we believe that these essays show how theories can enrich our understanding of literature, facilitate our analysis of a particular text, elucidate the multiple layers of meaning, and thus significantly enhance the *jouissance* in our acts of reading. Literary theory with a *différance*!

CALLS FOR PAPERS

1

TRANSATLANTIC ENCOUNTERS: AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY'
TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 27–30, 2008 IN ŁÓDŹ, POLAND.

The conference is organized in celebration of the 15th anniversary of the establishment of the Department of American Studies and Mass Media at the University of Łódź. The conference will offer a forum for discussing issues related to American Studies as seen from the perspective of transatlantic and interdisciplinary research.

We invite proposals from individual scholars as well as groups of three to five presenters on topics including, but not limited to:

— media and society: film, radio, TV, the press, and the new media
— multiculturalism: approaches to and representations of
— globalization, regionalization, political leadership
— terrorism: military and intellectual responses to
— national identity, migration, and representation
— popular culture and its national and international contexts
— interdisciplinary American Studies/Transatlantic Studies pedagogy

Key-note speakers: Emory Elliot (University of California, Riverside), Alfred Hornung (University of Mainz), Zbigniew Lewicki (Warsaw University)

Deadline for the submission of title and abstract of 200–250 words and proposals for panels (350 words, including names of presenters and titles of their presentations) is May 15, 2008.

Please submit abstracts electronically or by mail to the following address:
TRANS 2008
Department of American Studies and Mass Media,
University of Łódź
ul. Składowa 41/43, 90–127 Łódź, Poland
E-mail address: trans2008@uni.lodz.pl

A selection of papers will be published by Peter Lang Publishers (Germany) in 'American Studies and Media' Series. General Editors: Elżbieta H. Oleksy and Wiesław Oleksy.

2

MODERNITY'S MODERNISMS: HEMI/SPHERES, "RACE", AND GENDER.

We seek abstracts for essays to be included in a collection that will build on recent scholarship underscoring both the need for and possible ways in which the project of widening the borders of modernism and modernist studies may be undertaken. Beginning with the 15th century encounter between Old World and New—an instance of modernity commonly considered solely in terms of Western cultural development—the collection will explore how this more conventional articulation of modernity is split into numerous hemispheric modernisms with global affect, and how these modernisms are often linked to each other through transnational flows of people, ideas, and things, particularly in terms of "race" and gender. Reconceiving conventional articulations of modernity in this way shifts the focus of interconnectedness between disparate modernisms from the significance of globalization to the exploration of shared history, thus providing the ground for consideration of New World modernisms while opening up new possibilities for unearthing their hidden links with the Western and non-Western modernisms of the Old. Modernity's modernisms thus become multiple interconnected hemi/spheres, in which exist many possible relations of various modernities through history, time, and space, across axes of east and west and north and south—linked also, through the shared quest of discovery, to disparate global modernities existing prior to the 15th century modern moment of the West. Understood in terms of multiple hemi/spheres, then, modernity's modernisms suggest a dynamic paradigm that reconfigures conventional binaries, revealing a previously hidden nexus between inside/outside, colonial/postcolonial, national/transnational, the West and the Rest.

We invite essays that interpret modernism in various social, cultural, historical, philosophical, ethnic, political and geographical registers, and which also reconsider the problem of modernity within a hemispheric frame emphasizing multiple points of view. We are particularly interested in essays that explore the shared histories of modernisms across axes of east and west, north and south. In addition, we are looking for essays that interrogate the boundaries of and interrelationships between modernism and modernity's neglected binaries, especially those between the West and the Rest. The following questions, which should not be taken as exhaustive, might serve as a guide:

1. What does it mean to expand the borders of modernism, and how is modernity implicated in this act?

2. What is the meaning of modernity in relation to modernism?

3. What is the relation between space and time in a reconfigured notion of modernism and modernity?

4. How might a notion of shared history inform our understandings of modernism and modernity?

5. What does it mean to consider the 15th century encounter between Old World and New as a "relational", rather than "nominal", moment?

6. In what ways might "race" and gender be implicated in new versions of modernism and/or modernity?

7. How might a "hemispheric" modernism be described, and what might be its significance?
8. What is the relation between "hemispheric" modernism and globalization?

9. What modern hemi/spheres might exist across axes of east and west and/or north and south, and how might recognizing them alter our understanding of modernism and modernity?

10. How might we describe the hidden nexus between inside/outside, colonial/postcolonial, national/transnational, the West and the Rest?

Abstracts should be 1 page single-spaced, Times Roman 12" font and e-mailed, along with a CV, to Cyraina Johnson-Roullier and Meg Harper at johnson.64@nd.edu, or mailed to 1614 N. Campbell Ave. , Chicago IL 60647 by January 15, 2009. Authors of abstracts selected for the collection will be notified by March 1, 2009 of the deadline for final essays.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Earl E. Fitz is Professor of Portuguese, Spanish, and Comparative Literature at Vanderbilt University, where he regularly teaches courses on Brazilian and Spanish American literature and on inter-American literature. His most recent book, written with Dr. Elizabeth Lowe, is *Translation and the Rise of Inter-American Literature* (2007).

Paul Giles is Reader in American Literature and Director of the Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford. He is a former president of the International American Studies Association and the author of *Atlantic Republic: The American Tradition in English* Literature (2007) and *Virtual Americas: Transnational Fictions and the Transatlantic Imaginary (New Americanists)* (2002).

Paweł Jędrzejko is Assistant Professor in the Department of Literatures in English and Postcolonial Studies, Institute of British and American Culture and Literature, University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland. A member of the Institute's faculty since 1995, Paweł Jędrzejko has performed the functions of the Academic Secretary of the Institute, Coordinator of the NeoLit Students' Research Society, and co-organizer of numerous conferences and scholarly events, including the 6th International Conference of the Melville Society in Szczecin, Poland in 2007. He is a co-founder and co-editor of the *Review of International American Studies*. He collaborates with the *Er(r)go Quarterly* and is responsible for the "Critical Notes", where he presents submitted books. He is author of two books: *Melville w kontekstach* [*Melville in Contexts*] (2007) and *Płynność i egzystencja* [*Liquidity and existence*] (Wydawnictwo Naukowe ExMachina / ExMachina Academic Press 2007, 2008), editor of two collective volumes, and author of numerous scholarly articles. To unwind, he goes sailing, sings sea-shanties in a vocal quintet Banana Boat, plays the guitar, or devises plans for future sailing expeditions. http://www.jedrzejko.eu

Li Jin is Vice President and Professor of English at Beijing Foreign Studies University. She is the author of two monographs and over thirty articles on American literature. Since 2004, she has been vice president of the China Association for the Study of American Literature.

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Patrick McGreevy is Director of the Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) at the American University of Beirut. He is the author of *Imagining Niagara: Meaning and the Making of Niagara Falls* (1994) and the forthcoming *Stairway to Empire: Lockport, the Erie Canal, and the Shaping of America*. He edited *America in the Middle East: The Middle East in America*, proceedings of CASAR's first international conference (2006), and is in the process of editing a volume based on CASAR's second conference, *Liberty and Justice: America and the Middle East*.

Mary Louise Pratt is Silver Professor in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at New York University, where she is also affiliated with the Program in Latin American Studies and the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. She is a former president of the Modern Language Association (2003). Routledge has just published a new, expanded edition of her well-known book, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992, 2007).

Silvio Torres-Saillant is William T. Tolley Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Humanities and Professor of English at Syracuse University, where he has directed the Latino-Latin American Studies Program for eight years. He has published *An Intellectual History of the Caribbean* (Palgrave Macmillan 2006), *The Challenges of Public Higher Education in the Hispanic Caribbean* (Markus Wiener 2004 [co-edited]), *Desde la Orilla: hacia una nacionalidad sin desalojos* (Editora Manati & Ediciones Libreria La Trinitaria 2004 [co-edited]), *Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage* Vol. 4 (Arte Publico Press 2002 [co-edited]), *El retorno de las yolas* (Ediciones Libreria La Trinitaria & Editora Manati 1999), *The Dominican Americans* (Greenwood Press 1998 [co-authored], and *Caribbean Poetics* (Cambridge University Press 1997). A Senior Editor for *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Latinos and Latinas in the United States* (Oxford University Press 2005) and an Associate Editor of Palgrave Macmillan's scholarly journal *Latino Studies*, Torres-Saillant has sat on the Board of Directors of the New York Council for the Humanities, the Delegate Assembly of the Modern Language Association, and the University of Houston's Recovering the US Hispanic Literary Heritage Project. Having occupied the 2005–2006 Wilbur Marvin Visiting Scholar post at Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, Torres-Saillant currently directs the New World Studies Series at the University of Virginia Press.

Sun Youzhong is Dean of the School of English and International Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University. He is the author of four books--*John Dewey's Social Thought, Modern American Popular Culture, Approaching America,* and *American Cultural Industry*—and the co-translator of *Individualism Old and New: Selected Works of John Dewey.* His forthcoming books include *Covering China: A Comparative Study of The New York Times and The Times, 1993–2002,* and *Classics of Western Thought* (editor). He has published numerous essays and reviews in a number of journals at home and abroad.

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— We also post calls for papers or contributions, notices, conference reports, news from IASA members, as well as book reviews.

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— Suggestions for special issues, forum topics, or similar initiatives should be addressed to the editor.

— Every submission should be accompanied by the author's name and institutional affiliation. Articles should also include an abstract of no more than ten lines.

— In principle, we accept contributions in all 'American' languages (i.e. English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.). Accompanying abstracts should be in English (and, if appropriate, in the language of the article's composition).

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