

## From Comparative Literature Today Toward Comparative Cultural Studies

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**Volume 1 Issue 3 (September 1999) Article 2****Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek,****"From Comparative Literature Today Toward Comparative Cultural Studies"**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol1/iss3/2>>

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**Abstract:** In his article "From Comparative Literature Today Toward Comparative Cultural Studies" Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek proposes a theoretical approximation of already established and current aspects of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies. "Comparative cultural studies" is conceived as an approach with three areas of theoretical content: 1) To study literature (text and/or literary system) with and in the context of culture and the discipline of cultural studies; 2) In cultural studies itself to study literature with borrowed elements (theories and methods) from comparative literature; and 3) To study culture and its composite parts and aspects in the mode of the proposed "comparative cultural studies" approach instead of the currently reigning single-language approach dealing with a topic with regard to its nature and problematics in one culture only. At the same time, comparative cultural studies would implicitly and explicitly disrupt the established hierarchy of cultural products and production similarly to the disruption cultural studies itself has performed. The suggestion is to pluralize and parallelize the study of culture without hierarchization. The article contains brief descriptions of recent volumes in comparative literature across the globe and closes with a ten-point draft proposal of the how of scholarship in comparative cultural studies.

## Steven TÖTÖSY de ZEPETNEK

### From Comparative Literature Today Toward Comparative Cultural Studies

Historically, the comparative perspective and method has proven itself indispensable in many disciplines and established itself accordingly intellectually as well as institutionally. For example, in a review of the 1997 *The Comparative Imagination: On the History of Racism, Nationalism, and Social Movements* by George M. Fredrickson, it is argued that the comparative perspective "give[s] us a good opportunity for assessing how comparative history can contribute to modern knowledge ... in *The Comparative Imagination*, Fredrickson welcomes the increasing tendency of historians of the United States to write from a "comparative perspective ... by using foreign examples to explain what is distinctive about American society" (Thompson 48; incidently, Fredrickson explains that before his turn to history, he pursued the study of comparative literature [8]). In the humanities, it has been established sufficiently and often enough that the discipline of comparative literature has intrinsically a content and form which facilitate the cross-cultural and interdisciplinary study of literature and culture. As well, it is generally accepted in scholarship that the discipline has a history that substantiated its intrinsic aims and objectives in content and in practice. Predicated on the borrowing of methods from other disciplines and on the application of the appropriated method to areas of study single-language literary study more often than not tends to neglect, the discipline is difficult to define however, because it is fragmented and pluralistic, non-self-referential and inclusive.

As a comparatist, I find it irritating that approaches and subject areas in cultural studies purport to be innovative when in fact the same areas have been studied under similar terms in comparative literature (for the argument that comparative literature historically included many aspects of current cultural studies, see, for example, Daniel and Peck 16-17; Straw 89; Tötösy De Zepetnek, "Comparative Literature and *Applied Cultural Studies*") and I consider this practice a misleading and misdirected act in scholarship. With regard to the current situation of cultural studies, it is also known among comparatists and among a critical mass of scholars working in the humanities — although rarely acknowledged publicly — that the discipline of comparative literature is rich in its history with regard to both theory and practice of much of what cultural studies is about today. Areas of study such as popular culture or film and literature have a long history of incisive work in comparative literature, for example. It is true, however, that cultural studies often presents new theoretical approaches (more often than not borrowed similarly to comparative literature), methods, terminologies, and rhetorical content which when applied result in innovative work in the study of culture. In consequence, I accept the currency of cultural studies and I am aware of the intellectual and institutional difficulties comparative literature, in contrast, is experiencing globally while cultural studies has acquired both intellectual and institutional standing. Thus, for political reasons but which are at the same time parallel to intellectual bases and considerations, I intend to explore the viability of enriching and developing both fields of study, that of comparative literature and that of cultural studies. This theory construction involves the merger of aspects of comparative literature and cultural studies into a new approach I designate as "comparative cultural studies."

For reasons implicit in my statement above, namely that comparative literature has had contributed significantly to literary studies, I argue that it also has much to offer to cultural studies. In my discussion, I begin with a description of some aspects of the current situation of comparative literature from which I will then proceed to a draft proposal of a framework for "comparative cultural studies." In principle, comparative cultural studies is conceived as an approach—to be developed eventually to a full-fledged Framework—containing (for now) three areas of theoretical content: 1) To study literature (text and/or literary system) with and in the context of culture and the discipline of cultural studies; 2) In cultural studies itself to study literature with borrowed elements (theories and methods) from comparative literature; and 3) To study culture and its composite parts and aspects in the mode of the proposed "comparative cultural studies" approach instead of the currently reigning single-language approach dealing with a topic with regard to its nature and problematics in one culture only. In this schema of theoretical components the study of literature is not privileged although for now because of my own interests I confer focus on literature. In other words, the discipline of comparative cultural studies would implicitly and explicitly disrupt the established hierarchy of cultural products and production similarly to the disruption cultural studies itself has performed. Among others, the suggestion is to pluralize and parallelize the study of culture without hierarchization.

With regard to the history of the discipline of comparative literature, it is surprising that a truly international and synthetic history of the discipline—a description of its history within the larger field of literary studies as well as the history of theories and methodologies within comparative literature and with a description of the discipline's institutional history and making—is yet to be written. Curiously, apart from usually short descriptive studies such as chapter two in Ulrich Weisstein's 1968 *Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* or chapter one in Claudio Guillén's 1993 *The Challenge of Comparative Literature* or the chapter "Zu Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Komparatistik" in Peter V. Zima's and Johann Strutz's 1992 *Komparatistik: Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft* or brief descriptions of comparative literature within national borders such as

those in Tania Franco Carvalhal's 1997 *Comparative Literature World Wide: Issues and Methods* or as in Armando Gnisci's and Francesca Sinopoli's 1995 *Comparare i comparatismi. La comparatistica letteraria oggi in Europa e nel mondo*, the history of the discipline is available only in fragments. There are also some volumes such as Arno Kappler's 1976 *Der literarische Vergleich. Beiträge zu einer Vorgeschichte der Komparatistik* or specific histories such as Peter Theodor Leithmann's 1977 *Moriz Carriere and the Development of Comparative Literature* or Zoran Konstantinović's 1988 *Vergleichen-de Literaturwissenschaft. Bestandsaufnahme und Ausblicke*. However, these studies, similar to the article-length type I mention above, offer a partial and limited view of the history of the discipline at best (for selected bibliographies of work in comparative literature, see Tötösy de Zepetnek, "Bibliography for Work in Comparative" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/clcbibliography>>, "Multilingual Bibliography" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/comparativeliteraturebooks>>).

There are "supplementary" types of material which would also be important for a synthetic international history of comparative literature. For example, personal histories such as Lionel Gossmann's and Mihail I. Spariosu's 1994 *Building a Profession: Autobiographical Perspectives on the Beginnings of Comparative Literature in the United States* (with articles by Wellek, Levin, Lange, Greene, Rosenmeyer, Holdheim, Balakian, Guerard, Hart, Furst, Perloff, Lindenberger, Gillespie, Corngold, Gossmann, Spariosu) or descriptions of various conferences in comparative literature such as Marko Juvan's "Thematics and Intellectual Content: The XVth Triennial Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association in Leiden" (<<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1003>>) or my own "Comparative Literature and *Applied Cultural Studies*". As well, there is a marked need of institutional histories of comparative literature in both national and international contexts (for a selection of sources, see Kirby 197-203).

The usual process of presenting histories of comparative literature in all of the above mentioned volumes and in all others is in the context of and limited to national borders, that is, comparative literature in Germany, in France, in the United States, in China, etc. While this is the approach I would like to circumvent in an international history of comparative literature I am working on now, I realize that it is indeed easier to proceed in the national model. And when I myself, in this article, present examples of a renaissance of comparative literature in various "peripheral" countries (see below), I present these examples by listing countries (because it is easier to do so). However, I would like to point out with utmost conviction that this is not the best approach. A more "comparatist" model would be to discuss the histories of comparative literature with regard to their cultural and regional settings, their sources of theory and method, and so on. One useful approach would be, I propose, to present a description of the history of the discipline based on a regional approach where "region" is understood as a specific cultural environment, a system of communication incl. a specific environment of scholarship historically and linguistically determined (and I hope to be able to present such an international and synthetic history of the discipline in my forthcoming work).

In my observation, compressed here in a brief overview, the following developments can be observed in comparative literature from a global perspective of the last ten to fifteen years: 1) The appropriation of theory by cultural studies and English and the consequent reduction of the area of activity by comparative literature, tied to the diminishing institutional stability of the discipline of comparative literature in the traditional centres of the discipline (USA and Europe); 2) The development of a comparative European literature; 3) The emerging of comparative literature in "peripheral" geo-cultural spaces of scholarship; 4) The "Americanization" of comparative literature; and 5) The potential development of comparative literature with/within new media. In the following, I will proceed in my discussion with a focus on selected points from the above five points, with the plan to eventually develop my discussion and proposals in forthcoming publications. With regard to my second observation, namely the development of a comparative European literature, I take my point of departure with George Steiner. When Steiner gave his inaugural lecture as Lord Widenfeld Professor of European Comparative Literature at Oxford University in 1994, he presented a paper entitled "What is Comparative Literature?" First, Steiner described how "every act of reception of significant form, in language, in art, in music, is comparative" (1) and he argued that "from their inception, literary studies and the arts of interpretation have been comparative" (3). True, especially today, after literary theory has become mainstream and in the era of cultural studies, this position is hard to refute. Steiner proceeds to say that "I take comparative literature to be, at best, an exact and exacting art of reading, a style of listening to oral and written acts of language which privileges certain components in these acts. Such components are not neglected in any mode of literary study, but they are, in comparative literature, privileged" (9). If I understand Steiner correctly, he is referring here to that traditional form of comparative literature where the knowledge of foreign languages for the scholar of comparative literature is an essential factor. Fair enough and I agree with him. He then outlines three specific areas which are essential features of the discipline in his opinion: 1) "It aims to elucidate the quiddity, the autonomous core of historical and present 'sense of the world' (Husserl's *Weltsinn*) in the language and to clarify, so far as is possible, the conditions, the strategies, the limits of reciprocal understanding and misunderstanding as between languages. In brief, comparative literature is an art of understanding centred in the eventuality and defeats of translation" (10), 2) the "primacy of the matter of translation in comparative literature relates directly to what I take to be the second focus" (11), and 3) "Thematic studies form a third 'centre of gravity' in comparative literature" (13).

Steiner's argument, clearly, hinges on the knowledge of foreign languages and on the matter of subject matter, that is, themes, which are universal, at least in principle. While I agree with Steiner that this knowledge is an essential and basic aspect of the discipline, I find his argument seriously lacking. For, as we know, the knowledge of foreign languages is not necessarily a privilege of comparatists, i.e., there are many scholars in literary studies in English departments or in other national language departments who do speak and work with other languages. In my opinion, the distinctive feature of comparative literature is *cumulative*, that is, including interlinked factors such as the knowledge of foreign languages with an inclusionary ideology (the attention to *alterité*) tied to precise methodology (for an elaboration, see Tötösy de Zepetnek, *Comparative Literature* 13-23). Curiously, Steiner does not mention methodology either explicitly or implicitly in his argumentation and thus this part of his position is hardly defensible in the present situation of the discipline.

In the U.S., the much discussed Charles Bernheimer 1995 volume *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (with articles by Appiah, Pratt, Riffaterre, Apter, Bernheimer, Brooks, Chow, Culler, Damrosch, Fox-Genovese, Greene, Higonnet, Lionnet, Perloff, Russo, Siebers, Weinstein) is in several ways similar to Steiner's arguments. With particular attention to what I find of importance, namely theory and methodology, the majority of contributors to the volume do not mention methodology either implicitly or explicitly. Of course, the main and most important feature of the volume is its aspects of and call for politically based ideology of inclusion. And the question of methodology does not appear in most comparative literature textbooks or works of today either. Perhaps this is for the reason that comparative literature, either as the translation of literatures and cultures (as in a conceptual and ideological translation and/or as an actual translation) or as a cross-cultural inclusionary ideology and practice is assumed to be a methodology per se. While I accept this as a historical argument and as an essential characteristic in the same historical context, I propose that this is not enough to justify or practice the discipline today. And the fact that the comparative approach without explicit methodology is not enough to convince scholars today is evident, for instance, in an article entitled "Why Comparisons Are Odious" by the editor of *Critical Inquiry*, W.J.T. Mitchell, in 1996, in his response to the 1995 topical issue of *World Literature Today*, *Comparative Literature: States of the Art*. I would even argue that Steiner's proposal of a comparative European literature—as coming from an internationally reputed scholar whose work otherwise without doubt has been influential—manifests in some ways regression. In contrast, Hugo Dyserinck situated comparative literature a decade earlier, in 1985, in two major areas, "1) A comparative history of literature, involving the mutual relations, as well as the similarities and differences, between individual literatures" and "2) A comparative theory and methodology of literature, dealing with literary theories developed in individual countries (or linguistic areas) and with corresponding methods of literary criticism" (xvii). In principle, the second point is closer to my own contention that in comparative literature one ought to state at all times a clearly and precisely described method which then is applied. And there are of course some good examples of such as in Dyserinck's theoretical and applied work, *Imagology*, which has evolved since its early days in the 1960s and 1970s into a full-blown field of *imagology* with many studies where the framework has been applied successfully (see Joep Leersen's *Imagology* material and bibliography

<<http://www.imagologica.eu>>). There are some areas, however, where Steiner's argumentation corresponds to both Dyserinck's first area of comparative literature (literary history) and to Susan Bassnett's or André Lefevere's proposal that the discipline may be saved by such areas of study, among others, as the study of translation: see Bassnett's 1993 *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* and Lefevere's 1992 *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context*. In Steiner's proposal this is located in the "dissemination and reception of literary works across time and place" (11), further specified in the study of "who reads, who could read what and when?" (12). This area of scholarship, indeed, I find promising, especially when defined as the area of "sociology and history of reading and readership" I propose in my own work (see, for example, Tötösy de Zepetnek, *Comparative Literature* 43-78).

The notion of a comparative European literature is also prominent in French-language comparative literature. Among the publications of recent years, in particular Béatrice Didier's 1998 *Précis de Littérature Européenne* and Didier Souiller's and Vladimir Troubetzkoy's 1997 *Littérature comparée* propagate said notion championed by Steiner. *Précis de Littérature Européenne* is divided into sections of methods, space, periods, and genres. In the first section, methods, the volume contains several articles discussing in various ways and from several points of view the notion of a the theory of comparative European literature and the topics range from the problematics of the study of European literature, the history of a European literature, the comparative history of myth in European literature, the question of European literature and social classes, European cultures and interdisciplinarity, the publishing history, libraries, and the reading of literature in Europe, and the history of the teaching of literatures in Europe. As the editor of the volume, Didier argues for a comparative European literature. However, the definition of a European literature encompasses mainstream literatures and cultures (which I would call canonization one) and within the mainstream canonized texts and authors (which I would call canonization two). There are a few articles which deal with marginal, minor, or peripheral literatures and cultures in Europe, such as Jiddish and Arabic and there are two articles which argue "pour une littérature qui ne se limite pas à celle des 'langues courantes'" (185) and for the "place des littératures régionales en Europe" (191). Overall however, the general tone of the articles emanates

from a national approach to literatures and cultures and the notion that in a unified Europe each literature and culture becomes "regional" is untouched and implicitly rejected. The approach and tone in the Souiller and Troubetzkoy volume is similar. In other words, there is an implicit and at times explicit hierarchy in the approach, which then stretches also to the methodologies discussed and presented. Here, comparative literature is based on the premise of national literatures which then can be and should be compared to each other and that the comparisons rest on the canon of mainstream literatures and cultures as well as on the canon of specific authors writing in the mainstream languages and cultures. Granted, it is difficult to argue for a divorce of literature from national bases and it takes some work to do this: Souiller and Troubetzkoy and the contributors to the Didier volume offer studies where the focus on national literatures — compared or not — is mediated by attention to genres or themes, for instance. However, overall both volumes are in a traditional mode of literary study and they do not take into account the newer developments of cultural studies, feminism, multiculturalism, or any such. There are also a number of programs in comparative literature where the notion of comparative European literature is established.

With regard to my observation that comparative European literature is, in principle, based on the premise of national literatures and that this represents anew an entrapment in the national paradigm, there is a further aspect I would like to mention briefly. This is the problem of national self-referentiality within the scholarship of comparative European literature. For example, in the above mentioned volumes of Souiller and Troubetzkoy and Didier, such volumes as Margaret R. Higonnet's 1994 *Borderwork: Feminist Engagements with Comparative Literature* (with articles by Lionnet, Brodzki, Rajan, Metzger, Cullens, Vlasopolos, Higonnet, Hirsch, Miller, Gölz, Malti-Douglas, Gaard, Goodwin, Clark, Snaider Lanser, and Nnaemeka) are not referred to. Obviously, I am not criticizing the fact that a particular text was not cited. Rather, my observation brings me to the following additional factor with regard to national self-referentiality in scholarship, comparative European or other. Whether it is German or French oriented comparative literature, most work concentrates on "home-grown" sources, that is, in the case of French works on French sources and in the case of German works on German sources while North American (U.S. and Canada) works pay attention to at least mainstream French and German sources (although rarely to any other). I think it is precisely in comparative literature where the notion of "theory approximation" should be a standard: when a theoretical framework, method, or theme is discussed, attention must be paid to similar and/or analogous frameworks in a range of languages and cultures (see Tötösy de Zepetnek, *Comparative Literature* 215-20).

In principle, I do not object to a comparative European literature if it constitutes method, but I do object to it if it is implicitly or explicitly based on perceived or real hierarchies and with the "national" agenda. In an odd twist, there is further potential in comparative European literature and that is to counteract the often criticized Eurocentrism of comparative literature itself. Although I did not find any reference to this most obvious aspect of a comparative European literature, I assume that the focus on a truly inclusive study of all European literatures would make the criticism of Eurocentrism in this specific new designation redundant and paradoxical. At the same time — as with reference to what I said above about national self-referentiality in scholarship and the national basis of a comparative European literature — a new geo-political focus no matter how much on the surface aesthetically oriented would also include somewhat of a logical lapsus with regard to the established parameters of comparative literature; regardless of the truth of the criticism that the discipline — or rather some of its practitioners — have indeed often been and are Eurocentric.

Next, I would like to briefly elaborate on my third observation of comparative literature today, namely that there is an emerging of comparative literature in some corners of the globe, geo-cultural spaces which in the politics of education and scholarship one would understand as "peripheral" areas. I would like to note that in some but not all cases this "peripheral" situation of education and scholarship overlaps with economics and technology while in some it does not. The said emerging of comparative literature is of some interest from several points of view, such as the sociology of knowledge, the current situation and history of literary studies, and the general status and situation of the humanities, etc., and including for and in the history of the discipline itself. This emerging appears to take place despite Bassnett's statement in her *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* that "today, comparative literature in one sense is dead" (47). This development — perhaps as a quasi implicit structural response to the Anglo-American situation as perceived by Bassnett — is not occurring in the traditional geographical and cultural loci and mainstream of the discipline such as the United States, France, or Germany (although, I should add in a context of differentiation and with an eye on the particular that disrupts generalizations, some universities in states of the former East Germany such as Halle-Wittenberg, Frankfurt an der Oder, Frankfurt am Main, and Erfurt appear to be interested in establishing new chairs of comparative literature). While Bassnett may be right that comparative literature in the traditional centres — France, Germany, the United States — is undergoing both intellectual and institutional changes and a certain loss of intellectual as well as institutional position owing to factors such as the takeover of theory by English, the impact of cultural studies, the diminishing number of comparative literature professorships, etc., this loss of presence is occurring in the "centres" of the discipline and with regard to its own natural context of Eurocentrism and Euro-USAmerican centre. Clearly, Bassnett's pronouncement of the death of comparative literature is exactly from that Eurocentrism she otherwise attempts to subvert and to oppose in her

work. And thus, curiously, Bassnett pays no attention to the strong development of the discipline and the promise it holds outside of the discipline's traditional centres: in the last two decades comparative literature has shown much promise in some countries and cultures where the discipline has not been very strong or, in some cases, in existence at all before. As I mentioned earlier, interestingly, while the traditional centres of the discipline — the *ménage-à-trois* of France, Germany, and the United States — are at best able to maintain a status quo of the discipline, in Mainland China, Taiwan, Japan, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, universities in the states of the former East Germany, etc., the discipline is emerging and developing strongly and this can be gauged by the emergence of new comparative literature journals, new chairs in comparative literature, a marked increase in publications, etc. And it is not without reason and in my view well based and logical reasons that colleagues from Spain and Italy, for example, write to me that in their view the insistence of the International Comparative Literature Association to maintain English and French as the official languages of the association is wrong, colonial, outdated, etc., because if French than why not Spanish, German, Chinese, and all the other languages. Consequently, they argue, only English should be the official language—as our present *lingua franca*—with many other languages allowed for presentation if there is an audience and interest. Following my argumentation in relation to my above third observation of the current situation of comparative literature, namely that we must pay attention to the situation of the discipline of comparative literature not only in the centres but also (or perhaps mainly) in the "peripheries," here are a few examples of recent work published in comparative literature in the "peripheries":

In Portugal, the Portuguese Comparative Literature Association brought out its second series of publications emanating from the recently founded annual comparative literature conferences, Margarida L. Losa's, Ismênia de Sousa's, and Gonçalo Vilas-Boas's 1996 *Literatura Comparada: Os Novos Paradigmas* (with articles by Lopes, Carlos, Clüver, Segers, Ramalheite, Opitz, Cadete, Martins, Delgado Mingochio, Braga Neves, Sousa, Capinha, Coutinho, Silva, Pires, Ferreira Duarte, Lam, Carvalho Homem, Barrento, Almeida Flor, Bastos, Teixeira Anacleto, Sequeira, Ferreira Hörster, Carvalho, Hüsngen, Fátima Gil, Keating, Schmidt, Rusch, Viehoff, Zurbach, Schreier, Halász, Esteves, Leal, Ribeiro, Ibsch, Tötös de Zepetnek, Seixo, Paiva Monteiro, Kushner, Moser, Fokkema, Bulger, Silva, Grossegeesse, Reis, Carvalhal, Esperança Pina, Laranjinha, Barros Dias, Moreira, Guincho, Lago, Alves, Carneiro, Simões, Jorge, Sarmento, Alves, Coelho, Novakovi, Azevedo, Cordeiro, Silva, Matos Frias, Gil, Conrado, Pina, Lemos, Medeiros, Cunha-Pereira).

In Brazil, we have Tania Franco Carvalhal's 1997 *Comparative Literature World Wide: Issues and Methods* (with articles on comparative literature in Brazil by Souza and Miranda, in France by Chevrel, in Canada by Kushner, in Romania by Cornea, in Portugal by Buescu, in Uruguay by Behar, in Hungary by Szegedy-Maszák, in Korea by Hyun, in Argentina by Palermo, in the Low countries by Van Gorp and Neubauer, in Greece by Siaflekis, in China by Yue, in Spain by Gual, and in the U.S. by Gillespie,). It appears that comparatists in Brazil are also very active with annual conferences for the discipline. As well, Brazilian comparatists take an active role within the executive of the International Comparative Literature Association.

In Spain — a particularly active area of comparative literature today — several books and manuals of comparative literature are of note. There are, for example, Dolores Romero López's 1997 *Orientaciones em literatura comparada* (with articles by Bassnett, Chevrel, Culler, Fokkema, Gillespie, Kushner, Marino, Prawer, Remak, Swiggers, Tötös de Zepetnek), Maria José Vega's and Neus Carbonell's 1998 *Literatura comparada. Principios y métodos* (with articles by Texte, Croce, Gayley, Baldensperger, Van Tieghem, Wellek, Remak, Fokkema, Ruprecht, Laurette, Chaitin, Chevrier, Ashcroft-Gareth-Tiffin, Gnisci, Sniader Lanser, Lefevere, Tötös de Zepetnek), Dolores Romero López's 1998 *Una relectura del "fin de siglo" en el marco de la literatura comparada: teoría y praxis* (1998), and Claudio Guillén's *Múltiples moradas. Ensayo de literatura comparada* (for a review of these volumes, see Zambrano

<<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1039>>), Darío Villanueva's 1994 *Avances en... teoría de la literatura* (with articles by Villanueva, Iglesias Santos, Jauss, Manteiga Pouse, Cabo Aseguinolaza, Casas, Even-Zohar). Although not specifically comparative literature, most articles in Montserrat Iglesias Santos's 1999 *Teoría de los Polisistemas* are located in comparative literature (with articles by Dimić, Even-Zohar, Lambert, Robyns, Shavit, Sheffy, Toury, Yahalom). As well, the University of Huelva publishes a new comparative literature journal since 1997, *Exemplaria: Revista Internacional de Literatura Comparada*.

In Argentina, we have the special issue of *Filología* 30.2 (1997), *Literaturas comparadas* (with translated articles by Antelo, Bernheimer, Gilman, Rodríguez Pérsico, Tötös de Zepetnek, Mignolo, Aguilar, Campos, Rabaté, Merkel, Spiller, Matamoro, Gárate, Chicote, Guido, Iribarren, Gamero, and Muschietti). The volume is interesting because it contains a mixture of foreign and domestic authors while most other such volumes I cited above contain translated work. Further, there are the volumes with selected papers from the second and third conferences of the AALC: Asociación Argentina de Literatura Comparada of 1997 and 1998.

In Australia there is the new University of Sydney World Literature Series with volume one by Mabel Lee's and Meng Hua's 1997 *Cultural Dialogue and Misreading* (with articles by Gillespie, Cornea, Dev, Valdés, Fokkema, Ersu, Yue, Gu, Qian, Siaflekis, Findeisen, Lee, Qin, Didier, Wang, Szegedy-Maszák, Coutinho, Blodgett, Boeing, Veit, Van Gorp, Shen, Zhang, Detrie, Moura, Neubauer, Wang,

Tanaka, Schmeling, Seixo, Bessière, Losa, Tao, Kaes, Larsen, Segers, D'Haen, Meng, Klein, André, Tötösy de Zepetnek, Hyun, Valdés, Carvalhal, Kelson, Sondrup, Song, Guo, Cao) and volume two is Mabel Lee's and A.D. Syrokomla-Stefanowska's 1998 *Literary Intercrossings: East Asia and the West* (with articles by Gibbins, Hasegawa, Yihuang, Leal, Lee, Lee, Lee, Quinzhang, Matsui, Nakayama, Odagiri, Ota, Qian, Sugawara, Takachi, Walker, Wang, Wang, Wong, Yip, Yoon). Further volumes in the series are planned.

In Holland—a traditionally strong area of comparative literature—we have the 1996 *Festschrift* in honour of comparatist Douwe Fokkema by Harald Hendrix, Joost Kloek, Sophie Levie, and Will van Peer (eds.). *The Search for a New Alphabet: Literary Studies in a Changing World* (with articles by Andringa, Bertens, Bessière, Behar, Boeft, Bons, Brandsma, Bronzwaer, Carvalhal, Chang, Chevrel, Coetze, Dev, Dijkstra, Doleel, Enkvist, Gillespie, Glas, Goedegebuure, Gorp, Gräbe, Ibsch, Janaszek-Ivaniková, Kushner, Lambert, Lange, Lernhout, Livingston, Miner, Moerbeek, Mooij, Musarra-Schroeder, Neubauer, Ben-Porat, Rigney, Rüter, Runte, Schmidt, Segers, Seixo, Shen, Steinmetz, Stralen, Strydom, Suleiman, Szegedy-Maszák, Thüsen, Tötösy de Zepetnek, Turk, Valdés, Coller, Vervliet, Viehoff, Vlasselaers, Wang, Weisgerber, Wesseling, Wiersma, Yuan, Yue, Zwaan).

In Mainland China and Hong Kong — among publications in Western languages — we have Yue Daiyun's and Alain Le Pichon's 1995 *La Licorne et le dragon. Les Malentendus dans la recherche de l'universel* (with articles by Yue, Eco, Le Goff, Rey, Danchin, Pichon, Hua, Peng, Shen, Tang, Wang, Sun, Chen, Zhou, Sun, Wang, Teng, Tang, Zhou, Qian, Chun) and the 1995 volume *New Perspectives: A Comparative Literature Yearbook* (with articles by Liu, Yue, Lee, Mi, Jun, Lee, Ding, Tatlow; for a recent description of the situation of comparative literature in Taiwan and the Mainland today, see also Tötösy de Zepetnek, "The Study of Literature in China and Taiwan").

In Italy we have Armando Gnisci's and Franca Sinopoli's 1995 *Comparare i comparatismi. La comparatistica letteraria oggi in Europa e nel mondo* and 1997 *Manuale storico di letteratura comparata*. The 1995 Italian volume is also of some interest for the following reason. It is common knowledge that in Italy the mastery or even interest in foreign languages is limited (perhaps even more than in the United States) and thus the publication of anthologies of comparatist texts serves at least two purposes: it supports the suggestion that the interest in comparativism as an international discipline in the age of globalization makes sense and it suggests — via the presentation of the texts in Italian — that the local aspect of scholarship, that is, the study of the international via the local is also with purpose and of intellectual and pragmatic content and potential results. The 1995 volume contains articles on comparative literature in Latin America by Carvalhal, in Japan by Kutsukake, in China by Xie, in Latin America again by Badin, in Italy by Sinopoli, and with thematic articles on imagology by Dyserinck, on the interliterary process by Durisin, on postcolonialism by Neri, and on the International Comparative Literature Association and its literary history volumes by Pál. As to the pragmatically important genre of manuals for the teaching of comparative literature, Gnisci's and Sinopoli's 1997 *Manuale storico di letteratura comparata* is of note. The editors provide their Italian readership with a historical perspective of comparative literature from the earliest times (Texte, Croce, Van Tieghem) through the discipline's golden age (Wellek, Etiemble, Remak), through its present tense (Miner, Bernheimer, Yue, Gnisci). The volume contains also a list of comparative literature handbooks and incisive articles since 1931 to the present, a list of the proceedings of International Comparative Literature Association congresses, a list of published volumes of the International Comparative Literature's *A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages*, a list of major comparative literature learned journals, and a list of bibliographies of comparative literature. Similarly to Iglesias Santos's *Teoría de los Polisistemas* cited above, Aldo Nemesio's 1990 *L'esperienza del testo* (with articles by Nemesio, Tötösy de Zepetnek, Schmidt, Larsen and Seilman, Hayward, Whitten and Graesser, Roberts and Kreuz, Miall and Kuiken, Dixon and Bortolussi, Goetz and Sadoski, Halász, Andringa, László), too, contains much comparative literature material.

In Hungary we have *neohelicon: acta comparationis litterarum unversarum*, a journal that over the last two decades issued several state-of-the-art volumes about the discipline of comparative literature. Its latest such issue is 24.2 (1997) which contains articles by the usual line-up of established comparatists (Balakian, Gnisci, Runte, Strelka, Szili, Valdés, Weissstein, Zima) but a few newer names found themselves also into the volume (Friggieri, Sexl, Tötösy de Zepetnek).

In Austria—a country where in recent years substantial efforts have been made in educational policy, university restructuring, funding, etc., to internationalize its scholarship—a recent volume of interest is Norbert Bachleitner's, Alfred Noe's, and Hans-Gert Roloff's 1997 *Beträge zu Komparatistik und Sozialgeschichte der Literatur*. The volume is a *Festschrift* in honour of the Austrian-Italian comparatist Alberto Martino. It is divided into sections of history of reception (with articles by Gemert, Heydemann, Dilk, Bachleitner, Belski), translation (with articles by Knape, Noe, Kanduth, Meloni, Ley, Pfister, Kolb), traditional comparisons of texts (with articles by Pol, Michele, Costazza, Hahl, Sagarra), papers on the social history of literature (with articles by Heger, Hinterndorfer, Mannack, Wittmann, Vignazia, Martens, Fischer, Gugler, Jezek, Göpfert, Girardi, Raponi, Battafarano), and a section on literary theory and comparative literature (with articles by McCarthy, Bertozzi, Rossel, Gillespie, Konstantinović, Roloff). We also have Peter V. Zima's and Johann Strutz's 1992 *Komparatistik: Einführung in die Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft*. It is somewhat difficult to classify Zima's and Strutz's volume as "Austrian" (and thus peripheral) as the volume was published in Germany for a German readership predicated on the fact that it is in Germany where there are a number of



comparative literature programs while in Austria only in Vienna and Innsbruck (in Klagenfurt there is no degree offered in the discipline); however, since both scholars work at the University of Klagenfurt, it should be made known that we are dealing with a different cultural source than that of Germany. The volume is divided into chapters introduction, the history of comparative literature (with focus on US-American, British, French, German, Marxist approaches), comparative literature as a theory dialogism, the typological approach, the genetic approach, reception theories, translation studies, periods and genres, and an example of regional comparative literature. Strutz and Zima published a collected volume previously in 1991 *Komparatistik als Dialog* (with articles by Haderlap, Kofler, Zima, Reiningger, Kucher, Slibar, Giacomini, Guagnini, Kosuta, Sequi, Gsteiger, Grüning, Strutz.), a precursor of their 1992 volume in that the volume deals with questions relating to the triangle of the cultures of Southern Austria, Slovenia, Switzerland, and Italy.

At the same time, the traditional centres of comparative literature have also produced some new works in the discipline and, at least intellectually, this scholarship suggests that all is not as desperate as we may assume. For example, the Bernheimer volume I referred to above has made a major impact across the globe which, in turn, suggests the impact US-American comparative literature is able to claim. But to deduce optimism from the production of influential work in the USA, Canada, France, or Germany would perhaps be pushing one's luck, at least in my opinion. To use anecdotal evidence, here is one example: "While earning her M.A. in comparative literature, Louise Rafkin never imagined that she'd end up cleaning houses for a living" (11). In addition to some of the volumes published in the traditional centres of the discipline I already referred to above, I should mention Yves Chevrel's 1992 *L'Etudiant chercheur en littérature*, a good manual because despite its general title, the volume is clearly comparatist. Chevrel's translated volume — by Farida Elizabeth Dahab — *Comparative Literature Today: Methods and Perspectives* should also be noted as it can serve as a good text book for US-American and Canadian students of comparative literature. As to manuals in the context of useful pedagogical tools for comparative literature, the single U.S. volume of recent years is John T. Kirby's 1998 *The Comparative Reader: A Handlist of Basic Reading in Comparative Literature* (with contributions by Allert, Anderson, Benhamou, Broden, Bullock, Clowes, Dixon, Dubois, Elia, Freeman, Györgyey, Hart, Hsieh, Hughes, Johnson, Kirby, Lamb, Lawton, Leitch, Mancing, Merrell, Mvuyekure, Peterson, Poster, Sagar, Schiappa, Schrag, Scott, Sekine, Shallcross, Sharpley-Whiting, Stephenson, Tamburri, Thompson, White, Zhang). The volume is divided into selected bibliographies of national literatures (further divided into periods), literary and critical theory, various methodologies such as psychological, semiotic, etc., approaches, media and literature incl. film, postcolonial literatures, and an interesting chapter on the professional and institutional aspects of the discipline of comparative literature. In addition to volumes I already mentioned above, in the U.S. we also have the 1995 special issue on comparative literature of the journal *World Literature Today* (with articles by Kadir, Perloff, Loriggio, Balakian, Vuller, Brodsky Lacour, Melas, Isstaif, Komar, Greene, Hutcheon, Hassan, Zhao).

In Canada — a cultural space that may be considered peripheral or as a centre, depending — we have the 1996 special issue of the *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature / Revue Canadienne de Littérature Comparée* (with articles by Dimić, Brooks, Cavell, Hutcheon, Moser, Fokkema, Gnisci, Nitri, Wang, Gálik, Teleky, Tötösy de Zepetnek,) and my own 1998 *Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, Application* (although published in Holland). And there is also the 1997 collected volume edited by Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek, Milan V. Dimić, and Irene Sywenky, *Comparative Literature Now: Theories and Practice / La Littérature comparée à l'heure actuelle. Théories et réalisations*: chapter one "Comparative Literature and Literary Theory" with articles by Bessière, Birus, Brady, Chevrel, Dev, Dugast, Fokkema, Gálik, Gu, Kao, Kushner, Losada Goya, Margolin, Mourão, Ribeiro, Saramago, Schmeling, Skulj, Tatlow, Van Peer, Wägenbaur, Yue; chapter two "Literary History and Histories of Literature" with articles by Beeler, Berg, Brix, Camps, Cornea, Dahab, Dubost, Esterhammer, Foste, Friedman, Hart, Leersen, Lobo, Martin, Rao and Rao, Veit, Wang; chapter three "Genres and Textual Properties" with articles by Duarte, Engel, Fachin, Kolesch, Leung, Moser, Palleiro, Tanteri; chapter four "The Novel and Other Prose" with articles by André, Chen, Larsen, Moyal, Oliveira, Stovel, Van Gorp, Walker, Wallace, Wolf; chapter five "Drama and Literature and the Other Arts" with articles by Aaltonen, Ádám, Barban, Caprioli, Grammatas, Kürtösi, Polit, Schwarz, Solomon; chapter six "Literature and Film" with articles by Avrutin, Barrett, Danan, Oliveira, Kline, Thornton; chapter seven "Literature and Technology" with articles by Baker, Beeler, Campe, Schmitz-Emans, Zhang; and chapter eight "A Bibliography of Theories, Methods, and Histories of Comparative Literature" by Tötösy de Zepetnek (for a review of the volume see Grabovszki, "New Work" <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1333/>>).

In Germany, there is Reinhold Göring's 1997 *Heterotopia: Lektüren einer interkulturellen Literaturwissenschaft*. The volume is interesting because the author refrains from naming comparative literature—there are brief references to the discipline on pages 27, 34, 53, and 65 — the general concept of the book as well as the applications to primary texts of the proposed approach are comparatist. Perhaps the reason for the author's understated references to comparative literature is a result of his acute observation of the discipline's often preoccupation of doing comparative literature by default only. That is, the situation when the framework and its applications are based on and in the bases on national literatures, one would have better success in the academe. And there are Carsten Zelle's 1998 *Kurze Bücherkunde für Literaturwissenschaftler* and his 1999 *Allgemeine*

*Literaturwissenschaft*. The former contains a good section on comparative literature as well as it contains material about new media and the study of literature; the latter is a collection of selected articles about the history and contemporary situation of the specifically German *Allgemeine Literaturwissenschaft* (general literature) including specific examples of the subject matter taught at the universities of Essen and Siegen but also extending to the brief example of Vanderbilt University (with articles by Link-Heer, Brodsky Lacour, Zelle, Link-Heer, Zima, Schmidt, Roloff, Gendolla, Pfeiffer, Glaser, Riha, Franke and McCarthy). Interestingly, at least one author (Gendolla) discusses the question of the study of general literature in the context of new media and technology in more detail.

Last, I elaborate briefly on my fifth observation of the current situation of comparative literature, namely the potential of new media, that is, specifically the internet and the world wide web and their impact on scholarship (on this, see also, e.g., Grabovszky, "The Impact"

<<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1040>>). Here is a quote from a recent article by Robert Lepage, the internationally renowned Québécois-Canadian playwright who recognized early the advantages and positive meaning of a global view for his own plays, as well as contemporary Québécois-Canadian literature as a whole. What he is saying is relevant to my discussion by analogy: "the peripheral situation of Québécois-Canadian literature is similar in concept to the marginalized situation of the humanities and comparative literature in turn within the humanities today. Lepage argues that the world wide web and "its spread is part of the reason why Quebecers are so abruptly questioning their identity and coming to such new conclusions. New technology leaves no room for xenophobia. How can Quebec sell its Internet products if it continues to have an isolationist image? And if you send me an e-mail, and you don't have all the accents and the c and the little hat [circumflex] — what is so French about it? So a lot of people decided to write in English. These things may seem trivial, but they are hints of a much bigger shift" (69). There is no doubt in my mind that the world wide web and the internet provide possibilities for the study of culture, including comparative literature and the proposed comparative cultural studies and that, in my opinion, scholars in the humanities must exploit. Unfortunately, there is much Ludditism among scholars in the humanities including comparatists while scholars in cultural studies tend to be more interested and competent (for an example of the discussion of this resistance in the humanities, see Norbert Gabriel's *Kulturwissenschaften und Neue Medien. Wissensvermittlung im digitalen Zeitalter*). With regard to the world wide web and the discipline of comparative literature, websites in full text and open access, there are only a few in existence, for example The *Bryn Mawr Review of Comparative Literature* (publishes book reviews only) or *Surfaces: Electronic Journal / Revue électronique*. In comparative literature and culture there is one such journal in existence—print or online—the recently founded journal *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*.

Granted, there are some infrastructural problems, too, which affect the situation of the web and the internet in general: there are two such problems of major impact: one is the obvious problem of different technological development and availabilities among regions of the world and the second one is the infrastructure of telephone line providers and its economics. Technologically advanced societies of Europe are seriously handicapped in the development of the internet in comparison with the U.S. and Canada for the simple reason that local calls are expensive in Europe while they are much less to minimal in English-speaking North America. Clearly, in Europe the monopoly of the state telephone companies will have to be modified and this has started to begin: whether it will evolve to similarly easy access to telephone lines or other ways of web access — such as cable TV — remains to be seen. And there is also the perception of scholars in the humanities of the emergence and significance of web journals. It is true that some web journals do not have a comparable scholarly content traditional hard-copy journals offer. But this can be changed and the time constraints and financial constraints hard-copy journal suffer under will make it ultimately imperative that knowledge transfer and scholarly communication will demand the switch to ejournals and the internet. That an online journal in the public domain has much potential is already observable in the case of *CLCWeb*, now online with three issues of five articles each and several book reviews in each issue. Of interest here is that in the first available period of statistical analysis of *CLCWeb's* access and online use, 13-30 April 1999, the journal received 1,950 hits. This means 108 hits per day on the average and for an esoteric subject such as comparative literature and culture this shows high-level and involved use. The statistics also show — among many aspects of the ways, length, precise use of specific sections of the journal, various technical aspects of access, etc. — that *CLCWeb* has been accessed from a large number of countries, incl. many countries outside North America and Europe. Interestingly and contrary to my expectations, the relatively large traffic on *CLCWeb* has not subsided: in June there were 118 hits per day and in July there were 126 hits per day, plus similarly high numbers for multiple users, etc. (for ongoing statistics of web use and traffic, go to the journal's subpage "web traffic" off the index page).

In closing my observations on new media and comparative literature (and on work in the humanities by extension), I would like to briefly refer to an aspect of institutional policies which have some impact on the situation of not only comparative literature but on scholarship in the humanities in general. Briefly put: how is it possible that, for example, the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada (SSHRC) to date refuses to even consider funding of an online journal in the humanities precisely because it is in the public domain? After several attempts of explanation, I received the final decision by an SSHRC official that because *CLCWeb* does not have minimum 200 paid subscribers, it is ineligible for funding. My explanations that *CLCWeb* is in the public domain and thus cannot logically

have paid subscribers was not accepted and the large web traffic with the ejournal — which clearly shows that the *CLCWeb* is being used by the scholarly community — did not make an impression either. Obviously, this particular government agency is still stuck to a traditional mindset and its policy makers — who include academics — have not followed the developments made possible by the new web culture of scholarship. In my opinion, scholarly communication and knowledge transfer on the world wide web should be facilitated by open and competitive funding by government agencies, just as are other types of scholarly activities. Online journals should be able to compete for such funding because government agencies use taxpayers' money in the first place and this way some of that money is returned to the taxpayers, just like in other areas of scholarly activity. Unfortunately, the present policies of the SSHRC have not followed the emerging situation of scholarship in the humanities where online journals in the public domain perform the said meaningful service for the scholarly community and where they perform knowledge transfer on an international scale previously unheard of as well as impossible to enact. The said policies are short-sighted and counter-productive and I hope that the SSHRC will rather sooner than later consider changing its policies of funding online ejournals in the public domain.

Last but not least I would like to touch briefly on a most contentious issue, namely on the comparative study of "Other" literatures and cultures, here with specific reference to East/West comparative literature. The still dominant aspect of the national paradigm and its position with regard to comparative literature and its claim of inclusion is a most important issue in the politics of comparative literature. As I argue in my 1995 "A Report on Comparative Literature in Beijing," for a Western comparatist the inclusion of the Other is problematic at best. But here as always, I argue that it is the "how" and not the "what" that determines scholarship: "I took issue with [the] ... notion that Orientalism can be successfully studied only by an Oriental. This notion, as often as it occurs under the generic notion of "appropriation" in US-American scholarship in particular, leads in my opinion to the doctrinization of scholarship and counter-acts the very notion of dialogue, scholarly or other. Cultural communication prescribes dialogue about perception and view from whichever locus one speaks from. If the notion ... is correct then its logical conclusion is that Orientals should not study the Occident either. Surely, this is an untenable position of either side. Of course, if an Occidental scholar studies Oriental works, any correction of his/her analysis by an Oriental scholar should be welcome and seriously considered. The argument that the post-colonial base of power disqualifies an Occidental to study the Oriental becomes a tool of harm if implemented" (11-12). More recently, Takayuki Yokota-Murakami in his 1999 *Don Juan East/West: On the Problematics of Comparative Literature*, posits that comparative literature and its claim of and for inclusion is a priori marginalization and exclusion. Yokota-Murakami argues that comparative literature is in principle and throughout its history Eurocentric and its claim of inclusion is an unsuccessfully disguised attempt to "universalize" humanity as expressed in literature but from the said Eurocentric point of view and power. I fully agree with the author that Western humanities and comparative literature in particular "included" the Other from its own Eurocentric locus. But as forceful and insightful the description and argumentation are, Yokota-Murakami does not offer a solution and thus we end up with the untenable situation as I describe above.

In recent debates in comparative literature, too, and in the humanities in general, innovation is a matter of great interest (and, of course, a real necessity). Taking my point of departure from the current interest and large amount of work produced in cultural studies everywhere and applying my approach to comparative literature from within the framework and methodology of the systemic and empirical approach to literature and culture, I first developed a set of principles for comparative literature and culture, as presented in my 1998 *Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, Application* (15-18). Here is a brief dictionary definition of the systemic and empirical approach understood as a contextual approach:

The systemic and empirical approach is a theoretical and methodological framework for the study of culture including several fields such as comparative cultural studies, cultural studies, comparative literature, literature, anthropology, ethnography, audience studies (see Tötös de Zepetnek, "Toward a Framework of Audience Studies" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/audiencestudies>>), and cognitive sciences. The main question is what happens to products of culture and how: It is produced, published, distributed, read/listened to/seen (etc.), imitated, assessed, discussed, studied, censored, etc. The systemic and empirical study of culture originates as a reaction to, and an attempt at, solving the problematics of hermeneutics. The approach and methodology(ies) of the framework are built on the theory of constructivism (radical, cognitive, etc.), in turn based on the thesis that the subject largely construes its empirical world itself. The consequence of this line of thought—as seen in the work of scholars in Germany, Holland, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, Canada, the USA, and elsewhere in several fields and areas of study—is the replacement of (metaphorical) interpretation with the study of culture products and the processes of the products as based on radical constructivism, systems theories, and the empirical (observation and knowledge-based argumentation). The system of culture and actions within are observed from the outside—not experienced—and roughly characterized as depending on two conventions (hypotheses) that are tested continually. These conventions are the aesthetic convention (as opposed to the convention of facts in the daily language of reference) and the polyvalence convention (as opposed to the monovalency in the daily empirical world). Thus, the object of study of the systemic and empirical study of culture is not only the text in itself, but roles of action

and processes within the system(s) of culture, namely, the production, distribution, reception, and the post-processing of culture products. The methods used are primarily taken from the social sciences, systems theories, reception theory, cognitive science, psychology, etc. In general, the steps to be taken in systemic and empirical research are the formation of a hypothesis, putting it into practice, testing, and evaluation.

Next, I propose an adjusted set of principles, for the proposed new approach of comparative cultural studies. These principles are not new or particularly original, especially to those who know or are in comparative literature: what is intended is the explicit formulation of principles already known and/or established in the discipline of comparative literature and at the same time adapted to the new paradigm of a comparative cultural studies. I should also like to mention that many of the principles I am suggesting here are obviously part and parcel of various approaches, theoretical or methodological and/or national and homogeneous literatures. My point is that it is the cumulative perspective of the approach that may make a difference and that may be innovative. My notions toward a comparative cultural studies is at this point is obviously not a full-fledged framework. Rather, the principles represent an approach (incl. ideological content) which I develop in detail in my forthcoming work. To date, curiously, the comparative aspect in cultural studies is relatively unexplored and there are relatively few universities where there are degree programs in a combination of comparative literature and cultural studies or an outright program in "comparative cultural studies." Here is a partial list of institutions where such programs exist: the graduate program in Comparative Culture at Sophia University (Tokyo), the program of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature at the University of Minnesota, the Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Warwick, the Centre for Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies at Monash University, the Comparative Cultural Studies program at Trinity College of Vermont, the Center for Comparative Cultural Studies at the Palacky University (Czech Republic), the Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies program at the University of Connecticut, or the University of Virginia program in Comparative Cultural Studies. The situation is much more limited with regard to theoretical and methodological frameworks for a "comparative cultural studies" on the landscape of published studies and, perhaps, the nearest conceptualization of a theoretical framework — with not much methodology, however — of comparative cultural studies is Itamar Even-Zohar's more recent work such as "Polysystem Theory and Culture Research" and "Culture Repertoire and the Wealth of Collective Entities" at <<http://www.tau.ac.il/~itamarez/>>.

The above demonstrated ("peripheral") interest in the discipline of comparative literature outside the established mainstream French-German-USAmerican core may be a result of the often-occurring time-shift — delayed reaction time — within knowledge transfer or it may be a result of the general globalization here emanating from and taking place in the "peripheries." But there may be another reason, that of a sophisticated approach to the study of culture by scholars in many ways located outside or parallel to the French-German-USAmerican mainstream and that, of course, dominates the study of literature world wide today, in particular the US-American schools including the situation where the French Derrida or the Italian Eco or the German Habermas are translated into English, published in the USA, and therefrom impact on thinking in cultures where the first language is not a mainstream European language. What I mean is this: in Anglo-American, French, and German literary study—general or comparative—the aspect of theory saturation is a well-known situation and the fact that in recent years the focus in literary study switched from the study of literature proper to all sorts of inquiries of culture in general brought about a preoccupation of literary scholars with other matter than literature. For comparatists in the mainstream German-French-USAmerican core this created serious problems because their areas of theory, interdisciplinarity, etc., have been successfully appropriated and today everyone may be a "comparatist" While this may be an interesting development, it appears to me that scholars working in non-mainstream cultures and within that in comparative literature, seem to be interested in maintaining a focus on literature while at the same time they want to study it in an international context writing for a regional scholarly readership. Concurrent to the interest in comparative literature as I perceive it and discussed above, there is of course the impact of cultural studies—mainly although not exclusively from US-American scholarship—in the humanities everywhere, including in the countries where comparative literature itself is experiencing a renaissance or emerging interest. It is this situation that I think we can capitalize on. What I mean is that the interest and new work in comparative literature occurring outside the traditional centres of the discipline can be related and connected to the impact of cultural studies on the one hand and taking the history and intellectual achievements of comparative literature - in particular its aspect of cross-culturality based upon in-depth knowledge and familiarity with other languages and cultures - toward the construction of a framework and practice of comparative cultural studies on the other hand.

I would like to insert here a brief comment about the problematics of globalization versus localization and regionalism. In my opinion, while regionalism is obviously a viable alternative to and meaningful replacement of nationalism and aspirations to cultural homogeneity, globalization can be understood and perceived as a positive force that does not necessarily embody US-American cultural impact. I concur with the view that "global culture doesn't mean just more TV sets and Nike shoes. Linking is humanity's natural impulse, its common destiny. ... cultures don't become more uniform; instead, both old and new tend to transform each other. The late philosopher Isaiah Berlin believed

that, rather than aspire to some utopian ideal, a society should strive for something else: 'not that we agree with each other ... but that we can understand each other'" (Zwingle 33). Among other perspectives, comparative literature and comparative cultural studies aspires to be scholarship precisely in this sense. It appears to me that it is the US-American type of cultural studies that has acquired the most incisive impact in scholarship in the humanities everywhere. Overall, however, my observation is that similar to literary studies, work in cultural studies has produced limited results based on an empirical, that is, evidence- and observation-based perspective in theory and in application. In other words, while cultural studies in the U.S., in the United Kingdom (e.g., Grossberg; Kolodziejczik, Lynn, Zylinska), Germany (Burns), in France (Forbes and Kelly), in Spain (Graham and Labanyi), or in Italy (Forgacs and Lumley) produce relevant and incisive work, they more often than not lack the type of evidence-based theoretical and methodological approach I propose for both comparative literature and comparative cultural studies with the systemic and empirical approach (in turn based in radical constructivism; see Riegler <<http://www.univie.ac.at/constructivism/>>; see also Tötösy de Zepetnek, "Constructivism" <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweblibrary/ccsconstructivism>>).

I am aware, however, that in sociology, ethnology, history, anthropology, ethnography, cognitive science, etc.—including work related to or about literature—there is a large corpus that is "empirical," evidence-based and argued in both theory and application. With regard to cultural studies, while in isolated cases it is briefly mentioned that the historical and conceptual background of cultural studies is based, in many ways, on work (theory and application) in comparative literature, the comparative approach in and for cultural studies is not explored apart from a few rudimentary beginnings such as Aleida Assman's 1999 "Cultural Studies and Historical Memories." Consequently, while there is empirical work with explicit methodology undertaken in cultural anthropology and similar fields which have some impact on cultural studies (see, in particular, Norman Denzin's *Symbolic Interactionism and Cultural Studies*), cultural studies when in literary studies — or the other way around — is almost exclusively hermeneutic, discursive in the essayistic mode, and metaphorical, at best political. In other words, evidence-based and argued work in cultural studies appears to be produced in fields and with approaches from sociology, ethnology, anthropology, history, etc., while in the fields of traditional humanities such as English-language literature, such approaches are neglected or even rejected in favour of the said metaphorical and essayistic "scholarship" and there are scholars few and far between who would agree with the notion that "cultural studies has to be disciplined ... to get better and useful knowledge takes rigorous theoretical and empirical work" (Grossberg 29).

The first principle of comparative cultural studies is the postulate that in and of the study, pedagogy, and research of culture—culture is defined as all human activity resulting in artistic production—it is not the "what" but rather the "how" that is of importance. This principle follows the constructivist tenet of attention to the "how" and process. To "compare" does not—and must not—imply a hierarchy: in the comparative mode of investigation and analysis a matter studied is not "better" than another. This means—among other things as listed below—that it is method that is of crucial importance in comparative cultural studies in particular and, consequently, in the study of literature and culture as a whole.

The second principle of comparative cultural studies is the theoretical as well as methodological postulate to move and to dialogue between cultures, languages, literatures, and disciplines. This is a crucial aspect of the framework, the approach as a whole, and its methodology. In other words, attention to other cultures — that is, the comparative perspective — is a basic and founding element and factor of the framework. The claim of emotional and intellectual primacy and subsequent institutional power of national cultures is untenable in this perspective. In turn, the built-in notions of exclusion and self-referentiality of single culture study and their result of rigidly defined disciplinary boundaries are notions against which comparative cultural studies offers an alternative as well as a parallel field of study. This inclusion extends to all Other, all marginal, minority, border, and peripheral and it encompasses both form and substance. However, attention must be paid of the "how" of any inclusionary approach, attestation, methodology, and ideology so as not to repeat the mistakes of Eurocentrism and "universalization" from a "superior" Eurocentric point of view. Dialogue is the only solution.

The third principle of comparative cultural studies is the necessity for the scholar working in this field to acquire in-depth grounding in more than one language and culture as well as other disciplines before further in-depth study of theory and methodology. However, this principle creates structural and administrative problems on the institutional and pedagogical levels. For instance, how does one allow for development — intellectually as well as institutionally — from a focus on one national culture (exclusionary) towards the inclusionary and interdisciplinary principles of comparative cultural studies? The solution of designating comparative cultural studies as a postgraduate discipline only is problematic and counter-productive. Instead, the solution is the allowance for a parallelism in intellectual approach, institutional structure, and administrative practice.

The fourth principle of comparative cultural studies is its given focus to study culture in its parts (literature, arts, film, popular culture, theatre, the publishing industry, the history of the book as a cultural product, etc.) and as a whole in relation to other forms of human expression and activity and in relation to other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences (history, sociology, psychology, etc.). The obstacle here is that the attention to other fields of expression and other disciplines of study results in the lack of a clearly definable, recognizable, single-focused, and major theoretical and

methodological framework of comparative cultural studies. There is a problem of naming and designation exactly because of the multiple approach and parallelism. In turn, this lack of recognized and recognizable products results in the discipline's difficulties of marketing itself within the inter-mechanisms of intellectual recognition and institutional power.

The fifth principle of comparative cultural studies is its built-in special focus on English, based on its impact emanating from North American cultural studies which is, in turn, rooted in British cultural studies along with influences from French and German thought. This is a composite principle of approach and methodology. The focus on English as a means of communication and access to information should not be taken as Euro-American-centricity. In the Western hemisphere and in Europe but also in many other cultural (hemi)spheres, English has become the lingua franca of communication, scholarship, technology, business, industry, etc. This new global situation prescribes and inscribes that English gain increasing importance in scholarship and pedagogy, including the study of literature. The composite and parallel method here is that because comparative cultural studies is not self-referential and exclusionary; rather, the parallel use of English is effectively converted into a tool for and of communication in the study, pedagogy, and scholarship of literature. Thus, in comparative cultural studies the use of English should not represent any form of colonialism — and if it does, one disregards it or fights it with English rather than by opposing English — as follows from principles one to three. And it should also be obvious that is the English-language speaker who is, in particular, in need of other languages.

The sixth principle of comparative cultural studies is its theoretical and methodological focus on evidence-based research and analysis. This principle is with reference to methodological requirements in the description of theoretical framework building and the selection of methodological approaches. From among the several evidence-based theoretical and methodological approaches available in the study of culture, literary and culture theory, cultural anthropology, sociology of culture and knowledge, etc., the systemic and empirical approach is perhaps the most advantageous and precise methodology for use in comparative cultural studies. This does not mean that comparative cultural studies and/or its methodology comprise a meta theory; rather, comparative cultural studies and its methodologies are implicitly and explicitly pluralistic.

The seventh principle of comparative cultural studies is its attention and insistence on methodology in interdisciplinary study (an umbrella concept), with three main types of methodological precision: Intra-disciplinarity (analysis and research within the disciplines of the humanities), multi-disciplinarity (analysis and research by one scholar employing any other discipline), and pluri-disciplinarity (analysis and research by team-work with participants from several disciplines). In the latter case, an obstacle is the general reluctance of humanities scholars to employ team-work in the study of culture including literature. It should be noted that this principle is built-in in the framework and methodology of the systemic and empirical approach to culture.

The eighth principle of comparative cultural studies is its content against the contemporary paradox of globalization versus localization. There is a paradoxical development in place with regard to both global movements and intellectual approaches and their institutional representation. On the one hand, the globalization of technology, industry, and communication is actively pursued and implemented. But on the other hand the forces of exclusion as represented by local, racial, national, gender, disciplinary, etc., interests prevail in (too) many aspects. For a change toward comparative cultural studies as proposed here a paradigm shift in the humanities and social sciences will be necessary. Thus, the eighth principle represents the notion of working against the stream by promoting comparative cultural studies as a global, inclusive, and multi-disciplinary framework in an inter- and supra-national humanities.

The ninth principle of comparative cultural studies is its claim on the vocational commitment of its practitioners. In other words, why study and work in comparative cultural studies? The reasons are the intellectual as well as pedagogical values this approach and discipline offers in order to implement the recognition and inclusion of the Other with and by commitment to the in-depth knowledge of several cultures (i.e., languages, literatures, etc.) as basic parameters. In consequence, the discipline of comparative cultural studies as proposed advances our knowledge by a multi-faceted approach based on scholarly rigor and multi-layered knowledge with precise methodology.

The tenth principle of comparative cultural studies is with regard to the troubled intellectual and institutional situation of the humanities in general. That is, the tenth principle is with reference to the politics of scholarship and the academe. We know that the humanities in general experience serious and debilitating institutional — and, depending on one's stand, also intellectual — difficulties and because of this the humanities in the general social and public discourse are becoming more and more marginalized (not the least by their own doing). It is in this context that the principles of a comparative cultural studies is proposed to at least to attempt to adjust the further marginalization and social irrelevance of the humanities.

In conclusion, my definition of the field of comparative cultural studies is as follows:

Comparative cultural studies is field of study where selected tenets of the discipline of comparative literature are merged with selected tenets of the field of cultural studies meaning that the study of culture and culture products— including, but not restricted to literature, communication, media, art, etc.—is performed in a contextual and relational construction and with a plurality of methods and approaches, inter-disciplinarity, and, if and when required, including team work. In comparative cultural studies it is the processes of communicative action(s) in

culture and the how of these processes that constitute the main objectives of research and study. However, comparative cultural studies does not exclude textual analysis proper or other established fields of study. In comparative cultural studies, ideally, the framework of and methodologies available in the systemic and empirical study of culture are favored.

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