


Worlding Literatures between Dialogue and Hegemony

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**Marko Juvan,**

**"Worlding Literatures between Dialogue and Hegemony"**

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**Abstract:** In his article "Worlding Literatures between Dialogue and Hegemony" Marko Juvan claims that during its late capitalist renaissance, the Goethean idea of *Weltliteratur* is interpreted either in terms of intercultural dialogism or hegemony embodied in the asymmetrical structure of the world literary system. Launching the concept of *Weltliteratur* during the emergence of the early industrial globalization, Goethe initiated a long-lasting transnational meta-discourse that influenced the development of transnational literary practices. In his aristocratic, cosmopolitan humanism, Goethe expected world literature to open up an equal dialogue between civilizations and languages encouraging cross-national networking of the educated elite. However, his notion of dialogue is marked by the hegemony of Western aesthetic and humanistic discourse based on the European classics. Marx and Engels exposed aesthetic and humanist cosmopolitanism as the ideology masking European bourgeoisie's global economic hegemony and the worldwide expansion of Western geoculture. It is within this ambivalence of dialogism and hegemony that the process of "worlding" (Kadir) and nationalizing of European literatures has taken place since the early nineteenth century.

**Marko JUVAN**

### **Worlding Literatures between Dialogue and Hegemony**

The expression *Weltliteratur* was introduced by the polymath author of world histories August Ludwig Schlözer in 1773 (see Schamoni) — significantly, with reference to the small and peripheral literature of Iceland (Schlözer 2). From 1827 to 1831, the notion was reinvented and launched among the cultured readership by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, then living in Weimar, a culturally thriving town, but semi-peripherally positioned in the existing interliterary system of Europe. Goethe discussed world literature in about twenty sketchy formulations scattered over his public lectures, review articles from his *Kunst und Altertum*, talks with his secretary Johann Peter Eckermann, and extensive personal communication with intellectuals of European *respublica litterarum* (Goethe, "Appendix"; *Schriften* 351-52, 361-64; "Some Passages"; Eckermann 164-67). Goethe's ideas were debated in British, Italian, and French literary journals during the last years of his life (see D'haen 5-9; Juvan, *Prešernovska* 82-122; Koch 19, 231-33; Pizer 3, 21, 83). This early, short-lived exchange, however, engendered a long-lasting transnational metadiscourse on world literature, which, functioning as an autopoietic recursive loop, both reflected and fostered localized practices of global literary processes such as "bibliomigrancy" (see Mani; Juvan, "Cultural Circulation"), translation, interliterary intertextualities, and transnational canonization. Goethe's utterances initiating this discourse responded to contradictory aspects of his own experience of a "national" (i.e., German) author who gained a broader "international" reputation (see Pizer 18-46; Strich 32-51). His idea of *Weltliteratur* grew from his uncertainty about the position of German literature *vis-à-vis* traditionally established national literatures of West Europe (see Casanova 40; Damrosch 8; Pizer 18-41; Strich 27-30) while also emanating from his networking with European writers and intellectuals who pursued cosmopolitan ideals (see Buescu; D'haen 7-8; Koch 43-176; Pizer 59-60). Other factors of living experience also played a role in Goethe's invention of the term: his well-stocked library along with reading, translating, and commenting on foreign literatures and print media, his poetry that drew on manifold literary resources, peripheral and non-European included (Koch 177-229; Nethersole 309; Pizer 21), and last but not least via his notion of "circulation" based on the rise of the traffic of artworks across linguo-cultural boundaries (Juvan, *Prešernovska* 115-22). With the statements with which he introduced the phrase *Weltliteratur*, Goethe declared that he was witnessing the dawn of a new, cross-national era of literary production (see Strich). From his novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* to statements made in his old age, Goethe compared the circulation of cultural goods with the capitalist world market (see Casanova 12-14; D'haen 8; Koch 2, 17; Strich 31). Literature was going global because of the exposure to the capitalist mode of production and the accelerated development of communication technologies. It was above all this new social reality of the post-Enlightenment literary discourse that was reflected, given sense, and even programmed by a metadiscourse on world literatures inaugurated by Goethe.

It has been stressed repeatedly that Goethe expected world literature to encourage the renewal of every national literature and to create a space in which smaller, peripheral, or non-European literatures could establish themselves on an equal basis (see, e.g., D'haen 6, 11; Pizer 18-46; Strich 32-36, 45-48). For Goethe, the opening of world literary space gave a national literature an opportunity to assert itself internationally without feeling hampered by the dominance of either the ancient canon or major literatures which had been established and recognized since early modernity. Even a national literature that appeared to be dependent on and lagging behind major literatures of the European West could now prove to be an original producer, a competent translator, and an important mediator of a cross-literary traffic. To be sure, Goethe was thinking primarily of German national literature and through his networking attempted to promote Weimar not only as the cohesive intellectual center of politically disjointed Germany, but as a hub of the nascent world literary system at large. Fritz Strich, quoting Goethe's expressions, renders this in terms close to world-system approaches: "For that is what the world literature which developed during Goethe's later years really was, the world-wide expansion of the little circle round Goethe. Goethe remained the central point round which the literatures of Europe revolved, and Weimar became the intellectual capital of Europe. ... The little world system, the microcosmos Weimar, had grown to a great world system, a

macrocosmos, in which the planets of the intellectual universe revolved round the fixed star, Goethe" (50-51). A necessary condition for the worldwide assertion of national literature is, however, that it renounces parochial self-sufficiency. As epitomized by his dialogue with Persian literature (Hafez) in *West-östlicher Divan*, in which he represents his subjectivity intertextually, through Orientalist otherness, Goethe was attempting to avoid subjectivist arbitrariness and, by refracting his experience through foreign forms and themes, achieve the status of a "classical national author" (*klassischer Nationalautor*), comparable to British, French, and Italian writers of European fame (*Schriften* 240-42; Juvan, *Prešernovska* 107-14; Strich 45-47). Goethe advised every literature to make use of literary patterns from other parts of the world and recognize within the foreign elements a different individualization of the "generally human" so that national literatures would build universality through exchange (see Eckermann 164-67). According to Goethe, the aesthetic perception of works from foreign languages and cultures enabled the identity self-reflection of the modern European individual, while interliterary traffic and the cooperation of intellectuals in a literary republic were the path to intercultural understanding and durable peace between nations (see Juvan, *Prešernovska* 93-106; Strich 5, 12-20, 31-39).

Nonetheless, to facilitate dialogue and the overcoming of differences, Goethe thought it necessary to imagine a common universal foundation, for which he adopted the particular European concept of aesthetic humanism whose criterion was the canon of ancient classics (see Damrosch 13; D'haen 29-33; Juvan, *Prešernovska* 96-97, 113-14). Goethean utopia of spiritual dialogue between cultures was thus in fact totalized by Western aesthetic ideology and based on potentials which could be brought to cultural production by the advent of globalization. This impresses a distinctly Eurocentric seal on the universalism of his *Weltliteratur*. In his statements on world literature, in many places Goethe presupposes various forms of hegemony. As a high official in the Weimar Court, he was able to form his cosmopolitanism also through access to the cultural products available thanks to European colonialism and concentrated and examined in libraries or other "centers of calculation" (see Juvan, "Cultural Circulation" 23-32; Latour; Young 213-14). Moreover, Goethe understood world literature primarily within the mindset of the European cultured class, fearing that the emerging global literary market would favor the spread of uniform mass literature over the transnational circulation of its serious and nobler counterpart. Goethe was therefore among the first to distinguish the elite and the mass circuits of works which find their audiences abroad (see D'haen 8; Juvan, *Prešernovska* 121-22).

In their *Communist Manifesto* of 1848, Marx and Engels grounded economic metaphors with which Goethe had described the dawn of world literature. Instead of following Goethe's interpretation in terms of aristocratic aesthetic humanism, they disclosed cosmopolitanism as an ideology with which the European bourgeoisie masks its world economic hegemony. Thus they linked world literature, which is supposed to replace the particularism of national literatures, with the global dominance of (cheap) Western bourgeois geoculture over economically dependent cultural practices:

In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature. The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization ... It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production ... In one word, it creates a world after its own image. (Marx and Engels 39)

Indeed, the historical moment of Goethe's introduction of a metadiscourse on world literature and the periods of its conjuncture coincide with cycles of world capitalism from the industrial revolution to the present global decline of late capitalism. In the nineteenth century, the international book market and copyright changed fundamentally the social position of writers (see Bourdieu). Authors began to be evaluated according to their success in book sales, their symbolic capital, and increasingly also by their international profile. It is within this reconfiguring of the author function (Foucault) that Goethe's idea took shape (Juvan, *Prešernovska* 87-89, 112-17). The next two major global turning points in the functioning of the literary system are associated with further conjunctures of discourses on the world's literatures: in the aftermath of the major economic depression and World War II, Strich undertook the first resounding revival of *Weltliteratur*, while since the turn of the millennium and coinciding with the

end of the US-American cycle and the decline of world capitalism, we are witnessing a renaissance of this concept in Pascale Casanova, Franco Moretti, David Damrosch, John Pizer, Mads Rosendahl Thomsen, Theo D'haen, and others (see, e.g., Tötösy de Zepetnek and Mukherjee; Tötösy de Zepetnek and Vasvári). Following Moretti's 2000 "Conjectures on World Literature," the concept of world literature(s) overgrew its function of denominating a research subject and evolved to a "new critical method" ("Conjectures" 55) and to a new "paradigm" of literary studies (see D'haen 1; Thomsen 5). Emanating from the U.S., this paradigm is reorganizing the history and theory of literature in the light of globalization (although there are also US-American scholars and others who are cautious about the concept, see, e.g., Figueira; Tötösy de Zepetnek and Vasvári). In its attempts to transcend comparative literature, national literary histories, and postcolonial studies, however, world literature studies has been formed heteronomously by imagining and interpreting its object of cognition through models derived from theories of globalization (see, e.g., Gupta; for an overview, see Connell and Marsh). World literature studies correspond with their emphasis on international and transcultural flows of people, capital, goods, and ideas, and the deconstruction of monolingual, ethnically essentialist categories (see Hayot 223-24). Through the same key, in current studies of literature Goethe's *Weltliteratur* is actualized as a *locus classicus*, the historical prototype for the reinterpretation of inter-literary relations.

The term "world literature" connotes universality, but in the global history of its wandering it has become ambiguous and has been understood through different value perspectives. Of key importance seems to be the tension between conceptualizations in which either intercultural dialogue between literatures or the notion of a system of global cultural hegemony are emphasized. In the concept of world literature, the importance of dialogue is foregrounded by approaches open to Goethe's thought about a new era of literature marked by international circulation, cooperation between writers, fertile cultural exchange, and aspirations towards the mutual understanding of nations and civilizations. Conversely, among the established meanings of *Weltliteratur* the one that most explicitly tends towards the notion of hegemony is the concept of world literature as a canon of the greatest artworks of humankind, since in most of its historical realizations the international canon reflects and empowers the dominance of White, Western, and men's literary production. For part of Western literary studies, especially if associated with teaching world literature is primarily a space for intercultural dialogue: through the circulation of texts and their active presence in foreign environments, individuals and communities are supposed to broaden their horizons, reflect upon their own identity in an intercultural relationship to otherness, surpass nationalist narrow-mindedness, strengthen the cosmopolitan ethos, refashion domestic traditions, increase the scope of the expressible, and gain an opportunity to establish themselves globally even if they write in a minor language. Strich affirms Goethe's ideal of world literary circulation in which, through dialogue, authors contemplate themselves and their national literatures in the mirror of the world. In so doing, Strich supports the renewal of international peace, economic exchange, and cultural cooperation: "World literature is, then, according to Goethe, the literature which serves as a link between national literatures and thus between the nations themselves, for the exchange of ideal values. Such literature includes all writings by means of which the peoples learn to understand and make allowances for each other, and which bring them more closely together. It is a literary bridge over dividing rivers, a spiritual highway over dividing mountains. It is an intellectual barter, a traffic in ideas between peoples, a literary market to which the nations bring their intellectual treasures for exchange ... It is an international conversation, an intellectual interest in each other" (5; note his drawing on Goethe's economic metaphors).

Sarah Lawall and Damrosch have re-articulated Strich's liberal-humanist perspective in contemporary vocabulary, connecting it with social issues current in the U.S. in the period of late capitalism. In her introduction to *Reading World Literature*, Lawall criticizes the dominance of the Occidentocentric aesthetic-ethical universalism of university world literature curricula in the U.S. and supports the broadening of the transnational canon with the voices of subalterns. With a deconstruction of the oppositions self versus Other and home versus world, Lawall shows how identities enmeshed in interliterary communication express themselves through signification and cognition as dialogic networks (33-34). Lawall refers to Goethe's idea claiming that "interconnected society and world view" form themselves through "the community discourse of world literature" (46). By emphasizing the relationalism of identities immersed in reading within transnational literary

discourse, Lawall shows world literature to be a system of cognitive interactions, that is, a dialogue. Along with Pascale Casanova and Moretti, Damrosch is usually placed in the trio of founders of the world literature paradigm: in *What Is World Literature?* — unlike Dionýz Ďurišin's 1992 *Čo je svetová literatúra* (What Is World Literature) because it was published in a minor language — it has become a key reference in the globalized renaissance of Goethe's conception. Damrosch realizes the ideal of the multicultural broadening of the canon with his selection of texts from the "periphery" which he interprets as examples of world literature. Thus he commits himself to the interests of communities and regions whose peripherality was only given a historical explanation by Casanova and Moretti. Unlike Casanova and Moretti, Damrosch does not present Goethe's ruminations on international literary circulation as a prefiguration of the global culture market dominated by major centers (which are accumulating sources, products, and producers from spaces under their influence); instead, he interprets Goethe from the perspective of cosmopolitan conceptions of intercultural hermeneutics and aesthetics. In world literature — where with the aid of translations literary works which circulate across the border of their original language and culture make gains as they actively come to life in foreign societies — Damrosch sees a "mode of circulation and of reading" in which "windows on the world" open up to us, and through which the intellectual horizons of national literatures are refracted in mutual dialogue (5, 15, 281). These works therefore create an autonomous, transnational, multi- and intercultural, and decentralized (elliptical) aesthetic space, enabling us to free ourselves from a political connectedness to our own nation, language, class, and so on.

In opposition to the liberal humanist perspective of Strich, Lawall, and Damrosch, some scholars of world literature emphasize its hegemonic character (see Arac; Frassinelli and Watson; Huggan Spivak). Critiques of world literature's dialogism come not only from camps of comparative literature, postcolonial studies, and literary transnationalism. Even champions of world literature studies, such as Casanova and Moretti, have denied dialogism of interliterary exchanges stressing instead the hegemonic model of cultural diffusionism. According to diffusionism, texts and conventions that are produced or mediated by major Western languages and cultural metropolises spread throughout the planet, whereas peripheral or dependent cultural spaces adapt them only passively. Under the global influence of few world literary capitals and major world languages a standardized geoculture — with its products, conventions, and practices — imposes itself gradually on local cultural dialects and such a condition of world literature, criticized as "Anglo-globalism" (Arac), was already feared by Erich Auerbach in 1952: "Should mankind succeed in withstanding the shock of so mighty and rapid a process of concentration ... then man will have to accustom himself to existence in a standardized world, to a single literary culture, only a few literary languages, and perhaps even a single literary language. And herewith the notion of *Weltliteratur* would be at once realized and destroyed" (66). Casanova's historical sociology of the global literary space and Moretti's evolutionary sociology of transnational literary forms both emphasize asymmetries in the constellation of cultural power, that is, inequality between the dominant centers of influence and the weaker, predominantly receptive peripheries. Casanova and Moretti point out that this systemic imbalance — partly homologous, but not reducible to historically changing constellations of global economical and political power — has been shaping the flow, direction, and content of interliterary processes from the beginning of the modern era to contemporary times. Critics reproach their conceptions of the world literary space (Casanova 3-4, 82-125) and the world literary system (Moretti, "Conjectures") for placing exaggerated emphasis on a competitiveness, Darwinian survival struggle, and for their reductionist explanation of interliterariness through analogies with Fernand Braudel's and Immanuel Wallerstein's economic histories of capitalism (see, e.g., Prendergast). By underestimating the unpredictable creative potentials of "world-semiosis" in the peripheral zones beyond Western metropolises, Casanova and Moretti are thought to have overlooked the polycentrism, plurilingualism, and multidirectionality of literary flows (see, e.g., Kliger; Thomsen 33-39, 138).

In these reproaches, multiculturalists and humanist liberals from world literature studies concur with those who attack world literature from other camps (e.g., Spivak) and other representatives of postcolonial and transnational studies are even more critical. Pier Paolo Frassinelli and David Watson, for instance, accuse Casanova of "a progressivist notion of aesthetic development" and "a teleological narrative" in which "the literary aesthetic [is] overcoming history, the nation, and the political, and generating its own autonomous space" and they expose her "reproducing a geography in which much

of the postcolonial world is positioned as peripheral to literary modernity" as a characteristic of "Eurocentric diffusionism" (197-99). One can hear the even harsher appraisals that Goethean *Weltliteratur*, with its historical genesis and current methodological application on a global scale, is in fact provincial (see Behdad and Thomas 2-7, 10). According to Graham Huggan, politically it even represents "the cultural *realpolitik* of globalization masquerading as either a 'worldly' cosmopolitanism of reading (Damrosch, 2003) or a transnational study of form (Moretti, 2000)" (491). Perhaps one day it will turn out that the renaissance of Goethe's *Weltliteratur* in US-American literary studies is a final hopeless attempt, during the decline of its world dominance, to universalize its own conception of "literature" and "world" through a methodological update. Or, as J. Hillis Miller posits that "The new discipline of World Literature ... might be seen as a last ditch effort to rescue the study of literature. It does this by implicitly claiming that studying literature from around the world is a way to understand globalization" (253-54). Theorists of the macro-system of world literature and their critics thus share a common perception that the concept of "world literature" — in the singular — is marked by hegemony. Therefore, *Weltliteratur* — whether we understand it as a theoretical concept, an ideologeme, a publishing and translation practice, a transnational network of literary life, or a curriculum canon — appears to legitimize Western (male, White, bourgeois, etc.) dominance and reinforce monolingualism (English as a global language), imposing itself on all others as a universal criterion (see, e.g., Patil <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1217>>).

After all, terminology and taxonomy are indicators of the conflicting and aporetic nature of theoretical thinking. The expression "world literature" may be ranked among Mieke Bal's concepts which travel "between disciplines, between individual scholars, and between geographically dispersed academic communities" (24) and have thus become "the sites of debate, awareness of difference, and tentative exchange" (13). As a "travelling concept" (Bal) the term "world literature" has been globalized in different linguo-semantic variants and invested with ideological tensions, such as described above. As far as the late modern cultural history of Europe is concerned, the prevailing notions of world literature — focused mainly on the Greek and Latin classics, the Bible, and the modern literary traditions of West Europe — were based on the ideology of cultural nationalism, the concept of nation state, and the colonial experience, so they presupposed national literatures as prime if not only components of the global literary space. Conversely, actors in particular literary systems referred to the ideas and practices of world literature in order to ideologically establish or confirm their national identity on a wider scale (Juvan, *Literary* 73-79). Although Đurišin, Irina Neupokoyeva, and Alexander Beecroft rightly claim that the world literary process knows systemic units other than nations and nation states — for example tribes, city states, imperia, regions and border zones, minorities, diasporas, (im)migration, or interliterary communities and other spaces and loci — it cannot be denied that in the period that gave birth to the international book market and the term *Weltliteratur* (that is, the epoch of the "'second' *Weltliteratur*" or the "world literary system" according to Moretti ["Evolution" 120]), national movements and nation states figure as most important players, at least ideologically. Inclusion of the national in the world, the presence of the world in the national, and nationality as a necessary condition for the appearance of world literature may be understood as symptoms of the interlocking ideologies of post-Enlightenment cultural nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and the aesthetic understanding of practices in/of art (Juvan, *Literary* 77). Along with the expansion of the capitalist world system and the global diffusion of Western liberal-bourgeois modernity in the form of "geoculture," this nexus has been reproduced and modified also outside Europe and has become compatible with the "inter-state system," since the latter is legitimized through proliferation of distinctive national identities (see Wallerstein 139-57, 184-99). Thus it does not come as a surprise that since the early nineteenth century world literature has been inscribed into each and every system of literature in Europe, be it emerging-peripheral or traditionally established and central. To be sure, the contents and quantity of such imports vary: while major languages and influential literatures tend to be self-sufficient, the share of translation — the main medium of world literature's circulation — in print is bigger in smaller languages and (semi-)peripheral literary systems (see Sapiro).

Repertoires of world literature, thus selected and adopted in the course of cultural transfers have been variously represented within individual literary systems: in each of them they have been translated, staged, and referred to intertextually or rewritten in its imaginative writing, discussed and commented on in its media, included materially in holdings of libraries and bookshops, absorbed into

cultural memory and cognitive schemes of its actors, and canonized in translation and in school and university curricula. Nonetheless, world literature has not (re-)fashioned cultural identity of a particular literary field only by interference in its interior structures (whether textual, discursive, medial, or institutional), but also conditioned its identity building in the exterior role of an imaginary or a lawgiving symbolic Other. Especially to the emergent, weaker European literary systems world literature often represented an imagined measure of literary quality, power, and success (Juvan, *Prešernovska* 21, 176). Either with contemporary works winning international recognition or masterpieces which had already been canonized transnationally, world literature figures as the Other in relation to which these systems fashion their identities and position themselves imaginarily in the global aesthetic space. Attitudes towards the symbolic laws of world literature are multifarious and ambivalent ranging from attempts to emulate and interiorize models of world literature through a conviction that these models have been achieved or surpassed by domestic traditions to ignoring foreign repertoires, repressing traces of their influence, and engaging in a creative tension with them (see Terian).

My example of above is drawn on Slovenian literature, whose systemic "emergence" (see Domínguez <<http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1304>>) began in the late eighteenth century within the Habsburg empire and took a peripheral position in the newly evolving world literary system. As a nascent literature, it introjected the universal Other to establish itself ideologically as a pillar of Slovenian national identity and as a showcase of artistic performance on par with the aesthetic discourse elaborated in the respected, time honored core literary systems of antiquity and modern Western Europe, as well as with comparatively more advanced contemporary semi-peripheral literatures of the region such as the Czech or Polish. Slovenian literature belongs to Central European literary systems which, with their texts, actors, media, and institutions, were introducing the ideology of aesthetic autonomy into the public space in close alliance with cultural nationalist movements (see, e.g., Hroch; Leerssen). Limited circles of nobility, the intelligentsia, clergy, and other early protagonists of "national awakenings" which took place in culturally and politically dependent communities saw literary discourse as a means to assert national identity and legitimize cultural, administrative, or political autonomy within the existing empires, in the Slovenian case the Habsburg monarchy. In doing this, two complementary strategies of cultural transfer were used in Slovenia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: imaginative literature in Slovenian was appropriating models of the core or semi-peripheral European literatures from the Greco-Latin canon, through the early modern vernacular classics, to contemporary German, British, Czech, and Polish romanticists while attempting to foreground its distinction from patterns in transnational circulation. For example, Anton Feliks Dev (1732-1786), Anton Tomaž Linhart (1756-1795), Valentin Vodnik (1758-1819), France Prešeren (1800-1849), and other writers engaged in the national movement were thus building the identity of emerging literature both by displaying that Slovenian letters belong to a wider and generally acknowledged European cultural formation, as well as by asserting their specificity, for example by pointing to local social condition and domestic traditions of Slovenian writing, stressing its topographic and thematic specificity, addressing the aesthetic and socio-political issues of the mother tongue, recalling and inventing national history, and/or elaborating a highly individualized perspective.

All this catching up with the apparently universal aesthetic canons entailed serious labor to achieve the linguo-stylistic perfection of the Slovenian vernacular and devise a literary repertoire (thematic, rhetorical, genre, formal) able to match the ones representing the symbolic capital of nations with a better developed cultural infrastructure. In this context, a peripheral European literature such as Slovenian was believed to establish its national identity through finding its place in the imaginary order of world literature, what may be explained by Djelal Kadir's notion of "worlding" (2, 7) as interpreted by Eric Hayot: "If worlding named a process, however, it would be a process of orientation or calibration; to world (a person, or a place) would be to locate it 'as is' in relation to the whole, to think the whole as that which includes 'on loan.' Worlding is gestural; it is an attitude, by which one adjusts oneself, symmetrically, to one's inclusion in a whole that does not belong to one. Worlding creates worlds because it bespeaks the part's relation to the whole, but also because in that speaking it imagines (or recreates) the whole that opens to the part. The whole neither precedes the part, nor succeeds it" (228). I wrote elsewhere about worlding and nationalizing Slovenian literature in the period of its systemic emergence showing how Dev's baroque classicist poetry called for a national



canon by rewriting and familiarizing the classical topos of Parnassus, which had been given modern and national touch as early as the Italian renaissance, and transposing it imaginatively into his home surroundings (Juven, "Literary Self-Referentiality"). The second example I would like to mention is the poet Prešeren, who, with the help of the philologist and literary scholar Matija Čop (1797-1835), adopted Schlegelian romantic cosmopolitanism and appropriated some of world literature's cultural capital to "cultivate" the Slovenian vernacular to compensate for its lack of functional and social differentiation and encourage the diglossic educated classes in Carniola to respect the original Slovenian poetry because it attested the dignity of their native tongue. The ultimate reason for Prešeren's labor for the aesthetic perfection and a world-class status of Slovenian was to allure the educated class to participate in the national movement by becoming actors in the evolving literary system and by helping it gain autonomy within the predominantly German cultural life of the Habsburg empire. With his borrowings from the classics and the moderns, Prešeren developed a poetic language elevated and saturated through aesthetic resources which were getting conceptualized as world literature. This kind of the romantic classic represented to Čop and Prešeren a shortcut by which the emergent Slovenian literature — lacking media, public sphere, and cultural institutions — could catch up with apparently more developed European literary systems (Juven, "World"; *Literary* 78-83).

Based on cases like those outlined above, I am skeptical about Moretti's model of cultural transfer within the world literary system if the notion of a unilateral flow of literary forms and themes from the emanating-hegemonic centers to receptive-dependent peripheries is applied to explain the textual level. The intertextual relations between metropolitan source literatures and (semi-)peripheral target literatures cannot be explained away by Moretti's formula of "a compromise between a Western formal influence (usually French or English) and local materials," which was derived from his analyses of the European novel (Moretti, "Conjectures" 58-60; "More Conjectures" 78-79). While the formula may be operational at the macro-level of the transnational literary market — which with its wavelike diffusion of successful cultural products causes diverse peripheral fields to choose and adapt the most demanded, prestigious, fascinating, or innovative global patterns — it proves to be too superficial at the level of intertextual interaction between agencies who are positioned into two or more unequal literary systems and hence perhaps micro-systemic approach to literature and culture would serve better (see, e.g., Tötösy de Zepetnek, "The New"; Tötösy and Vasvári). Many peripheral authors who are aware of their strategic borrowing from a hegemonic literary repertoire and its grafting into the local conventions tend to employ textual strategies which can hardly fit the definition of "compromise." To avoid the dependence on a single core literary system, such writers may turn to a multitude of other influential literatures, interliterary communities, and also to peripheral zones. In the course of the nineteenth century, Slovenian literature, exposed to German cultural hegemony, drew not only on other West European sources, but also on Czech, Slovak, South Slavic, and Russian literatures. Moreover, it sought to improve its weaker status by various forms of alliance with Austro-Slavic, pan-Slavic, or South-Slavic ideologies which were circulating within the Slavic interliterary community. Being conscious of and frustrated by their systemic dependence on core sources of world literature, peripheral authors may also present their reflection of a subjugated interliterary position to their home readers either indirectly through intertextual dialogism of parody, stylization, pastiche, and allusion or directly through fictional, often self-ironical *mise-en-abîme* of their literary dependence (see Juven, *Literary* 82-85). For instance, the most radical Slovenian Enlightenment author Linhart rewrote in 1790 Beaumarchais's *The Marriage of Figaro* by travesty and adapting its revolutionary edge to humbler social realities of his native country. In Linhart's play, banned by Austrian censorship until the revolutionary year of 1848, the protagonist Matiček mentions humorously that he saw the comedy of Figaro, his more brilliant fictional counterpart, in a nearby theater.

Moretti, pressed by similar objections to his formula, soon subtilized his theory. He now pays more attention to the radical untranslatability of the linguo-stylistic level of the model text. He also introduces agonistic and politically laden term to capture the interaction between the contexts of the influencing center and the influenced periphery. He replaces the notion of "compromise" with the postcolonial concept of hybridity. As he points out, hybridity amounts to more than amalgamation of different traditions; it is the "dissonance, disagreement," the "form as struggle," even "the crystallization of an underlying political tension" ("Evolution" 120). In my opinion, Moretti's "form as struggle" results also from the dual tactics of writers from the world periphery, such as exemplified by

the Slovenian cases. On the one hand, these authors tended to adapt a prominent foreign pattern as a tool for their local needs with which they could articulate a better response to challenges of their home traditions and social state of affairs. On the other hand, with the material being transferred from the center, peripheral authors also enter into a struggle if they feel threatened by its creative power or oppressed by the apparent socio-cultural supremacy of its source system: through the hybridization of imports with home repertoires and through their own creative invention, they try to fashion or protect their literary identity.

In conclusion, from the very beginning the concept of world literature(s) has been torn between the liberating dialogism of free spiritual circulation and the hegemony of major languages and metropolises. Both in the millennia prior to the introduction of the notion of *Weltliteratur* and in the last two hundred years during which the modern world literature system has taken shape in the light of Goethe's concept, literatures of the world have nonetheless in actual fact developed relationships which have been neither purely competitive nor hierarchical: they developed with exchanges both within and between larger regions and in a multitude of creative environments formed the plural canons of universalism. However, the field of dialogue between literatures from Goethe through Marx to the present day is super-determined by a modern world literary system that imposes on the transnational circulation of literature an asymmetrical geographic distribution of linguistic-cultural capital and media and institutional and legal infrastructure.

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