The Role of the Humanities
in a Global Age

Some years ago, during the summer of 1997, I took part in a meeting on "The Future of the Humanities in Europe and the Americas," which I helped organize at the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. The event brought together a number of distinguished scholars from various parts of the world to announce the inauguration of an International School of Theory in the Humanities and to debate the intellectual direction that this School should take in the next decade or so. A number of position papers were distributed in advance of the meeting, outlining the authors' vision of the humanities and suggesting ways in which the International School's objectives could best be implemented. These position papers served as points of departure for animated debates on topics such as: Theoretical and Institutional Models of Interaction between the Humanities and the Sciences; New Paradigms for Humanistic Thought; Play, Aesthetics, and the Concept of Interdisciplinarity; National Identity, Cultural Diversity, and the Languages of the Humanities; The Role of Literature in Developing New Models of Human Interaction; and Future Modes of Intellectual Exchange between Europe and the Americas.

Several of the position papers started from the opening remarks that Ronald Bogue, Associate Director of the International School, and I included in our description of the proposed goals and themes of the conference. We defined the main objectives of the School as follows:

"The International School of Theory in the Humanities at Santiago de Compostela will explore the ways in which a much-needed qualitative integration of the humanities and the theoretical sciences may be brought about. It will also explore the ways in which the humanities in the West can redefine themselves in relation to cultural expressions of other, nonwestern societies that have become more and more prominent in the global arena. Finally, it will explore the ways in which the humanities can best continue their role as both

the ethical conscience of the polis and an imaginative space within which fresh ideas are constantly generated, debated, and tried out, so that they may later on be adopted and implemented by the community at large.

The School will bring together leading junior and senior scholars from various fields and diverse cultures who will explore these intellectual issues from a transdisciplinary perspective, seeking to harmonize local and global exigencies and develop cooperative models both within and outside the academic world. Our immediate, practical goal is to establish an intercultural community of teachers and researchers in the humanities that will offer a new model of transatlantic cooperation among leading institutions of higher education."

Needless to say, these were provisional, schematic statements that were intended to get the discussion going, and as such they largely accomplished their goal. As a result of the many heated, yet constructive debates during the meeting, it became clear that the International School of Theory in the Humanities should attempt to move beyond Europe and the Americas, actively seeking participation of colleagues from other parts of the world. The School should thus focus on the humanities within a global reference frame, particularly on the ongoing cognitive and sociocultural changes that current globalizing trends have triggered throughout the world. It also became clear that its programs and activities should involve, in addition to scholars, teachers, and students from the humanities, informed academics from other fields of knowledge and nonacademic practitioners of all ages and from all walks of life.

Two related theoretical issues were raised by the position papers that commented on our tentative programmatic statements: a) the difficulty or, perhaps, even the impossibility of a real dialogue between the sciences and the humanities or between the so-called "two cultures" (C.P. Snow's term); and b) the logocentric bias of any dichotomy between Western and non-Western cultures. Both issues have considerable bearing on the future role of the humanities in a global learning environment. The first issue largely depends on how the various authors of the position papers define "science" and "humanities," or even "dialogue." Here, of course, one can also question, in the best deconstructive fashion, the very dichotomy between the two areas of human activity.

But, more to the point, if one accepts the ever-widening gulf between the two cultures (sciences and humanities) as an irreversible, historical "fact," rather than the result of certain reversible human choices, then one will also have to accept the overall increasing fragmentation of knowledge in all fields of human endeavor as an inevitable, entropic process. Such an entropic process will eventually lead to a breakdown in all communication not only among scientists and other researchers, but also among the scientists themselves, not to mention all other human beings. From the viewpoint of the humanities (as well as of the sciences), it is much more productive to assume that responsive understanding, dialogue, and other forms of intercultural and crossdisciplinary

communication, whether specialized or nonspecialized, are desirable, possible, and, indeed, indispensable for sustainable human development.

The second issue is part of the same deconstructive problematic in which the term "non-Western" can simply be seen as the subordinated term of "Western" in a logocentric, binary opposition. One can even combine the two issues, showing how a denial of any possibility of genuine dialogue across disciplines corresponds to a denial of any possibility of dialogue across cultures. One can also show that the dichotomy between the sciences and the humanities, no less than that between the West and the rest, is also of Western extraction. For example, the opposition between human and other sciences does not really operate, say, in traditional Chinese culture, where such oppositions are allegedly unknown. In other words, one may place the concept of Western and other worlds in a larger, global reference frame and attempt to define, through intercultural research and dialogue, the similarities and differences between various world cultures as perceived by their various members. Extensive intercultural comparative analysis and nonreductive juxtapositions may well show that some of these perceptions are unfounded, deriving mostly from incomplete knowledge, received opinion, or other subjective factors. All of these subjective factors are nevertheless significant in understanding cultural attitudes and behaviors in various parts of the world. They will play a substantial role in our attempts to modify attitudes and behaviors that have been counterproductive, or to encourage those that have been helpful in furthering human development, oriented toward global intelligence.

One can finally point out that deconstruction itself is as much of a "Western" logical operation as any of the binary oppositions it seeks to dismantle and therefore is equally subject to critical scrutiny and ideological suspicion. Although it has as a rule presented itself as a liberal ideology in academia, deconstruction can also easily accommodate the nihilistic impulses of a certain conservative temperament that denies the possibility of any genuine intra- and intercultural dialogue. As such, it can help justify opposition to any change in the current academic and other institutional structures (especially once it has moved from the margins to the center of disciplinary power), on the ultimate principle that they will only accelerate the overall entropic processes of human and other life on earth.

In any case, once the dust settles around such academic arguments, we are, as often as not, left with two basic propositions: "humans are radically different" or "humans are essentially the same." Both propositions are arguably true, depending on the level of abstraction we choose to adopt. What is of more import, however, is not the logical truth of such propositions (which are always tautological), but their ethical implications, their practical, day-to-day uses, particularly within an intercultural, global reference frame. It is for this reason that the foregoing debate highlights the need to go not only beyond binary and linear ways of thinking, but also beyond deconstruction or any other hermeneu-

tics of suspicion, as well as beyond the current malaise of threatened cultural identities. In other words, we need to steer the goals and practices of intercultural learning and research toward an ethics of global intelligence.

In this chapter, I shall use the story of our International School to highlight some of the current problems in the humanities and spell out the principles that would foster the kind of local-global learning environments and intercultural intellectual climate that are needed for sustainable human development in the next few decades. The humanities, in cooperation with other branches of knowledge, could play a renewed, vital role in these local-global undertakings. I shall also briefly outline the research programs and methodologies that such an International School might adopt in the future and then shall propose and discuss in some detail two concrete projects from the field of literary studies, understood as a transdisciplinary, intercultural enterprise.

1. The International School of Theory in the Humanities: Past and Future

The International School of Theory in the Humanities was meant to be a very modest beginning for the intercultural and transdisciplinary project that a liminal, local-global university ought to be. In fact, it was liminality and its conceptual fields that the organizers felt should be the first topic for the inaugural session that took place in Santiago de Compostela in the summer of 1998. The guiding premise of the session was that many reconfigurations of human knowledge occur at the margins of constituted fields, as well as in the grey areas between disciplines, which may be called liminal interstices. The session focused especially on the liminal features of literature, which has often been seen as a marginal activity, but which can, precisely because of its liminal marginality, elaborate and help implement alternative ethical, epistemological, and sociocultural models. Viewed in this light, literature is no longer an outmoded medium of mass communication, but an indispensable anthropological tool of self-exploration and self-fashioning that should, alongside other artistic productions, regain a prominent place in our future global communities.

This first session was attended by over fifty junior and senior scholars, who came from a wide array of disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. The countries or regions represented were the United States, Canada, Latin America, Western and Eastern Europe, Russia, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The majority of the participants, however, were from Spain and the United States, mainly because of financial and logistical reasons. Several scholars from Southeast Asia and other places could not attend, for example, because of visa problems. In order to make the School both intellectually viable and financially accessible, we felt that all junior participants should be offered partial or full fellowships. To this purpose, we formed a consortium of over twenty universities

from the United States, Canada, Taiwan, Spain and other countries that offered grants, through annual competitions, to a number of their junior faculty and advanced graduate students to enable them to attend the International School. George Soros's Open Society Institutes in Eastern Europe and Russia also offered grants, on a selective basis, to several junior and senior researchers from those regions.

From the very beginning, the language issue, attended by related issues of ethnic and cultural identities, became one of the main topics but also sources of controversy at the School. The two official languages of the School were English and Spanish, but most participants were English-speaking and had little Spanish and no Galician. Furthermore, this English-speaking majority made only sporadic and halfhearted efforts to accommodate their Spanish and Galician hosts. In turn, some of the hosts, especially among the students and the local community, understandably felt discriminated against in their own country and region and reacted, occasionally, with the kind of suppressed or open hostility not uncommon in cases where ethnic and cultural identities are perceived as being challenged or threatened.

Other issues of cultural difference such as housing, food, eating habits, business hours, public and private conduct, and so forth surfaced, especially between the North American participants and the rest of the fellows. These conflicts never reached a point of crisis or inhibited the operation of the School, but they were never resolved in a satisfactory manner, either. They illustrate the crucial importance of the local and the mundane in any intercultural, global project, no matter how innovative, ambitious, or generous its intellectual and ethical objectives might be.

The second session of the School, in the summer of 1999, was dedicated to the interaction between the sciences, the humanities, and the arts, and again brought together junior and senior humanists, scientists, and practicing artists from different countries and continents. That year, we paid more attention to the local, cultural, and academic communities, and we involved the local Centro Gallego de Arte Contemporanea in the activities of the School. The session of that year resulted in a collective volume, *Connecting Creations: Science-Technology-Literature-Arts*, edited by Margery Arent Safir and published by the Xunta de Galicia in 2000.

Although the second year of the School was considered a success by participants and organizers alike, the same nagging issues of conflictive cultural difference lurked in the background. These issues were now compounded by the divisions between the "two cultures," the sciences and the humanities. From what I could observe during the session, there was little inclination, with very few exceptions on either side of the divide, for genuinely transdisciplinary dialogue. Some participants came to the session with preconceived notions and preset ideological positions and would often talk past each other, either extolling the cognitive and methodological virtues of their own disci-

plines or denigrating those of the others. They never attempted to put themselves into anybody else's shoes, as it were.

There were also, among the participants, humanists who admired the sciences, especially for their "rigorous," disciplinary methods, and used them as methodological weapons against their colleagues in the humanities. There were equally scientists who admired the humanities for their creativity and cognitive flexibility—indeed were poets and artists themselves—and used them, in turn, as a bully pulpit against their own colleagues. I have some sympathy for this position, on the Ruskinian principle that each discipline or field, but also any particular culture or community should, if necessary, critique its own shortcomings and leave it to others to critique theirs.[1] This is a *faute de mieux* principle, for which I implicitly argued when I discussed the Western notion of cultural critique in Chapter 1 of the present study. Of course, the notion of criticizing and reforming "one's own" does not yet amount to intercultural and transdisciplinary, responsive understanding, because it usually projects its own ideals onto the other's field or culture, without engaging it in a genuine dialogue. Nevertheless, it is at least a beginning of a gesture toward the other.

On the other hand, even though the controversies among some of the members of the "two cultures" sounded to me sterile at the time, they seem to have borne fruit subsequently, at least according to some of the junior participants at the School. These participants acknowledged, a year or so later, that they learned a lot from that kind of intercultural "contact" or encounter, frustrating as it seemed to be while it was happening. Many of them had not been exposed to intercultural and interdisciplinary experiences before, and their first reaction to them was understandably negative—they had had what one might call a "disciplinary knee-jerk reaction." But they discovered, later on, that their experience of cultural and disciplinary alterity had in fact benefited them, not least because it made them realize that they had felt needlessly threatened in their own professional credos and practices. They had, moreover, indiscriminately merged such prevailing professional credos and practices with their own personal identity, without reflecting on what that identity, and its professional guise, actually presupposed.

I continue, therefore, to believe that there is virtue in staging, indeed multiplying, such intercultural encounters, or what Fischer and Marcus call nonreductive juxtapositions and orchestrated engagements of cultural (and disciplinary) horizons, even though they may seem at first not to accomplish much. Besides, one cannot ignore the fact that, in our disciplinary cultures, intercultural contact can be, and often is, conflictive and messy. But, that is no good reason to avoid it, any more than it would be for a cancerous patient to ignore a malignant tumor in the hope that it will go away by itself. On the contrary, we need to face the reality of such conditions and work patiently and compassionately to change them, even if the process seems frustratingly slow, unrewarding, and full of setbacks.

The third session of the School, in the summer of 2000, focused on cultural issues of globalization, and took place in Avignon, France. The session was moved to Avignon because, with the changes in the leadership of the School the previous year, administrative problems seemed to crop up, which were compounded by illness, by inability to raise sufficient funds for an over-ambitious agenda, and by personality clashes among some administrators. As in the case of many intercultural projects, or for that matter any other projects that seem at first successful, we probably attempted to do too much, too soon, and did not pay enough attention to various local conditions, as well as to the fluid dynamics of the intercultural team in charge of the development of the International School.

Looking back on it, I believe that the first phase of our experiment in intercultural learning was not as rewarding as it could have been, precisely because of the "disciplinary knee-jerk reactions" with which all of us approached various organizational and logistical problems that require completely different solutions within an intercultural reference frame. In such complex intercultural and transdisciplinary projects, issues of cultural difference are bound to arise and will inevitably lead to conflict and breakdown of communication, unless they are approached in the spirit of responsive understanding, patience, and sustained dialogue. Unfortunately most of us, born and raised in various disciplinary cultures and environments, have yet to internalize this spirit and turn it into automatic habit. On the other hand, as we have seen from the example of the subsequent shift in reaction to and positive reevaluation of an initially negative intercultural contact, we might also need to change our perceptions of success and failure, especially with regard to intercultural and transdisciplinary learning experiments, to which we should no longer apply the usual disciplinary criteria and standards of evaluation.

For the future development of this or a similar School—which we might wish to call The School of Intercultural Theory and Practice, in recognition of its new orientation—one should take into consideration all of these practical factors in devising a more suitable format under which such intercultural educational projects may attain their main learning and research objectives. The School should intensify its efforts to reposition the humanities in relation to the extensive reconfigurations of knowledge that continue to occur on a global scale. The humanities all over the world ought to join the environmental sciences and other academic and nonacademic fields of human endeavor in a genuine and sustained intercultural dialogue about the future of our planet. This intercultural dialogue should be based on the principles of global intelligence, grounded in a mentality of peace. But, such principles are far from being (pre-) established and should in turn become an object of extensive intercultural debate and negotiation.

The humanities should also initiate and carry out concrete intercultural research projects that will be part of and coordinated with the more compre-

hensive programs of intercultural studies and of the local-global university as a whole. Indeed, one should start from the assumption that all sciences are "human sciences," because human beings produce them. In turn, all fields of specialization (not "disciplines"), whether we call them natural, or animal, or human, serve the same purpose within a local-global university, namely furthering human (self-) development. Globalization is slowly beginning to reveal that being human is not only a privilege, to be used and abused indiscriminately, but also—and in the first place—an enormous responsibility, because the well-being and development of other life forms on this planet depend on ours as well. To all of our human sciences we should then add one more, so far largely ignored: the science of being human, whether in a local or in a global, intercultural, reference frame.

The format of a future school should be based on the dynamic model of intercultural research teamwork that I outlined for the field of intercultural studies in Chapter 1 above. Relatively small, crossdisciplinary and crosscultural teams of researchers could meet for two- to three-week workshops during the summer session, as well as for shorter, follow-up workshops during an additional winter session. The summer sessions should be held for three years consecutively in the same location, whether in Europe or on another continent, after which the School should move to another site. The winter sessions should be held each year in a different location and should continue the research projects initiated during the previous summer. This way, one would assure both the continuity and the diversity of locality and intellectual effort, which are equally important factors in any intercultural learning project.

The research teams should be made up of academic humanists and scientists who are in the early and middle stages of their careers, as well as nonacademic researchers, thinkers, scientists, artists, journalists, civic entrepreneurs, and other worldwide practitioners of any age. During its first phase, the School recruited its participants mainly from the ranks of advanced graduate students and beginning assistant professors at North American universities. In the future, it should cut back on the number of graduate students and nontenured faculty, particularly from the United States. These students and junior faculty are as a rule too caught up in their immediate, utilitarian goals for a disciplinary career and, therefore, are in too vulnerable a position to have the economic security, intellectual detachment, and peace of mind necessary to work toward changing the disciplinary knowledge paradigm. The School should also increase the number of African, Asian, European, and Latin American participants, in order to make the intercultural research teams more balanced and diverse.

The research topics may be chosen from, although not necessarily limited to, any of the six general areas that I have mentioned in Chapter 1 as being crucial for intercultural studies in the next few decades: 1) Globalization and Local Strategies for Human Development; 2) Food, Nutrition and Healthcare

in a Global Environment; 3) Energy World Watch and Environmental Studies for Sustainable Development; 4) World Population Movement and Growth; 5) New Media, Information Technology, and Intercultural Communication; 6) World Traditions of Wisdom and their Contemporary Relevance. The research teams may also be asked to design proposals for new research topics and even for the creation of new crossdisciplinary and intercultural fields of knowledge, such as the one I propose, for example, in Chapter 4 of the present study.

To those of my colleagues in the field of literary studies who may wonder where literature would fit into all of this and who may think that I have "betrayed" my first allegiance, I will answer that few "disciplines" could play a more important part than literary studies in creating new ways of thinking and acting within a global reference frame. First of all, however, literary studies should move away from the notion of discipline itself, preparing the way for transdisciplinary mindsets and practices in all fields of knowledge. By its very nature, literature is antidisciplinary, or, rather, transdisciplinary, and hence can have a leading role in proposing new cognitive models for our academic and nonacademic communities.

In future global and crosscultural interchanges, traditional cognitive fields and boundaries will increasingly be challenged and reconfigured. We literary people should help this process along by contributing to the development of specific blueprints for future reconceptualizations of knowledge. Such blueprints might well need to display the kind of ontological flexibility and epistemological inventiveness that have always been the mark of literary discourse. For that purpose, we need to give up our own territorial ways of thinking and doing things. We should cease looking upon literature as a traditional canon of literary texts and regard it, instead, as a form of liminal activity that generates new cognitive associations and interactions. In this respect, literature, and the humanities in general, may help substantially with the local-global university's project of (re) turning to its liminal vocation, which I propose and discuss at length in Part III of *Global Intelligence and Human Development*.

New intercultural and crossdisciplinary research programs to be initiated by literary studies might include, among many other possibilities, examining the history of the literary canon itself within a global reference frame. This history is in fact closely related to the history of the university and higher education, if not to that of Western and other disciplinary cultural paradigms in general. It therefore has the obvious advantage of transcending, by its very nature, the scope of a specialized discipline that might appear, at first sight, of purely "local" interest or relevance. Another research program could, in turn, reexamine the history of world literature and of other fields of knowledge in terms of works that stage complex (inter) cultural issues that remain equally relevant today, within both a local and a global frame of reference. In other words, this research program would begin the laborious process of gathering a solid body of historical and theoretical knowledge about the globalizing efforts

of the past and their worldwide reverberations through the ages. Such historical and theoretical projects are absolutely necessary if we wish to avoid some of the grievous mistakes of the past and to redirect human development toward global intelligence.

I would, therefore, like to propose two research programs along these lines. They can be seen as originating in Western literary studies, but could best be developed within a crossdisciplinary and intercultural framework that includes, in addition to literary studies, a number of other human sciences, such as anthropology, art history, education, intellectual history, history and philosophy of science, history of religion, intercultural studies, legal studies, music, philosophy, political science, sociology, psychology, women's studies, and so forth.

The two research programs are: 1) the question of the literary and other cultural canons within a global framework; and 2) the issue of globalization as present in both Western and world cultural history throughout the ages. In the two remaining sections of the present chapter, I shall briefly indicate the lines along which such research programs might be initiated, at least from a literary and Western, local-global viewpoint. At the same time, I hope that colleagues from other fields and cultures will join me in refining the theoretical tools and undertaking the extensive historical research needed for these long-term projects. For this purpose, I shall provide two starting points: a very broad sketch of the history of the literary canon in the West; and a detailed case study of globalization in English Renaissance drama, specifically in Christopher Marlowe's play *Tamburlaine the Great*.

2. The Literary Canon in the West: Historical Outline and Global Prospects

Contemporary literary criticism in the United States and elsewhere has raised questions about the Western literary canon in terms of its ideological and political uses, specifically in terms of its purportedly colonialist, imperialist, racist, and gender-biased features. Feminist, Marxist, and postcolonial critics in particular have challenged the theoretical presuppositions that have controlled canon-building in Western culture and have argued either for replacing these presuppositions with their own ideological biases or for more equitable criteria of canonical selection and inclusion. Needless to say, these critics, far from attempting to abolish what they perceive as an authoritarian practice, often engage in their own kind of canon formation and authority building, simply contending for their share of the pie. Here, therefore, I am less interested in offering a generic definition or description of the canon, than in outlining, however briefly, what its major cultural uses have been through the ages and how these uses might change in a global learning environment. In the present

context, it will also be helpful to keep in mind Wolfgang Iser's description of the four modes of interpretation (canonical authority, hermeneutical circle, recursive loop, and traveling differential) in the human and other sciences and their essentially disciplinary nature that I have discussed in Chapter 1 above.

My thesis is that the history of various literary and other canons has preceded, then influenced, paralleled and crisscrossed, the history of the university in the West, following the same dynamic of elitist versus democratizing tendencies and a similar disciplinary paradigm.[2] In fact, this history should provide a "classical" example of how a disciplinary cultural paradigm, within the framework of disciplinary Culture as a whole, functions both in terms of inclusion and exclusion and in terms of controlling the body of knowledge and practices associated with it. The elitist concept of the canon, which is as old as Homeric textual production and criticism in Classical and Hellenistic Greece, received periodical boosts throughout the ages, for example, at the beginning of the common era through the Biblical textual wars, then through the scholastic Aristotelian tradition in the Middle Age, and finally, through the Neoclassical concept of mimesis, which prescribed the imitation of ancient texts as the proper way of producing modern ones.

The elitist, Neoclassical view of the canon was in turn challenged by the Romantic, democratizing tendencies in literature (just as, earlier on, the various translations of the Bible into vernacular languages during the Renaissance could be seen as a democratic challenge to elitist, traditional Biblical exegesis). For instance, William Wordsworth, in his Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, challenges the highly stylized and canonical language of Neoclassical poetry, known as poetic diction, replacing it with the more "democratic" language of common prose. Of course, the Romantic idea of noncanonical language and spontaneous literary creation that ultimately led to "free verse" became in turn canonical, holding sway in Western poetry up to the present day. Ironically, it is also a Romantic mentality that reactivated the religious notion of the canonical in relation to literary works, substituting literature for religion in high culture and thus reintroducing elitist tendencies in literature.[3]

In Western societies, the literary canon has basically functioned within both a national and a crosscultural context. Within the national context, a body of literary texts acts as a standard of evaluation, emulation, and selection for other texts to be produced in the same culture. Here canon formation is inextricably linked to the formation of nations and national identities. Well-known examples are the Homeric epics, which served to create a Hellenic ethnic identity; Virgil's *Aeneid*, which contributed to the creation of a Roman national self-image; Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Spencer's *Fairie Queene*, and Shakespeare's historical plays, which went a long way toward creating an English national identity, and so forth.

The canon may also be seen within a crosscultural reference frame, in which a whole national literature may act as a standard of evaluation, emula-

tion, and selection for other, younger or emergent literatures. Within the Western literary tradition, for example, the Graeco-Roman-Judaic canon has served as a model for the emergent English, Spanish, French, and Italian literatures, just as the latter have in turn acted, later on, as canons for the so-called minor literatures of other emergent, smaller European nations and/or ethnic groups. In all of these cases, a body of literary texts is invested with cultural authority and is implicated in the political and ideological contests among various ethnic and national entities. It is clear, then, that the major critical concepts of the literary canon share the disciplinary mentality that has prevailed in Western civilization ever since its inception, in the Hellenic and the Hebrew cultures, and has never been seriously questioned even to this day. (As I have repeatedly pointed out, most contemporary schools of criticism, including deconstruction, feminism, and postcolonial cultural studies often question who is—or should be—in power, rather than the nature and desirability of power as such.)

The history of the literary canon crisscrosses the history of the university not only as a "citadel of knowledge," but also as a "factory of knowledge," with its democratizing tendencies. With the advent of the contemporary mass-produced education, the literary canon has also become either more "diluted" or more "inclusive," depending on the conservative or liberal ideological critical camps that make those judgments. Thus, works written by women, ethnic minorities, and others have been included, regardless of traditional aesthetic criteria. Indeed, as the differences between high culture and popular or low culture have become either diluted or greater and greater (depending, again, on a liberal or a conservative critical perception), the aesthetic criteria themselves have changed, presumably to accommodate the more "democratic" tastes of such "mass consumers" of literature as college students, as well as "lowbrow" and "middlebrow," general readers.

Literary and other canons have not lost their hierarchical quality, but have greatly multiplied under the marketing techniques of mass production, indeed are being themselves mass-produced. As Nicholas T. Parsons points out, the range of fields in which "it is now possible to build a canon has hugely expanded. … The appetite for canons is perhaps at its most voracious in the music sphere, where categories have proliferated as fast as music shops could build racks for them. If you want to, you can find out what is more or less 'canonical' in any genre from Opera through Rockabilly to Rembetika, simply by browsing in a well-stocked CD outlet."[4] Literary and other canons are now often used as marketing gimmicks, based on value judgments by New Media and other celebrities, whose endorsements of "good reads" or "must reads" boost sales tremendously. Not unlike the university as "halfway house" in general, the literary and other canons have also become commercial vehicles of moving around "intangible" goods in the "immaterial" service industry.

This very brief history of literary canon formation as a fluid dynamic between aristocratic and democratizing tendencies, on which disciplinary cul-

tural paradigms of inclusion and exclusion are generally based, should also be tested in other fields of knowledge, where canons are constantly formed and reformed, such as in the history of music, painting and sculpture, science, and religion, to mention only the most obvious. In turn, the Western cultural paradigms of canon formation might be fruitfully compared to other such paradigms in non-Western societies, through a juxtaposition of cultural horizons and through extensive intercultural dialogue.

If the present thesis is borne out by comparative historical and intercultural research, then the question to be asked from various local-global perspectives would be: What are our future options in approaching the problematic of the literary and other canons? There are many possible, concrete answers to this question, which will become apparent only after our intercultural research teams have completed their research. But what I have proposed throughout this study, as a matter of principle, is that we, in the human sciences and the university as a whole, should consider moving away from our disciplinary paradigms, that is, from the ways in which we currently acquire, transmit, and utilize knowledge. So this shift would obviously affect our approach to literary and other canons, as well.

Several contemporary theorists, including Virgil Nemoianu, have attempted to make a distinction between the curricular and the canonical in literary studies, precisely in order to rescue the term "literary canon" from strictly ideological and political uses. Nemoianu, for example, argues that curricular literary works are "those chosen to be taught in class, to be included in anthologies, those that are read by and fed to large numbers of individuals in a linguistic and social community at any given time. . . . Curricular authors of the past are chosen for utilitarian reasons, to satisfy some needs—political, ethical, practical—and to create bridges of compatibility between an essentially recalcitrant phenomenon and the needs and preferences of structured societies with their ideological expressions."[5]

In turn, what we call a literary canon, Nemoianu argues, is a self-emergent and self-constituted body of works that have less to do with conscious choices by literary critics and ideologues than with the everyday practice of creative writers and the shifting taste of successive generations of readers. Here Nemoianu uses insights from contemporary scientific theories of self-emergence, specifically chaos theory: "As to how exactly literate communities select their narrative and imaginative providers, perhaps it is best to think of it by analogy with the theory of chaos in modern physics and mathematics. Inextricable collaborations of rational and predictable factors with irrational and sudden developments lead to stabilities and turbulences that alternate irregularly, or to nonperiodical regularities and recurrences. In literature we generally group such processes under the headings of sensibility and taste. These terms do not only indicate the metarational level on which decisions are taken, they also indicate the thin and pervasive nature of the value judgments

involved, as well as a randomized, carefree, and unfocused interaction with all kinds of material interests and existential choices."[6]

Nemoianu's shrewd redefinition of a literary canon may be employed fruitfully within a global context, especially if we wish to renounce the disciplinary mentality that has largely determined the past cultural uses of literary canons. We would then no longer see a literary canon as a consecrated, quasi-religious body of literary texts, or as a political pie to be cut every which way, or as an ever-changing laundry list of cultural inclusions and exclusions, or as a commercial gimmick of moving around "intangible" goods or "intellectual capital." Rather, we would regard it as a potentially infinite network of artistic creations that belong to a multiplicity of open-ended, actual, and possible worlds. In other words, we would preserve a non-agonistic distinction not only between the curricular and the canonical, but also between literature as a cognitive field and literature as an object of critical study or as a "discipline," in all the senses of that word.

Finally, the question may be asked, always from the perspective of an emergent ethics of global intelligence, if it were desirable to work collectively toward the creation of a global literary or any other canon. My answer to that question is a definite negative, if only because such globalizing attempts are invariably doomed to failure. Indeed, the history of Western and other civilizations abounds in examples of improper globalizing projects, based on the idea of bringing the "global" (read Western or other local ways of thinking and doing things) to the "local" (a large number of diverse, alien cultures). An attempt to create a new global canon of any kind would be as impractical and counterproductive as rebuilding the tower of Babel—itself the Biblical archetype of a failed global project. It will soon degenerate into local squabbles about who has a better literature, a higher culture, and more material and intangible goods, or about who is more developed and more powerful (or, conversely, more of a "victim") than all the others.

If anything, a global intercultural dialogue should primarily center on the idea of building a common humanity, based on our interdependent relationships of mutual causality. Obviously, various members of diverse cultures will have different notions as to what the nature and purposes of this common humanity might be, and nobody could tell in advance what new forms of humanity would emerge out of this intercultural dialogue. But we can at least be certain that they will move away from many of the current forms that are revealing themselves to be less and less sustainable.

By the same token, our intercultural and crossdisciplinary research communities should devise new, noncanonical ways of speaking about our literary and other cultural traditions that will be based on resonance, rather than imitation, on cooperation and negotiation, rather than competition and conflict. From the perspective of global intelligence, we would no longer speak, for example, of a major or a minor culture or, specifically, of a major or a minor

literature. In a properly globalized world, there will be no centers and margins, but only interdependent and interactive cultural areas, situated in a horizontal—rather than a vertical or hierarchical—symbolical order. This horizontal, rhizomic cultural model would apply to literary canons as well. Instead of using a body of literary texts as a disciplinary way of including or excluding different national, linguistic, and ethnic groups by affirming the superiority of one over the others, one would employ various literary corpuses to explore cultural differences, but without turning these differences into intractable, transcendental "others."

The question, then, would be not one of literary or cultural syncretism, of amalgamating various elements of diverse literatures and cultures into an all-encompassing global one—a sort of literary or intercultural supercanon—but of allowing cultural and literary differences to enrich us mutually and to delight us with their overflowing, generous abundance. Under those conditions, even literary criticism might change its function. It will no longer be called upon to establish canonical literary hierarchies and to promote or demote literary reputations, based on ever-shifting disciplinary paradigms of inclusion and exclusion. Nor will it be called upon to promote worldwide book sales in the interests of a global, cultural "capital." Rather, it will aim at healing and bringing together, instead of dividing, the local-global communities it will serve.

3. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great:*
   ## An Early Analysis of the Will to Power as Global Impulse

As I have noted in the Introduction, there have been many past efforts at globalization, some of them driven by improper global impulses, some not. Some of them have been Western, and some of them have involved other civilizations. One task of contemporary research in the human sciences could be to reexamine these efforts in their proper historical and intercultural contexts and show their positive and negative impacts on human development in the past three thousand years or so.

Globalizing efforts seem to sweep over the planet in epochal waves (according to the principle of resonance?), although they cannot necessarily be predicted and might be studied, for example, with the nondeterministic methods of chaos theory. Some appear to emerge more or less spontaneously, such as the waves of migration from the East to the West in late Antiquity and the Middle Age. Some have a long gestation period, during which they appear, at least in retrospect, to be carefully prepared ideologically, politically, economically, and culturally. Examples include the Hellenistic, Roman, Arabian, and Mongolian imperial drives, the Christian and Islamic, as well as Communist, proselytizing drives, etc.

Are these globalizing forces driven solely by material, economic, political, or demographic factors as most cultural historians, especially of the Marxist and/or materialist persuasion, seem to believe? Are there other, "immaterial," factors involved? A careful intercultural and crossdisciplinary historical study of these irregular tidal patterns may teach us more about the conditions of the possibility of their emergence and may even give us the collective means of interacting with the process in mutually advantageous and desirable ways.

Be it as it may, the late Middle Age and early Renaissance period in Western history seems to mark the beginning of one of these epochal tidal waves, with its drive toward the "New World" and other, "older," worlds that eventually resulted in the Western colonization of large areas of the globe and may be seen as being at the root of at least some of the globalizing trends today. Literary and nonliterary works in various Western and other traditions deal with the very complex issues that arise in the course of these globalizing processes, and it would be very instructive to look at the way in which they approach such issues. In the Western tradition, there are many examples of these kinds of works, ranging from the diaries of Columbus and other voyagers to the New World, to Spencer's *Fairie Queene* to Cervantes's *Don Quijote*, to English Renaissance drama, most notably in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Here I shall concentrate on Marlowe's drama and briefly examine some of the issues that it raises in relation to the phenomenon of globalization in the Renaissance, in order to determine to what extent these issues might still be relevant today.

In his play, Marlowe stages and reflects on an instance of globalitarianism in the historical, but also legendary, figure of Tamerlan or Timur Lenk, a Mongolian Khan, who was born in 1336 near Samarkand, into a minor branch of a noble Turkic-Mongolian clan. Although he was lame and crippled in his right side (hence his name, Timur Lenk, which meant "limping iron man" in Persian), Tamerlan stunned his contemporaries with his conquests, rivaled in the Middle Age only by those of his predecessor Genghis Khan and, in the ancient world, only by those of Alexander the Great. Through his dramatic character Tamburlaine, Marlowe describes the will to power as global drive. Paradoxically, it is as such that power sheds all its "soft" cultural disguises and mediations and reverts to its archaic manifestation of a naked, warlike mentality, with its attendant ethics of might makes right.[7] Tamburlaine, as presented by Marlowe, is one of the most accurate embodiments of what I have called, in a different context, the *ethopathology* of archaic power (Spariosu 1997).

In order to describe this ethopathology, Marlowe very aptly appeals to the Homeric world of the epic. Homer, particularly in the *Iliad*, presents the same archaic ethopathology, in Achilles and some of his peers. In fact, Menaphon, one of the Persian emissaries in Marlowe's play, refers to Achilles when he describes Tamburlaine's physical appearance to Cosroe, the brother of Mycetes, the king of Persia, and would-be usurper of the latter's crown:

Pale of complexion, wrought in him with passion,
Thirsting with sovereignty and love of arms,
His lofty brows in folds do figure death,
And in their smoothness amity and life.
About them hangs a knot of amber hair,
Wrapped in curls, as fierce Achilles' was,
On which the breath of heaven delights to play,
Making it dance with wanton majesty.
His arms and fingers long and sinewy,
Betokening valor and excess of strength.
In every part proportion'd like the man
Should make the world subdu'd to Tamburlaine. (120)

Here Marlowe idealizes the physical appearance of historical Tamerlan—who in reality was no Homeric giant, but a hobbling cripple of medium height—in order to make his heroic, Achillean stature plausible to his Elizabethan audience. He also shrewdly associates Tamburlaine with an earlier, Western paragon of archaic power, Alexander the Great. Alexander, we recall, was a careful student of the *Iliad*, under Aristotle's tutorship, and a self-avowed imitator of Achilles. He can also be credited (or faulted) with being the first globalitarian figure in the Western world. Marlowe thus shows the will to power as global impulse to be indifferently Eastern or Western, or, indeed, above cultural and ethnic, or even "class" and "gender" differences. In fact, it is the global will to power itself that sets up and erases all of these differences as it sees fit, in order to achieve its hegemonic objectives.

Although historical Tamerlan was of noble descent, Marlowe has his fictional counterpart claim that he is a Scythian shepherd by birth, in order to show that Tamburlaine has no social "complexes of inferiority" vis-à-vis his aristocratic rivals. To Zenocrate, the daughter of the Sultan of Egypt, Tamburlaine invokes the "old" nobility of strength, rather than the "newer" one of birth. He woos her the only way he knows how, namely with the promise of a future empire that he will conquer and lay at her feet by dint of his sheer physical prowess and cunning intelligence:

TAMBURLAINE: I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove,
And yet a shepherd by my parentage.
But lady, this fair face and heavenly hue
Must grace his bed that conquers Asia,
And means to be a terror to the world,
Measuring the limits of his empery
By east and west, as Phoebus doth his course. (112)

Note also Tamburlaine's description of his future empire that will extend from East to West, and back again, just as the sun runs its course. This description uncannily prefigures the Victorian boast, of a later century, that "the sun never sets" on the British Empire.

Tamburlaine's heroic boast (a commonplace in Homeric and other epic poetry) seems also to be accepted by his Persian rivals, who perceive him as an ambitious, Scythian "freedom fighter" who takes up arms against their empire. Their assumption is, moreover, that Tamburlaine, like many other freedom fighters throughout world history, can be co-opted and bought. For example, Ceneus, one of Cosroe's advisors, observes:

> He that with shepherds and little spoil
> Durst, in disdain of wrong and tyranny,
> Defend his freedom 'gainst monarchy,
> What will he do supported by a king,
> Leading a troop of gentlemen and lords,
> And stuffed with treasure for his highest thoughts! (121)

Cosroe and his allies attempt to co-opt Tamburlaine in their power bid for the Persian crown, but it is Tamburlaine who will eventually use them for the same purpose. His rivals underestimate his enormous appetite for power, as well as his cunning intelligence: Tamburlaine fully understands the fluid, reversible dynamic of center and margin and uses it to his advantage in order to move from the margins of the Persian Empire to its very center. When he "betrays" Cosroe in order to seize the Persian crown, the latter calls him "barbarous" and "tyrannical," with the characteristic double standard of any power contender who loses his or her bid. Cosroe forgets that he himself sought to wrestle the Persian crown from his brother, claiming that Mycetes was too "weak" to rule.

Furthermore, even though Cosroe claims to be superior to Tamburlaine, he bases this claim not on an archaic, but on a "modern" mentality of power that, in addition to a residue of archaic criteria, employs "modern," ethnic and cultural, criteria of social differentiation. As a result, Tamburlaine does not recognize him as a peer in any sense of that word and feels no obligation toward him. By contrast, it is "excessive strength" and "love of arms" that determine the hierarchy of values or the archaic ethical code that Tamburlaine lives by. According to this code, sovereign physical appearance must always match sovereign mental disposition and social behavior. Together, they must project an irresistible aura of power, as we can see not only in Marlowe's play but also from many descriptions of the Homeric warriors in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is for this reason that archaic heroes can recognize inner attributes by outward appearance:

> THERIDAMAS: Tamburlaine!
> A Scythian shepherd so embellished
> With nature's pride and richest furniture!
> His looks do menace heaven and dare the gods;
> His fiery eyes are fix'd upon the earth,
> As if he now devis'd some stratagem,
> Or mean to pierce Avernus' darksome vaults
> To pull the triple-headed dog from hell.

TAMBURLAINE: Noble and mild this Persian seems to be,
If outward habit judge the inward man.
TECHELLLES: His deep affections make him passionate.

TAMBURLAINE: With what a majesty he rears his looks—
In thee, thou valiant man of Persia,
I see the folly of thy emperor. (116)

Within an archaic reference frame, like attracts like, so that warriors instantly recognize and are drawn to each other. Tamburlaine and his friends recognize Theridamas, supposedly their Persian enemy, as one of their peers, just as the latter recognizes them as such. Here, again, we see that the archaic code of ethics does not primarily operate in terms of ethnic and cultural differences or dichotomies such as "barbarian" and "civilized," employed by Cosroe. Archaic warriors may become fast friends or fast enemies, irrespective of their ethnic or racial background, according to how they perceive each other in relation to the heroic order of rank. Equality of strength may lead to temporary alliances, but will eventually lead to contest, through which one of the rivals must be subdued or eliminated. Inequality of strength, on the other hand, will often lead to friendships and alliances. Thus, archaic social hierarchies are based on strength, or rather, on recognition of strength. In turn, friendships among archaic warriors are based on commonality of interest and recognition of their order of rank. Theridamas recognizes and does not challenge Tamburlaine's superior strength and, as a result, they become friends and allies.

For his part, Tamburlaine understands that friendships and alliances are based on reciprocal obligations between suzerain and vassal. Although he refers to the legendary friendship between Pylades and Orestes, he also promises to make good on his heroic boasts:

TAMBURLAINE: These are my friends, in whom I more rejoice
Than doth the King of Persia in his crown;
And, by the love of Pylades and Orestes,
Whose statues we adore in Scythia,
Thyself and them shall never part from me
Before I crown you kings in Asia
Make much of them, gentle Theridamas,
And they will never leave thee till the death. (118-19)

In return, Theridamas promises Tamburlaine a vassal's unflinching loyalty and support in his quest for global hegemony: "Nor thee nor them, thrice-noble Tamburlaine/ Shall want my heart to be with gladness pierc'd,/ To do you honor and security" (119).

Although archaic warriors are as a rule presented as a querulous and contentious bunch by a "modern" mentality (for example, in Shakespeare's comedies), they will rarely fight for the sake of fighting, but only when they have no choice. When Theridamas first approaches the Scythian camp, Tamburlaine

asks his friends whether they should fight or parley. Even though they recommend a heroic stand against their numerically superior adversary, Tamburlaine chooses negotiation instead. In fact, as we can see from certain single combat scenes in the *Iliad*, a hero's boast can also be a strategy of prevailing over his adversary by the power of rhetoric, rather than that of arms.

But, Tamburlaine will, of course, not hesitate employing violent methods of discouraging others from fighting, even though he never employs violence for its own sake. His legendary cruelty is again in keeping with his archaic code of ethics: he posts a three-day policy toward his objects of conquest in the form of differently colored tents and helmet plumes. The first day, he pitches white tents in his camp and wears a white plume on his helmet, to signify that, if the city he has invested will surrender, he will be merciful and spare the whole population. The second day, he pitches purple tents and wears a purple plume to signify that he will spare all of those who do not bear arms. The third day, however, his black tents and helmet plume signify that "Without respect of sex, degree or age/ He razeth all his foes, with fire and sword" (151). This policy, strictly enforced, spares him many a battle and, more important, deliberately projects an image of irresistible power. For instance, when asked to spare the Virgins of Damascus who come to entreat him for mercy, he puts them to death all the same: "They have refus'd the offer of their lives,/ And know my customs are as peremptory/ As wrathful planets, death, or destiny." (166)

Throughout the play, Tamburlaine shows no pity—a Christian attitude, irrelevant to an archaic mentality. But he does show mercy, again as a calculated move in a power game. For instance, he makes an exception in the case of the Sultan of Egypt, Zenocrate's father, sparing his life, for shrewd pragmatic reasons: he earns Zenocrate's gratitude (instead of her odium) and gains a useful political ally in his father-in-law. In fact, the above examples have already begun to reveal that the ethical code of Tamburlaine and his world, including such cooperative values as are generally associated with friendship, loyalty, justice, love, sexual relations, family, children, aesthetics, and religion, is entirely derived from the power principle, which is the be-all and end-all of life on earth and beyond.

For an archaic mentality, the loyalty that is required between a suzerain and a vassal is also required between husband and wife, and father and children. Olympia, the wife of the Captain of Balsera, is a case in point. The Captain does not yield to Tamburlaine's three-day military policy and does not hand over the town of Balsera to him without a heroic resistance. He dies from his wounds, and his loyal son and wife decide to follow him. Olympia, his wife, stabs her son to death at the latter's request:

SON: Mother, dispatch me, or I'll kill myself,
For think you I can live and see him dead?

Give me your knife, good mother, or strike home:
The Scythians shall not tyrannise on me.
Sweet mother, strike, that I may meet my father. (218)

In turn, Olympia has Theridamas kill her, through a stratagem. She spurns
the Persian "enemy," who has fallen in love with her, and remains loyal to her
family, even if this means death. Through Olympia, Marlowe presents a model
of a warrior's family whose cooperative values include sharing his good or ill
fortune. Theridamas compares her to Zenocrate, who has developed similar loy-
alty for her husband, despite her occasional disapproval of his bloody deeds.

Tamburlaine expects the same cooperative values from his family. He
slays one of his sons when the latter proves to be a "weakling" who is more
interested in the soft life of a courtier, than in the hard life of a warrior. Tam-
burlaine stabs him in front of his enemies to show them "war's justice," which
he claims makes the "difference" between him and them:

And now you, ye canker'd curs of Asia
That will not see the strength of Tamburlaine,
Although it shine as brightly as the sun,
Now you shall see the strength of Tamburlaine,
And, by the state of his supremacy,
Approve the difference 'twixt himself and you. (230)

When the defeated kings accuse him of "barbarous tyranny," Tamburlaine
invokes again the archaic ethics of war, which metes out a higher justice than that
of their double standards. Like Cosroe, these kings cannot accept defeat as recog-
nition of the archaic order of rank and therefore fail to live up to "war's justice":

The Scourge of God and terror of the world,
I must apply myself to fit those terms,
In war, in blood, in death, in cruelty,
And plague such peasants that resist in me
The power of Heaven's eternal majesty. (231)

Archaic power creates its own kind of "beauty" or aesthetic values. When
Tamburlaine makes an exception in the case of Zenocrate's father, he fears that
her beauty might have softened his heart and distracted him from his goal of
world hegemony:

But how unseemly is it for my sex,
My discipline of arms and chivalry,
My nature, and the terror of my name,
To harbor thoughts effeminate and faint! (168)

At first, Tamburlaine regards his susceptibility to beauty as a sign of weak-
ness, but then he co-opts it for his archaic code of ethics, equating it with love
of warlike values that invest men with true nobility:

Save only that in beauty's just applause,
With whose instinct the soul of man is touched,
And every warrior that is rapt with love
Of fame, of valor, and of victory,
Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits. (168)

Tamburlaine also displays an archaic attitude toward grief and illness. For example, in order to express grief at his wife's death, he burns the town in which she fell ill. This is his way not only of making the town share his grief, but also of punishing the local gods who sent the illness. By burning down their temples, that is, their supply of human worship that nourishes and sustains them, Tamburlaine actually threatens their very existence. When he in turn falls ill, he wants to assemble an army and go against the gods who have sent him the illness, because they are jealous of his power. This is again the warrior's attitude that we see displayed in the Homeric epic, for example, in the case of Achilles. Death itself is perceived by an archaic mentality as a clever invention of the gods, who are envious and fearful of human excessive strength and want to impose limits on it. Some Hellenic warriors are so powerful that they do occasionally defeat the gods and even Death himself. Tamburlaine repeatedly claims to be among their number, although this is one heroic boast he cannot make good on.

Religion itself is, then, seen in terms of an archaic value-system of might makes right. From this viewpoint, the pagan gods, as well as the Christian and Islamic God appear as almighty deities who are involved in the power struggles of mortals. Or, rather, the mortals see themselves as soldiers or pawns that their deities enlist or use as surrogates in the battles they wage against each other. In this sense, one might say that archaic warlike values hardly disappear in later ages or from later, monotheistic religions, but are largely transferred to the divine, transcendental world, including Christian and Islamic faiths. Consequently, deities expect the same kind of cooperative values from warriors and other powerful men that the latter expect from their women, offspring, vassals, servants, serfs, and other dependants, in return for offering them protection.

We have already seen that Tamburlaine presents himself as a Scourge of God whom, in keeping with his archaic warlike values, he considers indifferently as Christian, Islamic, Hellenic, Roman, or Hebraic depending on the faith of his enemies he is "called upon" to punish. Another good example of archaic interpretation of "modern" religion can be seen in the attitudes of a Christian king, Sigismund of Hungary, and of an Islamic king, Orcanes of Natolia. The two kings enter a military alliance against Tamburlaine, which each king secures and guarantees by solemn oaths to his own God.

When the occasion arises for Sigismund to attack Orcanes and eliminate him as a potential rival, his councilors advise him to seize this opportunity. At first, Sigismund objects on the grounds of his religious oath: this would be

"treachery and violence," not so much against Orcanes, as against Christ, the guarantor of Sigismund's "oath and articles of peace."(199) Thereupon, Baldwin, advisor to Sigismund counters that one cannot rely on the "faith" or "true religion" of such infidels as Orcanes, so that what "we avow to them should not infringe/ Our liberty of arms and victory." (199) Sigismund sees through the Machiavellian casuistry of his advisor, however, and still believes that he should keep his oath:

> SIGISMUND: Though I confess the oaths they undertake
> Breed little strength to our security,
> Yet those infirmities that thus defame
> Their faiths, their honors, and their religion,
> Should not give us presumption to the like.
> Our faiths are sound, and must be consummate,
> Religious, righteous, and inviolate. (199)

Frederick, another advisor to Sigismund, intervenes in order to change the ground of the argument to the Bible itself. For this, he invokes the Old Testament's archaic notion of a vengeful God who exacts justice on the principle of "eye for an eye, and tooth for a tooth," which Christ attempted, of course, to turn away from:

> FREDERICK: Assure your grace, 'tis superstition
> To stand so strictly on dispensive faith
> And, should we lose the opportunity
> That God hath given to venge our Christians' death,
> And scourge their foul blasphemous paganism
> As fell to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest,
> That would not kill and curse at God's command,
> So surely will the vengeance of the Highest,
> And jealous anger of his fearful arm,
> Be pour'd with rigour on our sinful heads,
> If we neglect this offer'd victory. (199f)

Sigismund allows himself to be persuaded by this archaic argument and attacks Orcanes. Thereupon the King of Natolia, interestingly, does not appeal to Mahomet, but to Christ, taking him as witness for Sigismund's perjury. If Christ "be jealous of his name and honor/ as is our holy prophet Mahomet" (201), then he should give Orcanes the victory: "To arms, my lords! On Christ still let us cry:/ if there be Christ, we shall have victory." (202) Of course, here Orcanes equally employs an archaic argument, based on the same idea of a vengeful God, "jealous of his name and honor."

Sigismund is vanquished, despite his army's overwhelming numerical superiority, and is mortally wounded. Orcanes attributes his victory to Christ, despite the comment of his ally Gazellus, the Viceroy of Byron, who expresses an even more archaic belief, again echoing Heraclitus:

GAZELLUS: 'Tis but the fortune of the wars, my lord,
Whose power is often prov'd a miracle.

ORCANES: Yet in my thoughts shall Christ be honored,
Not doing Mahomet an injury,
Whose power had share in this our victory;
… this miscreant hath disgrac'd his faith,
And died a traitor both to heaven and earth. (203)

The dying Sigismund shares this view, attributing his defeat to his having betrayed his oath. Before he expires, however, he repents of his sin, reverting to true Christianity: "And let this death, wherein to sin I die/ Conceive a second life in endless mercy!" (202)

This scene is illuminating not only in terms of the archaic mentality that both medieval Christianity and Islam display, but also in terms of the possibility of intercultural communication and cooperation even between warlike cultures. It is enough for both parties to hold to their own religious precepts for them to be able to understand and respect each other. It is also significant that Marlowe, a Christian, shows a Moslem to behave righteously, in keeping with his faith, and a Christian to behave abominably. Sigismund's bad councilors, moreover, resemble our contemporary Western *Realpolitiker* who justify their camp's unjust behavior toward others on mimetic, cultural, and ethnic grounds, such as the Islamic "propensity toward violence" (in contrast to Christian meekness), or Arabic "compulsive lying," "double-dealing," and "constitutional inability" to honor international agreements.

So far we have examined the archaic aspects of the global power drive. Tamburlaine himself aptly sums up these aspects, invoking the entire value-system of might makes right, when he answers Cosroe's accusations of barbarity and bloodthirstiness. His model of conduct is "mighty Jove" himself, whose "thirst of reign and sweetness of a crown" made him thrust his "doting father from his chair" and "place himself in the imperial heaven." (132) Tamburlaine further invokes the archaic, Presocratic theory of physical and human nature as a dynamic complex of four warring elements, in order to demonstrate the universality and ubiquity of the will to power and justify his own quenchless thirst for empire:

Nature, that fram'd us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world,
And measure every wandering planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,
Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweet fruition of an earthly crown. (132-33)

For Tamburlaine, the will to power is a "natural," incontrovertible reality that manifests itself as concrete physical, mental, and cosmic phenomena. He describes the global power drive not only in terms of endless contest, but also in terms of "climbing after knowledge infinite," a theme that Marlowe will develop at length in *Doctor Faustus*. The playwright therefore reminds us that the identification of knowledge and power so common in our contemporary world has archaic origins, for example in Hellenic thought.

For Tamburlaine, moreover, the global power drive can find its culmination only in the "perfect bliss" of an "earthly crown." Here, however, he no longer thinks like an archaic warrior, for whom contest and war are ceaseless and can end only in death, but like an empire builder. Thus, Marlowe shows that any empire building or globalitarian project has as a rule two phases: an archaic phase, in which the archaic mentality of might-makes-right prevails; and a consolidation and preservation phase, during which this mentality gradually recedes into the background or moves away from the metropolis to the margins of the Empire, even as it remains the foundation and guarantee of the latter's growth and prosperity, if not of its very existence.

Marlowe symbolically marks the passage from the first phase of empire to the second one through the liminal event of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate's wedding, at the end of the first part of his play. Before solemnizing their rites of marriage, Tamburlaine lists all his conquests that he claims he has carried out only to honor Zenocrate. Additionally,

> To gratify thee, sweet Zenocrate,
> Egyptians, Moors, and men of Asia,
> From Barbary unto the Western India,
> Shall pay a yearly tribute to thy sire;
> And from the bounds of Afric to the banks
> Of Ganges shall his mighty arm extend. (177)

Tamburlaine orders his vassals to cast off their armors, hang up their weapons, put on scarlet robes, and start making new laws for the kingdoms and provinces they have seized by force. In other words, he orders them to normalize and legalize their power. He crowns Zenocrate Queen of Persia, secures his alliance with her father the Sultan of Egypt, arranges a solemn funeral for Bajazeth and his wife, whom he now calls "this great Turk and his fair empress," as well as for Zenocrate's former fiancé, the King of Arabia, and "takes truce with all the world." (178)

The imperial wedding fails its liminal vocation, however, because it does not yield a new world dispensation, based on peace. For a mentality of power, peace is nothing but a temporary cessation, if not another strategy, of war. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri are illuminating here when they point out that even though "the concept of Empire is always dedicated to peace—a per-

petual and universal peace outside of history," its practice is "continually bathed in blood." (Hardt and Negri 2000: xv)

Although Marlowe is fully aware of the two different disciplinary paradigms or cultures, appropriate for the two phases of empire, he focuses mostly on the first, archaic one, because of historical reasons that are both internal and external to his fictional world: Tamerlan never lived to see his empire reach the second phase. In turn, Marlowe's Elizabethan age had just gone through its archaic, warlike phase (the War of the Roses and other bloody feuds, such as religious ones) and was undergoing a period of consolidation that would last for almost two centuries before England could fully pursue and realize its imperial and colonial dreams. Nevertheless, the global imperial model had already been worked out, and used again and again, since the times of Alexander Macedon and the Roman Empire, as Marlowe obviously was aware. He was also aware of the revived imperial dreams of the West, stimulated by the "discovery" of the New World and entertained by his own country, as well as by its continental neighbors, Spain, Portugal, and France. So he does describe the second phase of empire, even though in less detail.

That Marlowe deliberately staged the concept and strategies of Empire for the consideration of his contemporaries can be seen from Tamburlaine's favorite pastime: power fantasizing, inflamed by world geography and global maps. Like any globalitarian, Tamburlaine is fascinated by geography and cartography. To him they are both a challenge and a measure of his conquests. They are a challenge, because they project and sanction the power status quo: before Tamburlaine ever bursts upon the world historical scene, the globe has already been divided up many times over. Maps mark territories that are firmly in the grasp of past and present conquerors, territories that remain disputed, as well as uncharted or "liminal" lands. At the beginning of the play, we see Tamburlaine fantasizing about remapping the whole known world through his conquests:

> TAMBURLAINE: Those walled garrisons will I subdue,
> And write myself great lord of Africa.
> So from the East unto the furthest West
> Shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant arm.
> The galleys and those pilling brigandines,
> That yearly sail to the Venetian gulf,
> And hover in the Straits for Christians' wreck,
> Shall lie at anchor in the Isle Asant,
> Until the Persian fleet and men-of-war,
> Sailing along the oriental sea,
> Have fetch'd about the Indian continent,
> Even from Persepolis to Mexico,
> And thence unto the Straits of Jubalter,
> Where they shall meet and join their force in one,
> Keeping in awe the bay of Portingale,
> And all the ocean by the British shore;
> And by this means I'll win the world at last. (148-49)

The world that Tamburlaine (or rather his historical prototype, Tamerlan) knows is the triple world of Asia, Africa, and Europe so that his task seems easier than that of Marlowe's contemporary would-be global conquistadors. By the end of Part 1, Tamburlaine has already accomplished two-thirds of his task: he has remapped Asia and Africa. It is significant, however, that Marlowe has Tamburlaine—a "Scythian," nomadic horseman-warrior—invoke the New World (Mexico) and naval expeditions in the preceding citation, not to mention the extensive knowledge of Hellenic and Roman mythology, poetry, and philosophy that he has this "Barbarian" display throughout the drama. The poet seems thereby to "nod," like his model Homer, slipping into anachronism and lack of aesthetic decorum. But it is highly unlikely that an accomplished University Wit such as Marlowe would commit gross historical errors unknowingly. It is more likely that he allows himself the kind of poetic licence that Aristotle calls a plausible impossibility in relation to his audience. He stresses the topicality of Tamburlaine's story, for the benefit of his spectators, by making direct references to the New World, as well as to the would-be imperial contestants for global hegemony in the Renaissance, particularly Spain, Portugal, the Venetian Republic, and England, whose budding hegemonic claims largely depended on the building and/or continuing projection of a credible naval power.

Like Marlowe's contemporary soldier-navigators, Tamburlaine wishes to conquer not only the known worlds, but also the unknown ones in order to satisfy his imperial power drive and to surpass all other global competitors:

> … when holy Fates
> Shall stablish me in strong Egyptia,
> We mean to travel to th'antarctic pole,
> Conquering the people underneath our feet,
> And be renown'd as never emperors were. (162)

Tamburlaine wants to confute all geographers and cartographers, by forcing them to follow him, rather than the other way round. In addition to occupying uncharted territories, he will rename all known and unknown lands after him and Zenocrate:

> I will confute those blind geographers
> That make a triple region in the world,
> Excluding regions which I mean to trace,
> And with this pen reduce them to a map,
> Calling the provinces, cities, and towns,
> After my name and thine, Zenocrate.
> Here at Damascus will I make the point
> That shall begin the perpendicular. (160)

In his quest for global hegemony, Tamberlaine wants to erase all past world geography and world history and rewrite them with one stroke of his "pen," which is his sword. Different maps trace, with the cartographer's pen,

different territorial claims and therefore function as instruments of power: by means of maps, territories can be contested and traded back and forth. Indeed, pen and sword were working together, before, during, and after Marlowe's time, to conquer uncharted territories. In the New World, for example, soldiers, navigators, priests, ethnographers, cartographers, and other sword and pen wielders were staking out and defending new land in the name of the various imperial powers they served. By his pen-sword, Tamburlaine wants to reduce all of these competing territorial claims to "a map," in the sense of both rendering other maps ineffective as instruments of power and reducing them to a single, unchanging map, his own.

At the same time, and with the same stroke of his sword-pen, Tamburlaine wants to arrest the ceaseless global power game of naming and renaming geographical places as a way of taking symbolical, as well as physical, possession of them. To this purpose, he claims that he will confer his and his wife's name upon all of these places, once and for all. In the *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche aptly describes this relationship between power and naming, as well as that between power and language in general, when he notes that archaic lords have the power of conferring names: "One would almost be justified in seeing the origin of language itself as an expression of the ruler's power"; by saying "this *is* that or that," the lords "seal off each thing and action with a sound and thereby take symbolic possession of it." (Nietzsche 1956: 160; italics in the original)

By the end of Part II, Tamburlaine has failed in his bid for global hegemony, just like Alexander the Great, because of illness, and it is again world geography that drives this point home to him. But he does not despair, nor does he renounce his global power bid. On the contrary, on his deathbed, he calls for a map and shows his sons what else is left to conquer, appealing to their greed for fame and riches, so that they will complete the job for him:

> Give me a map; then let me see how much
> Is left for me to conquer all the world,
> That these my boys, may finish all my wants. …
> Look here, my boys; see what a world of ground
> Lie westward from the midst of Cancer's line
> Unto the rising of this earthly globe,
> Whereas the sun, declining from our sight,
> Begins the day with our Antipodes!
> And shall I die, and this unconquered? …
> And from th'Antarctic Pole eastward behold
> As much more land, which never was descried,
> Wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright
> As all the lamps that beautify the sky!
> And shall I die, and this unconquered?
> Here, lovely boys; what death forbids my life,
> That let your lives command in spite of death. (253-54)

From Marlowe's presentation of geography and cartography as Tamburlaine's global instruments of power, we can clearly see that an empire builder may start like a Homeric warrior, affirming war, in the manner of Heraclitus, as a creator and destroyer of all hierarchies, but that he will attempt to arrest all contest and "normalize" his power, as soon as he arrives at the top. Again, Hardt and Negri are illuminating here when they observe that "the concept of Empire presents itself not as a historical regime originating in conquest, but rather as an order that effectively suspends history and thereby fixes the existing state of affairs for eternity." (Hardt and Negri 2000: xiv) We have seen that this is precisely what Tamburlaine attempts to do through his games of geographical remapping and renaming. This attempt at uniformizing and standardizing his rule would ultimately have the side effect of leveling cultural differences within the Empire and banishing them outside its borders. But, of course, Tamburlaine is not concerned with such differences, because he remains within the first, archaic phase of empire building, in which physical prowess and cunning intelligence, not cultural difference, primarily determine hierarchies.

It might be useful to juxtapose briefly Marlowe's view of Empire to that of Hardt and Negri, even though the two postmodern authors advise against such a comparative method. They claim that in their book Empire functions as a "*concept*, which calls primarily for a theoretical approach," and not as a "*metaphor*," which would "require demonstration of the resemblances between today's world order and the Empires of Rome, China, the Americas, and so forth." (Hardt and Negri 2000: xiv; italics in the original) This claim does not prevent them, however, from drawing extensive and instructive comparisons, throughout their book, between their postmodern Empire and the Roman Empire, for example.

Hardt and Negri also claim that they are describing an entirely new historical development, completely discontinuous from past globalizing attempts. We may therefore call this allegedly singular development the "New Empire," in order to underline Hardt and Negri's ideological affinities with the modernist and postmodernist fashion of calling everything "new," from the New Age to the New Economy to the New Technologies to the New Media to the New Society. Yet, is Hardt and Negri's Empire really an entirely new power concept? And if not, is there any sense in which it may, nevertheless, be said to depart from previous concepts?

One can see from Marlowe's play that he is staging one of the avatars of the *concept* of Empire, as it was available in world history up to his time. And this concept already has the basic elements that Hardt and Negri claim to be unique to their New Empire. This is not surprising, because both Tamburlaine and the two postmodern authors follow a phantasmagoric, yet compelling script: the eternal fantasy of global hegemonic power. This script may continually be rewritten by different globalitarians who can add this or that new

detail, method, or twist to it. But the concept of absolute, imperial power remains fundamentally unchanged, not unlike the Platonic realm of Ideas, which, as I have argued elsewhere, is equally an absolute power concept. (Spariosu 1991) On the other hand, what does change and becomes more refined are power's strategies of acting out this global hegemonic fantasy, and it is in relation to such strategies that we may ultimately identify the distinguishing features of the New Empire.

As we can see from both Marlowe's play and Hardt and Negri's informative analyses, it is in the very nature of power to dream of changelessness or stasis, while remaining engaged in a ceaseless, ever-shifting play of forces, or agon (contest). The semantic development of the Hellenic word *stasis* itself is instructive in this respect. Originally, it meant a ceaseless "dynamic" contest of all against all, as in Thucydides's history of the Peloponnesian War, for example, where it meant "civil war." But then *stasis* (civil war) came to mean the opposite of *dunamis* (power), as in our adjective "static," in the sense of stagnation or changelessness. Therefore, ceaseless movement (*dunamis*) and eternal cessation of movement (*stasis*) are the two conceptual poles into which power divides itself and between which it swings back and forth.

These two poles can be perceived either positively or negatively, depending on the position of the contestant in the power game. From the point of view of the contestant rising to power, *dunamis* is perceived positively as ceaseless play of forces, whereas *stasis* is interpreted negatively as stagnation, or death, or "nothingness." From the point of view of the contestant who has reached the top, however, *dunamis* appears as *stasis* in the sense of civil war and therefore anarchy (lack of hierarchy). He would now like to turn this "dynamic" stasis into eternal peace, understood as fixed hierarchical permanence (e.g., in the imperial *pax romana*), not as absence of power or "nothingness."

The mythological emblems of the two power poles are the Wheel of Fortune and Moira or Fate, conceived as immovable Necessity. Power constantly shuttles between these two "ideal" poles, which are no less interchangeable than *dunamis* and *stasis*, as can equally be seen from the semantic development of the terms involved: originally, the Hellenic word *moira* (for example, in Homeric epic) meant "share" or "war booty," for which warriors had to compete. Later on, in classical Greece, it came to mean implacable Fate, Necessity. Finally, in the ancient Roman world, the two concepts became reunited in the ambivalent figure of Fortuna, or Fortune. The relationship between this figure and power is discussed at length in the Renaissance, particularly in Machiavelli's *Prince*, and is reflected, for example, in the English expression "soldier of fortune."

Tamburlaine, like any globalitarian figure, would like to arrest this endless agon, or Wheel of Fortune, on the top position, and thus act as Necessity or Fate for every other contestant. But Marlowe shows that Tamburlaine's absolute power fantasies ultimately remain just that, defeated even by such mundane,

trivial occurrences as illness and unheroic death. When Tamburlaine wants to assemble an army to go against the gods on two occasions (his wife's and his own illness), Theridamas calls him back to mundane reality. Thus, he acts as a sort of "reality check" both for Tamburlaine and for the play's audience.

There are almost no such "reality checks" for Hardt and Negri's New Empire, probably because the authors seem more often than not transfixed by its globalitarian power of seduction, treating its perceptions as if they were "natural," rather than phantasmagoric reality. Tamburlaine's concept of Empire as Necessity or Fate equally applies to the New Empire. Witness, for example, Hardt and Negri's shrewd observation that Empire "presents its order as permanent, eternal, and necessary." (11) Here, the key word, however, is "presents." They do not always distinguish, and seldom very clearly, between the New Empire's claims and its de facto operation, between "ideal" theoretical concept and messy practice. Consequently, they often make contradictory and confusing statements.

For example, Hardt and Negri write that "the concept of Empire is characterized fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: Empire's rule has no limits." (xiv) They should instead have specified that Empire *claims* that its rule has no limits, as we have seen in Tamburlaine's case. But, this claim is always pre-empted by the fact that power cannot function without "limits," or "margins," or something to resist it. As Orwell shows in *1984* (and Samuel Huntington, unwittingly, through his *Clash of Civilizations*) globalitarian power must invent its enemies, if no real enemies are around. Hardt and Negri themselves implicitly recognize this, when they state, in the very next sentence, that "the concept of Empire posits a regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality, or reality that rules over the entire 'civilized' world." (xiv) In other words, they now implicitly acknowledge that the New Empire's rule does have limits, which are those of the "civilized" world.

The New Empire, like any past Empire, must stop at the barbarian borders, be it only in a "virtual" or symbolical manner, and must define itself in terms of those borders. Hardt and Negri themselves write in a different chapter, again contradicting their earlier statement: "The concept of Empire is presented as a global concert under the direction of a single conductor, a unitary power that maintains the social peace and produces its ethical truth. And in order to achieve these ends, the single power is given the necessary force to conduct, when necessary, 'just wars' at the borders against the barbarians and internally against the rebellious." (10) That is why, as Hardt and Negri equally point out, it is necessary for Empire, before it undertakes any police action, to vilify and/or magnify its enemies as barbarians, double-dealers, terrorists, conjurors in an axis of evil, and so forth. This is exactly the way in which the Persian king and other rulers against whom Tamburlaine fights define their empires in Marlowe's play. We have seen that they also define Tamburlaine as barbarian, from their temporary position on top of the Wheel of Fortune.

Hardt and Negri continue their shrewd, if contradictory description of the dynamic of center and margin, characteristic of any Empire, including their own: "One might say that the sovereignty of Empire itself is realized at the margins, where borders are flexible and identities are hybrid and fluid. It would be difficult to say which is more important to Empire, the center or the margins. In fact, center and margin seem continually to be shifting positions, fleeing any determinate locations. We could even say that the process itself is virtual and that its power resides in the power of the virtual." (39)

This cogent description, however, does not support the authors's thesis of the uniqueness of the New Empire. We see, for example in Marlowe's play, that the empire created by a nomadic warrior such as Tamburlaine is also characterized by continuously shifting margins and centers. This ceaselessly shifting position does not mean that centers and margins do not exist, or that they do not function as such, be it only in an imaginary or virtual manner. Rather, the center of power is where Tamburlaine happens to be at a certain moment; indeed, it travels around with the nomadic warrior. In past empires, as well as in other power systems, centers and margins are equally important for power to be able to function at all. The "new" and "improved" element in this power mechanism might be precisely the rapidity with which margins and centers shift positions, so that even Hardt and Negri are mystified into believing that the power of the New Empire is now universal or, even more effectively, a "concrete universal." (39)

Hardt and Negri claim that the New Empire is historically unique, also because we "are dealing here with a special kind of sovereignty—a discontinuous form of sovereignty that should be considered liminal or marginal insofar as it acts 'in the final instance,' a sovereignty that locates its only point of reference in the definite absoluteness of the power that it can exercise." (39) In this respect, according to them, the New Empire "appears in the form of a very high tech machine: it is virtual, built to control the marginal event, and organized to dominate and when necessary to intervene in the breakdown of the system (in line with the most advanced technologies of robotic production)." (40) But, the virtuality and discontinuity of imperial sovereignty hardly impair "the effectiveness of its force: on the contrary, those very characteristics serve to reinforce its apparatus, demonstrating its effectiveness in the contemporary historical context and its legitimate force to resolve world problems in the final instance." (40)

This description of the mode of operation of the New Empire sounds plausible, although Hardt and Negri have it *à l'envers*: it is the high-tech machine that is built on the model of Empire, rather than the other way round. The two authors display the typical modernist and postmodernist fascination with the high-tech world that becomes as much of a Fate as the globalizing processes that it supposedly triggers. But, anyone using e-machines knows very well that, no matter how advanced or fancy they are, they can easily break down or

malfunction, often at the slightest change in conditions, such as rainwater, or sand, or a virus getting into their systems, not to mention massive "power surges" and "power failures." Just as there is an enormous gap between the phantasmagoric claims and the actual, daily performance of Empire, there is a huge gap between the inflated claims and the actual, day-to-day performance of high-tech machines. Orwell is again instructive here, when he presents his globalitarian dystopia as plagued by trivial, daily technical malfunctions.[8]

A related problem is that Hardt and Negri regard the New Empire as liminal, thus "buying" its claim that it occupies all centers, margins, and interstices. By contrast, Marlowe is fully aware of the ambiguous position of power vis-à-vis the liminal. One example of a liminal, ambivalent figure in the play is Theridamas, who may be worth examining briefly in the context of Empire. As we have seen, from their first meeting, Tamburlaine correctly reads Theridamas as a "noble," but "mild" personality. The Persian lord understands power well, for example, when he praises kingship:

> To wear a crown enchas'd with pearl and gold,
> Whose virtues carry with it life and death;
> To ask and have, command and be obey'd;
> When looks breed love, with looks to gain the prize,
> Such power attractive shines in princes' eyes. (129)

Yet, when Tamburlaine asks him if he would be king, he answers: "Nay, though I praise it, I can live without it." (129) Theridamas does not have the same unquenchable desire for kingship that his friends do. His mild nobility is also recognized by Olympia, the "heroic" wife of the Captain of Balsera, who uses Theridamas's love for her to turn him into an unwitting instrument of her death. She spurns him because "no power attractive shines" in his eyes, in other words, because he does not share her dead husband's heroic values that she has fully internalized and instrumentalized. Olympia has literally no use for the Persian beyond making him the tool of her own self-destruction: she cannot entertain the possibility of a "mild" kind of life, outside the world of archaic power.

Yet, Tamburlaine, with his characteristic shrewdness, immediately sees the utility of having a liminal figure in his inner circle. Theridamas presents no threat to him, because he only partially shares his warlike values and his hegemonic objectives, contenting himself with accepting the subordinate position of Tamburlaine's "vassal." But, precisely because of that, Theridamas can offer him "neutral" and "disinterested" advice. Tamburlaine rarely relies on anybody else's council, and Theridamas is one of the very few vassals who can freely admonish the despot, without fear of his life. In Theridamas, therefore, Marlowe presents his audience with a nonhegemonic, if still power-oriented, standard—a "reality check," by which it can evaluate Tamburlaine's actions, as well as the fictional world of the play in general.

On the other hand, Hardt and Negri, by conflating the liminal and the marginal, present the New Empire as a historical necessity and inevitability. If the New Empire occupies a liminal position, as it and they claim, then it cannot be viewed from a non-imperial locus, nor is there any passage or escape into a different, non-imperial world. That is why Hardt and Negri develop the theory that the only alternative to the New Empire is an even newer "Counter-Empire" that would operate from within and would be established by the New Barbarians. But, thereby, Hardt and Negri forget their own insight that the New Empire has already precluded this possibility by claiming to have erased all differences between the inside and the outside.

The two postmodern authors imagine that the New Barbarians will bring Empire down through violence, as well as through "nomadism," "desertion," and "exodus." (Note, again, the logical inconsistency: the barbarians, like their historical counterparts who brought about the collapse of the Roman Empire, are supposed to operate from both within and outside the New Empire's borders, even though, according to Hardt and Negri, such borders no longer exist.) To this purpose, Hardt and Negri quote Nietzsche: "Problem: where are the *barbarians* of the twentieth century? Obviously they will come into view and consolidate themselves only after tremendous socialist crises." (Nietzsche, in Hardt and Negri 2000: 213)

Although they state that Nietzsche was "oddly prescient" of the barbarians's role in bringing down Empire, Hardt and Negri confess they "cannot know exactly" what the German thinker "foresaw in his lucid delirium." So they advance the odd hypothesis that it is Nietzsche's "barbarians" that in 1989 brought down the Berlin wall (213f). They might be perversely right, though: the Wall was brought down, not by the will of the "multitude," as they claim (214), but by the will of the New Nomenclatura in Russia and Eastern Europe. This ruthless and highly shrewd, young elite, who had completely severed their emotional ties to the old Marxist-Leninist ideals of social justice that largely motivated their parents and grandparents, saw the necessity of governing their starving "herds" by other, more capitalist means. They equally saw the increased opportunities of power and wealth that such capitalist means would bring to their own ranks.

It is common knowledge, however, that Nietzsche referred precisely to his overmen as the New Barbarians who would guiltlessly embrace the archaic values of might makes right and would mold socialist and democratic Europe into a new, multinational Empire. In fact, his "lucid delirium" seems uncannily to predict one of the current globalizing trends. As he points out in *The Will to Power*, the possibility "has been established for the production of international racial unions whose task will be to rear a master race, the future masters of the earth—a new tremendous aristocracy, based on the severest self legislation, in which the will of philosophical men of power and artist-tyrants will be made to endure for millennia—a higher kind of men, who, thanks to their

superiority in will, knowledge, riches, and influence, employ democratic Europe as their most pliant and supple instrument for getting hold of the destinies of the earth, so as to work as artists upon "man" himself. (Nietzsche 1968: note 504)

Hardt and Negri unwittingly disclose their own imperial project, the Counter-Empire, or shall we call it the New New Empire, which, according to them (and Walter Benjamin) is "a necessarily violent, barbaric passage" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 214-15). Of course, Hardt and Negri call their envisaged world order, not Empire, but New Republicanism. In this they would certainly earn Nietzsche's approval, because, after all, the New Barbarians would not wish to offend the sensibilities of democratic Western society—that would be entirely counterproductive in reaching their hegemonic goals. As in the case of any other would-be globalitarian, Hardt and Negri's transparent fantasy is to replace one Empire by another, not without first reenacting, through the New Barbarians, the archaic, "dynamic" phase of empire building, described in Marlowe's play. To use a not entirely inappropriate metaphor from the world of TV games, Hardt and Negri wish to spin the Wheel of Fortune once again, to compete for new "booty."

In this light, Hardt and Negri's idea of the multitude defeating Empire through Christian love (see especially the last section of their book) is logically inconsistent, misleading, and phantasmagoric. First, this would be a historical "repetition" of the circumstances of the Roman Empire's collapse, despite the fact that Hardt and Negri proclaim the historical singularity of the New Empire. As such, one cannot expect that the New Barbarians, reinfused with Christian love, will do any better than the old ones: the latter were converted and "tamed" by the Christian message of love that was, however, immediately co-opted by the prevailing mentality of power, as the violent history of Christianity and of the Christian Church sadly attests. Second, if Christian love is the privileged means of defeating the New Empire, what would happen to all of the other faiths, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, and so forth? Would they also need to be converted to Christianity, possibly through New Crusades, before they could join this new dispensation, based on Christian Universal Love? Third and most important, violence of any kind, be it in the name of Love or of any other generous principle, will not bring about the desired changes in current human mentalities, but will only perpetuate them ad infinitum, as Marlowe's play clearly implies.

A much better strategy for human (self-) development would be to recognize, like Theridamas, that we could very well live without Empire and simply walk away from it. Marlowe's play, no less than Hardt and Negri's book, dramatizes once more the need for literary studies and the human sciences in general, to work together toward creating a mindset conducive to alternative, irenic ways of relating to each other within our profession and within our communities at large.

Notes

1. See John Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive*, p. 33. I discuss this work at some length in *The Wreath of Wild Olive*, pp. 275-89.

2. This section can therefore best be read in conjunction with Part III of *Global Intelligence and Human Development*, where I present a brief paradigmatic history of the university in the West. An excellent historical account of the humanities in American academia is offered by Kurt Spellmeyer in *Arts of Living. Reinventing the Humanities for the Twenty-First Century* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2003). Spellmeyer and I have arrived (independently) at similar conclusions regarding a number of contemporary issues in the humanities, including the counterproductive effects of critique in the present academic environment, the necessity of bringing together the humanities and other branches of learning and making them relevant to current world concerns, and the cultural importance of the notion of resonance. I also admire his converting the writing program at Rutgers into an interdisciplinary effort to make students aware of and address a number of current global concerns. I am less excited about his professed pragmatism (despite my own interest in resolute civic action at the local level), which ultimately leads him to extol the benefits of an (idealized) Athenian-style democracy and a competitive, "free" market, in which the humanities must become "service providers." (Spellmeyer 2003: 20) I also do not share his negative view of theory (although I agree with him about its egregious abuses in the contemporary human sciences), nor do I share his unqualifiedly positive view of the so-called hard sciences. Above all, his home-grown, North American pragmatism, which historically has often gone hand in hand with reductive utilitarianism, blinds him to the creative role of "disinterestedness," liminality, and play at the intersection of cultures and academic disciplines (even though I again agree with him about the politically opportunistic, postmodernist abuses of these concepts).

3. For a useful discussion of the Romantic extension of the canonical from religion to literature up to the present day, see Pierre Walker, "Arnold's Legacy: Religious Rhetoric of Critics on the Literary Canon," in Virgil Nemoianu and Robert Royal (editors), *The Hospitable Canon: Essays on Literary Play, Scholarly Choice, and Popular Pressures* (Philadelphia/ Amsterdam, 1991), pp. 181-97. A good example of a reaffirmation of "elitist" or "aristocratic" literary critical values in a mostly "democratic" age is Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon: The Books and the School of Ages* (New York, 1994). Bloom's arguments in defense of high literary critical values occasionally reach the high pitch of religious fervor, if not bigotry, recycling his youthful interest in Romantic poetry as a new form of theology. A comprehensive recent feminist perspective on the canon can be found in Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon* (London/New York, 1999). The issue of canon-formation and national identity is also discussed by several contributors to the collective volume, *National Heritage - National Canon* (Budapest, 2001), including the editor of the volume, Mihaly Szegedy-Maszak. This collection is remarkable for its diversity of multidisciplinary and multinational viewpoints, even though it does not amount yet to an intercultural research project of the kind I am proposing here. Each contributor does his or her own thing, and very few attempt to engage the others in an intercultural dialogue. Finally, the controversy about the role of the literary canon in relation to humanistic knowledge in general is equally relevant to the present discussion. For this larger debate see, among others, Robert Scholes, *Textual Power: Literary Theory and the Teaching of English* (1985), Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), Gerald Graff, *Professing Literature* (1987), Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life. 1500 to the Present* (2000), and Kurt Spellmeyer, *Arts of Living* (2003).

4. See Nicholas T. Parsons, "'Sweetness and Light' or 'Tyrannical Schoolmaster'?" in Szegedy-Maszak (ed.), *National Canon - National Heritage*, p. 56.

5. See Virgil Nemoianu, "Literary Canons and Social Value Options," in Nemoianu and Royal (eds.), *The Hospitable Canon*, p. 219.

6. See Nemoianu, in *The Hospitable Canon*, p. 232.

7. I discuss this issue at length in *God of Many Names: Play, Poetry and Power in Hellenic Thought from Homer to Aristotle* (Duke University Press, Raleigh, N.C., 1991). There I make a distinction between an archaic and a median mentality of power, and show how these two mentalities engage in a relationship of mutual causality throughout the history of Hellenic thought.

8. For a good discussion of the "mechanical materialism" of the Western mentality that reaches its climax in postmodernism, with disastrous consequences for the global environment, see Gare, *Nihilism Incorporated*, pp. 110-55. See also Chapter 3 below. As to the "mechanical failures" of the New Empire, an instructive, if tragic, case is the failure of the various intelligence services in the US to prevent the terrorist attacks of September 11. Even though these services had enough specific information in their data pool to track down at least two of the terrorists and thus possibly stop all of the attacks, such information slipped through the bureaucratic cracks and was discovered only after the fact. The lesson to be drawn is not primarily that the intelligence services need better coordination, but that no amount of preparation and coordination can in the end prevent some of these attacks from succeeding. The dream of total security is as phantasmagoric as the dream of total control or hegemony, which will always founder on some mundane, unanticipated sequence of events or unintended consequences. In this respect, the so-called "war on terror" will, unfortunately, be no more successful than the so-called wars on poverty, drugs, and so forth. Lasting national and global security can be achieved only by giving up imperial ambitions and participating in the creation of a planetary society that is organized on principles other than power.