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**LITERATURE AT THE COSMOPOLITAN
CROSSROADS: ANIS SHIVANI**

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**LITERATURE AT THE COSMOPOLITAN
CROSSROADS: ANIS SHIVANI**

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“En unas pocas centurias, the future will belong to the mestiza. Because the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms, it depends on the straddling of two or more cultures. By creating a new mythos — that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave — la mestiza creates a new consciousness.”

Glória Anzaldua, *Borderlands/La Frontera*

RESUMO

O momento histórico em que vivemos nos convida a discutir questões sobre o fim das grandes meta-narrativas da modernidade, a economia de mercado e os direitos humanos. Vários autores, no campo literário, têm contribuído para a intensificação desses debates de forma aberta e comprometida. Entre eles está Anis Shivani, escritor paquistanês/estadunidense que atua como poeta lírico, romancista, contista, ensaísta e crítico literário. Avesso a rotulações, ele é um cidadão do mundo com opiniões contundentes sobre as formas de distribuição de poder em nossa época. O corpus de aplicação desta dissertação é seu livro de contos *Anatolia e Outras Histórias* (2009), onde encontramos um elenco de protagonistas representativos do que Frantz Fanon classifica como "os miseráveis do mundo", pessoas marginalizadas devido a suas crenças, ou à cor de suas peles, os pobres, os imigrantes, trabalhadores ilegais, refugiados, anarquistas, povos indígenas. O objetivo do trabalho é alimentar a discussão sobre este assunto. A dissertação se articula em três capítulos. Os dois primeiros apresentam uma visão panorâmica da problemática social e política ligada ao questionamento acerca da legitimidade do *mainstream*. O Capítulo Um trata sobre colonialismo, discurso pós-colonial, resistência anticolonial e descolonização; o Capítulo Dois apresenta os pensadores que teorizam sobre essas questões. Como se trata de um estudo com raízes na área de Letras, eu considerei pertinente abrir também um breve espaço para apresentar ideias sobre uma pedagogia cosmopolita. No Capítulo Três faço a crítica aplicada, com foco voltado para *Anatolia e Outras Histórias*. Após uma apresentação e comentários sobre a estrutura e o âmbito do livro, ofereço minha leitura de três contos, a saber, "Dubai", "Repatriação" e "Anatólia". Trata-se de um trabalho politicamente engajado, pois acredito na função social da literatura e no poder que ela tem para modificar o mundo. Encaro a obra de Shivani como única e transgressora, com suas personagens provenientes de culturas distintas e de diferentes épocas, compondo histórias de vida que ilustram a tendência contemporânea de busca por uma literatura mundial, que se pretende cosmopolita, onde percebemos inovações estilísticas como a mistura livre entre inglês e outros idiomas, reversões de narrativa, o uso inteligente de metáforas e a apresentação de pontos de vista aparentemente conflitantes. A pesquisa se volta para o estudo da dissidência, da transgressão, do não conformismo, convidando para o diálogo global. Ela investiga os temas que permeiam as narrativas, como a alienação, os sentimentos sobre estar em um entre-lugar, ou de falta de pertencimento, ou de não se enquadrar, a sensação de estar sendo perseguido, sentida pela maioria das personagens, cuja expectativa é serem aceitos e se sentirem integrados ao ambiente em que residem. Ao término desta pesquisa, espero haver demonstrado o valor da contribuição do universo ficcional criado por Anis Shivani como sendo um pleito cultural caleidoscópico e humano em favor da necessidade de alcançarmos formas mais eficientes de entendimento entre os países e as civilizações de nossa época. Acredito que se existe alguma força capaz de realizar tal façanha, ela vem a partir do canal aberto pela troca de ideias que a Literatura proporciona.

Palavras-chave: 1. Anis Shivani. 2. Cosmopolitanismo. 3. Transmodernidade. 4. Decolonialidade. 5. Diversidade Cultural. 6. Crítica Literária.

ABSTRACT

The historical moment we are living in invites us to discuss issues such as the end of the grand meta-narratives of modernity, market economy, and human rights. There are a number of authors, in the literary realm, who trigger this debate in an intense and committed way. One of them is Anis Shivani, a Pakistani-American author who is a lyrical poet, novel and short-story writer, essayist and literary critic. Shivani shuns labels, yet he is a citizen of the world with strong positions about the distribution of power in our time. The corpus of this thesis is Shivani's short story book *Anatolia and Other Stories* (2009), in which we meet a cast of protagonists that are representative of what Frantz Fanon calls the "wretched of the earth", people who do not fit because of their sets of beliefs, or the color of their skins: poor people, immigrants, undocumented workers, refugees, anarchists, indigenous people. The thesis aims at discussing such topics. For that reason, the first two chapters offer a panoramic view of the social and political processes that challenge the legitimacy of the mainstream. Chapter One comments on the issues of Colonialism; Post-Colonial discourse, Anti-Colonial resistance and Decolonialization. Chapter Two presents the thinkers who theorize upon such questions. As this thesis is written from within the realm of a Letters graduate course, I considered it important to open a space, in Chapter Two, for the discussion of a Cosmopolitan pedagogy. Chapter Three, the second section of the work, closes the focus of the research on *Anatolia and Other Stories*. After the presentation of the author and a comment on the structure and scope of the book, I offer my analysis of three of the short-stories, namely "Dubai", "Repatriation" and "Anatolia." This reading is politically committed, because I believe in the social role of literature and in its power to change the world. I see Shivani's as a unique and transgressive kind of literature. *Anatolia and Other Stories* introduces characters coming from a variety of cultures and time periods, whose life stories emphasize the contemporary trend towards a world literature, which intends to be cosmopolitan, through the use of stylistic innovations, such as the free mixture between English and other languages, narrative reversals, a clever use of metaphors and apparently opposing points of view. This thesis focuses on the elements of dissent, transgression, and non-conformism, which call for the globalization of dialogue. It investigates the discussion of themes that permeate the narratives, such as alienation, the sense of in-betweenness, of belonging, of outsidersness, the reality of persecution experienced by most of the characters, who long for integration. At the end of the work, I hope to have substantiated the importance of Anis Shivani's contribution in providing a kaleidoscopic, humanistic, cultural and artistic plea for the urgency and necessity of a better understanding among countries and civilizations. I believe in the power of Art to fulfill such a delicate task.

KEYWORDS: Anis Shivani; Cosmopolitanism; Transmodernity; Decoloniality; Cultural Diversity; Literary Criticism.

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INTRODUCTION

In a thesis, the Introduction is the place where the keys from which the work is to be read must be presented. Although I am aware of the fact that, as a researcher, I must observe a position as neutral as possible, I must apologize in advance for not always being as detached as I probably should. However, the complex issues here presented are very dear to me, and in fact I believe that there are moments when one should stand up for the things he/she believes in. And it is my belief that we must have a clear view of the present post-nationalist hybrid time-space compression of superpowers and internationalized structures of post-industrialized informational capitalism in order to enter the fictional world of Anis Shivani. Thus, we will be able to understand the relationship between Shivani's imagined cultural representations and the ensuing relations of power that take place among his global characters.

In order to come to terms with this perilous enterprise, I think that the best way to undertake the analysis of literature (my main purpose here) is to use a multi-perspectival approach. Such analysis may, therefore, be best understood as a critique of the homogenizing ideological logic of the Western hegemonic powers of Europe and America, from colonialism onwards, so as to analyze the historical background of the mainstream imperialistic cultural politics and their economic system as a generator and perpetuator of social injustice, as are reflected in the characters' fight for survival and dignity in the analysed short stories.

I believe that in order to discuss the global paradigm through a multi-perspectival approach it is important to present some alternatives to the present state of affairs from a humanistic perspective. Therefore, I decided to base the research on the libertarian – and at times idealistic – theories of people who dare to plunge deep into the analysis of the system, such as cultural semiotician professor Walter Mignolo, and scholars as Gayatri Spivak, Anthony Appiah, Edward Said, the revolutionary poet and writer Aimé Césaire, the also revolutionary writer, critic and psychotherapist Frantz Fanon, Enrique Dussel, Ashis Nandy, Glória Anzaldúa, Ramón Grósfoguel, as well as Anis Shivani himself. Since this American writer of Pakistani descent writes what has come to be known as world literature, it is important to make an analysis of the anti-colonial movement of resistance and its aftermath, post-colonialism. For this, I count on the help provided by the ideas of Aimé Césaire, an icon of the anti-colonial movement of resistance; and on Franz Fanon, writer and revolutionary; on

Edward Said's inspiring activism and the lucid criticism of Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. Through them, I will be able to pinpoint the continuities between the colonial past and our new world [dis]order – and, at the same time, disclose some relevant global counter-hegemonic cultural and social movements of resistance to this neo-liberal politics of inequalities.

Needless to say, literature is a cultural phenomenon which cannot be isolated from history and society, since it is a reflection of a given historical and political moment and cannot be separated from the national or international context. As a way to analyze this implication, I would like to draw attention to the disregarded links between the Enlightenment and colonialism, given the fact that the moral prerogative of the Enlightenment project was to shed light on the “darkness” of ignorance. This caused the non-Western peoples to be regarded as primitive by the European intelligentsia, which saw sense in enslaving and subjugating millions of people under the guise of an ‘ethical’ civilizing mission of saving souls. In this case, the monopoly of wisdom by Europe can be also interpreted through the metaphor of Plato's cave, whereby the philosopher-king from Plato's cave, *Sarastro*, had the moral right and obligation to return to the cave, and take people from darkness into the light, even if he had to make use of force to drag the unenlightened ones into the sunlight of his vision of the world.

By way of demystifying this Enlightenment project, or unveiling its hidden links with imperialism, I present this excerpt from the book *Postcolonial Enlightenment*:

Irremediably Eurocentric, the ideas grouped under the rubric of Enlightenment are explicitly or implicitly bound up with imperialism. In its quest for the universal, Enlightenment occludes cultural difference and refuses moral and social relativity. Inasmuch as its values are identified as coextensive with modernity, the Enlightenment naturalizes a teleology in which all roads inexorably lead to an episteme associated with the West. Frozen in the dark backward and abyss of the ‘primitive’ or ‘savage’, non-Western populations are stripped of the agency and historicity that underwrites civilized advancement. The doctrine of progress, in turn, legitimates imperial conquest under the guise of the civilizing mission, while the celebration of reason disqualifies other belief systems as irrational or superstitious. Enlightenment becomes alternatively the engine of a relentlessly totalizing historical spirit and the ideological sugar coating designed to disguise the bitter nature of empire from both its victims and its perpetrators. Cast in these terms, any vestige of the Enlightenment that remains, within a theory, becomes a sign of insufficient liberation. (CAREY & FESTA: 2009, p. 8)

It is also common knowledge today that the Western cultural forms can be placed in the dynamic scenario created by imperialism, which itself has been portrayed as a dispute

between the global North and the global South; the metropolis and the periphery; Whites and Colored; the West and the East; the global and the local; the hegemonic and the subaltern... we could go on and on, for the list of these opposing and yet complementary binaries seems endless, as if no identity can exist by itself, without opposites and negatives: the Greeks require the Barbarians; the Europeans, the Africans and the Asians; the Americans, the rest of the world...

Nowadays, in face of global terrorism, religious intolerance, xenophobia and all sorts of human rights' violations, the discussion of culture and arts through a multi-disciplinary approach imposes itself. Therefore, I have tried to make a point throughout this thesis: that the real polarization today is between the ones who propose and incite the clash of civilizations and the ones who believe in the intercultural and interfaith dialogue as the viable bridge among cultures and civilizations, as a way to bring about more tolerance and a shared sustainable present and future for humanity and all the other living creatures in this beautiful planet. It is my aim to counter globalization from above – with the ugly face of economic inequality – through the analysis and discussion of themes as belonging, outsidership, racism, xenophobia translated in the persecution to immigrants; as well as other controversial issues such as sexism, patriarchy, Islamo-phobia, anti-Semitism, homophobia, white supremacy and capitalism. I also present my reader with alternative projects that characterize an epistemic shift, such as decoloniality, decolonization of knowledge and being, coloniality of power, border thinking, *mestiza* consciousness, cosmopolitanism from below or critical cosmopolitanism and transmodernity, grounded in the work of the relevant thinkers above mentioned.

Now, after this brief contextualization of the world scenario, I believe it is time to let you know how Anis Shivani entered into my academic life, provoking in me this great enthusiasm concerning his ideas on world literature and cosmopolitanism, which I argue will soon replace the post-colonial academic discourse. One day, early in the morning, when I was reading some critical reviews on Ian McEwan's *Solar*, I was met with a peculiar review, written by a literary critic named Anis Shivani. At that time, I did not realize the importance of that moment, or how it would influence my academic and personal life. As ten American critics had written negative reviews on *Solar*, and here was Shivani disagreeing with them, I decided to dig deeper into that subject. Then, after two years, some bruises, and many fruitful discoveries, here I am, ready to introduce him to the Brazilian academia. As a step further from the well-known and traditional narratives and writers, I chose to discuss the writing of

this American-Pakistani, whose views on literature mirror our irreversible era of social disorder, “of multiple identities, of a spatial economy of power where dichotomies such as first world/third world; metropolitan/peripheral; local/global have lost their purpose (GROSSBERG: 1997, digital source).

Anis Shivani is a versatile world poet, a cosmopolitan citizen and a transgressive writer, one that can help delegitimize global inequalities. His humanistic narrative juxtaposes old and new; east and west; time and space, delivering us a timeless and universal set of stories of both individual and collective suffering, persecution, racial profiling, torture, terrorism, cosmopolitanism; in a nutshell, we hear the hidden history, that is, the unofficial history of artists, undocumented workers, dissenters, people from all colors and cultural backgrounds, being told from their perspective.

The main reason, though, for having chosen Shivani’s short-story debut collection, *Anatolia and Other Stories* (2009), has to do with my admiration for his life and literary trajectory. Graduated in Economics at Harvard, and an enthusiastic reader of the classics, (mainly Chekhov), Anis Shivani stands out as a major spokesman and interpreter of his time. His books on literary criticism and his articles are extremely critical of the consumption of American best-sellers, which, he argues, reproduce the status quo of the ubiquitous workshops of “creative writing” spread throughout the U.S.’s academia. As a lyric and revolutionary outsider, this fiction writer, literary critic, essayist, novelist and poet confronts the hegemonic power at all levels of the empire, as he calls the U.S., on cultural, economic and political terms. Through his multiple identities or roles, he challenges the system, and by so doing, delivers us a unique and magic literature, with characters coming from a variety of cultures and time periods, whose life stories reaffirm the present phenomenon of transmodern relationships among global actors. The themes of the day include dehumanization, uncertainty, surveillance, lack of freedom, the ideological vacuum of political power left by the Western war on terror, the partiality of universal human rights, cosmopolitanism, world literature, a certain sense of alienation, of in-betweenness, of longing to belong, of outsidership, of persecution felt by his immigrant, nomad, and refugee characters, who are transmodern cosmopolitans, crossing the borders of imaginary territories, some pertaining to civilizations lost in time and space.

Anatolia and Other Stories, Shivani’s debut collection of short-stories, reflects his humanistic transnational narrative through the use of stylistic innovations, the free mixture of

English and other languages (mainly Urdu), narrative reversals, a clever use of metaphors and apparently opposing points of view. According to Bilal Ibne's review, *Anatolia and Other Stories*' hardback cover

[...] is a collage of several images: Burj al Arab with a camel in the foreground; a lute with some embroidered shawls (or may be rugs) in the background; a woman's face who is probably gazing into a crystal ball; a Vietnamese (it may be a woman) riding a bicycle; an image of a painting of a Mughal or probably an Ottoman prince riding a horse; an intricate architectural design; and a world map. The stories in the book are as diverse as the images on the book cover [...] Most of his characters are thinking individuals and though ambivalent they do not get swayed by the current of their emotions. Although Shivani's characters come from a variety of cultures and time periods, there is a commonness among them. Most of the characters are uncomfortable with the societies they live in, the cultural norms they have to adhere to and the kind of people they have to deal with and yet they are not frustrated to the extent to take a radical decision of any kind. Some of the stories deal with immigrants who appear to be more comfortable in their adopted societies and cultures than the natives [...] and the characters range from an undocumented Indian worker in contemporary Dubai; to an Issei man in Manzanar, a California internment camp; to eighteenth-century Turkey, where a loyal-to-the-core Jewish trader unveils the hidden inequalities of the Ottoman empire; to a persecuted minority novelist in contemporary 'revolutionized' Iran; to a Chinese-American conservator at a Boston museum; to a Hungarian girl in 1950s rural Indiana; to a dissatisfied Muslim industrialist in post-independence India; to a creative writing workshop in America; to Texas; to an unnamed ship meant to repatriate fifty to sixty million people, these stories of novelistic breadth explore diverse cultures[...] (IBNE: 2009, digital source).

Interestingly enough, South Asian studies became a growing theoretical field in recent years. One just has to read the major academic output in the last 30 years or so, to meet an overwhelming number of Indian scholars-- Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Arjun Appadurai, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Ashis Nandy, from the fields of anthropology, history, literature, art history, who share a common interest: present theories that map Eastern modernity, while unveiling the alternatives presented by marginalized or subaltern groups to the totalizing narratives of a dominant Euro-American order. Postcolonial theory from South Asia is extremely relevant, for it helps us understand the processes of globalization taking place in the 21st century concerning South Asian historical as well as cultural practices. India, for instance, has undergone great social, political and economic changes during the last twenty-five years of economic liberalization, which led to an extraordinary opening to foreign investment and technology — the dot.com culture of Bangalore, India's so-called Silicon Valley.

By way of problematizing the hegemonic Euro-American context today, I draw on Walter Mignolo's groundbreaking book *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (2011) for a better understanding of the underlying structure of Western civilization, conceptualized as the 'colonial matrix of power'. Mignolo argues that

[...] while capitalist economy is globally shared, the colonial matrix of power or 'coloniality' — created and controlled by Western imperial countries (from Spain and Portugal, to Holland, France, England, and the United States) — is today disputed (by China, Russia, some Islamic countries, India, Union del Sur), whose competition for the control of authority and knowledge by state, corporations, and religious institutions, simultaneous to the disputes for liberation from that control in the spheres of sexuality, gender, and subjectivities [...], indicates that what is being contested is not only the control of authority, [...] in human rights' regulations, but also the control of the sphere of knowledge and subjectivities, which account, in the U.S. academy, for the "creation of programs and departments focusing on ethnic/racial and gender/sexuality issues" (MIGNOLO: 2011, xix).

Mignolo's analysis, thus, contextualizes the increasingly fast globalization of this third world economy (India's and other non-Western cultures'), and its drawbacks as the inevitable rise of religious nationalism, the escalation of violence and ethnic conflict, the systematic violation of women's rights and other minority groups', and the threat of the recent nuclear militarism and uneven industrialization with the outrageous wave of suicides due to the impoverishment of cotton growers, who owe fortunes to Monsanto. This gloomy scenario of multiple crises unveils the paradoxes and contradictions of coloniality, which is the dark side of Western modernity.

Therefore, through the discussion of three of Shivani's most emblematic and thought-provoking short-stories — "Dubai", "Repatriation", and "Anatolia", I hope to problematize issues such as surveillance, religious intolerance and totalitarianism, through the unveiling of the white supremacist discourse of racial segregation of people of color in the Western world which has irreversibly been "contaminated" by cultural diversity; and I want to make a point that it does not make sense anymore to represent the world in terms of fixed identities, like East or West, since cultures are hybrid constructions and we all are bound to relate to the others in and out both imaginary and real borders, between reality and imagination in the narrative of the human diasporas throughout the world. So, by practicing "epistemic disobedience" — that is, by presenting the stories from the viewpoint of the subalterns, losers, radicals, libertarians, dissenters; Shivani criticizes the rational logic of

Western epistemology. In a world polarized between conflict and dialogue, his model of writing enacts the “dialogue of civilizations” or the “dialogue among civilizations” countering Huntington’s biased “Clash of Civilizations” thesis. I claim that, unless one engages in a critical cosmopolitanism grounded in inter-cultural and inter-faith dialogue, a paradigm known as “trans-modernity”, one may not be able to achieve peace, justice and freedom on Earth. In a nutshell, transmodernity is a planetary paradigm rooted in tolerance and democracy, and in the dismantling of the hierarchies between different cultures and civilizations as a way to promote Earth citizenship. I do hope that many different hearts, minds and souls from millions of peoples of all different colors may celebrate life in harmony in this beautiful blue planet. The key to accomplish this almost impossible enterprise requires “the decolonization of knowledge and of being, as Mignolo and a collective of South-American thinkers and activists such as Enrique Dussel, Quijano and Grosfoguel put it in order to reach transmodernity. I hope that with this thesis I can contribute to foster the discussion of relevant issues such as the emergence of the alternative paradigm of transmodernity within and outside our academy.

1 CONTEXTUALIZING THE GEOPOLITICAL SCENARIO

1.1 COLONIALISM

We should not ignore that the fight for territories also entails ideas, forms, images and representations. According to Eric Hobsbawm (1987), the epoch of the great classic imperialism reached its climax at the “era of the empire”; which ended with the dismantling of the great colonies after World War II, a fact that has intensely influenced our present global moment. Accordingly, one must not neglect the underlying link between culture and colonialism, since colonialism can be seen both as a historical movement related to a European political and economic agenda throughout modernity, and a metaphor for cultural domination and violence; where culture can be seen both as a historically constituted set of practices and a regime in which power achieves its peak. Within this perspective, the link between culture and colonialism provides us with a critical mapping of history and power relations.

The ultramarine authority demanded vast interests such as the production of a set of cultural forms and structures of feelings, which accounted for the acceptance of the concept that certain peoples — the non-Westerners ---, were citizens of second- hand or less developed, who needed and begged to be subjugated for their own benefit. These distorted ideas in the minds of men, as a consequence of wars and tensions, derived from societies corrupted by class divisions, which, among other factors, were responsible for modern imperialism, whose imagination, logic and hegemonic ideology, by the end of the nineteenth century, was absolutely ingrained in literature, reflected in the great European realist novels, which fostered society’s consent for the implementation of the ultramarine expansion, through which capitalism achieved its global expansion.

Concerning imperialism, Said argues that it is the “practice, and the attitude of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (SAID: 1993, p.8). Colonialism, however, is only one form of the ideology of imperialism, and concerns the settlement of one group of people in a new location. Since imperialism is not strictly concerned with the idea of settlement, imperialism can be defined as “the extension and expansion of trade and commerce under the protection of political, legal and military control” (CONRAD: 2014, p. 276).

In his book *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), Ashis Nandy states two forms of colonization:

One is the physical conquest of territories and the other is the colonization of the minds, selves and cultures. While the first mode is violent, transparent in its self-interest and greed, the second is that of rationalists, modernists and the liberals who claim to have the responsibility of civilizing the uncivilized world. This colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps to generalize the concept of modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds (NANDY: 1983, p. xi).

Modern colonialism even restructured the economies of the countries it conquered; creating a flow of human and natural resources between colonized and colonial countries, which worked in both directions. This situation resulted in the flow of profit and goods along with a global flow of population as both the colonizers and the colonized moved--- colonial masters as administrators, soldiers, merchants, settlers, travelers, writers, domestic staff, missionaries, teachers, scientists and the colonized as slaves, indentured laborers, domestic servants, travelers and traders.

As it is known, no cultural practices are pure, naïve or innocent, since they helped to spread the imperialistic ideology beyond the economic and political decision-making layers, through the authority of identifiable cultural formations, which could be tracked down in education, literature, visual arts and music in the sphere of the national colonial cultures. Neither are literary works autonomous entities, nor are they isolated from the European ultramarine expansionism; for they helped, somehow, consolidate, support and spread the imperialistic practice, functioning as an instrument of cultural control, as well as a highly effective tool for the stereotyping of the ‘native’. Fostered by the colonial expansionism,

literature has been produced around novels, poetry, travelogues, missionary accounts, journals, which praised the ideology of the empire and its distant and unknown colonies, like Africa, which was rediscovered through European eyes. Books of writers such as Joseph Conrad, Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster attempt to retrace the natives' cultural traditions, which can be identified with an attitude of resistance against the colonial power. As to postcolonial literature, it seems that it has started after the Second World War, and it is defined by Elleke Boehmer as “a literature which identified itself with the broad movement of resistance to, and transformation of, colonial societies”. (BOEHMER: 1995, p. 184). On her book, Boehmer defines ‘colonialism’ as “a settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempts to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied land” (BOEHMER: 1995, p. 190).

By 1900, almost every country or region in the world had been subjugated by European colonialism and only after the Second World War, after 400 years of settlement, some states became independent, such as India and Pakistan, which were granted independence in 1947, while French decolonization was marked by wars in French Indochina, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Such literary texts are subject, today, to a systematic operation of deconstruction so as to subvert and unveil the oppressive ideology hidden in the apparently universalizing and innocent accounts of the native peoples' cultural traditions depicted through the biased colonial perspective of the colonizer.

The authors of *The Empire Writes Back*, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, use the term ‘post-colonial’ “to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day”. (ASHCROFT; GRIFFITHS; TIFFIN: 1989, p. 70.)

1.2 POST-COLONIAL DISCOURSE

Likewise, postcolonial discourse can be seen as the outcome of the work of writers such as Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon. Both authors took active part in social movements for the independence of Algeria and stand for the first wave of postcolonial literature. Living in Paris, they rendered positive the previously negative image of “*Négritude*”, which was

celebrated as a symbol of the mysterious Africa by N’gugi Wa Thiango, Bill Ashcroft and his collaborators, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Aijaz Ahmed, among others, since “Négritude” stands for a cultural and ideological movement, whose activists take pride on being black. From 1945 onwards, we witness the second wave of postcolonial writers, epitomized by Chinua Achebe, George Lamming, Ana Ata Aidoo, Alice Munro, Patrick White, Wole Soyinka, J. M. Coetzee and Nadine Gordimer. The third group, known as the migrant writers, like Salman Rushdie and V.S. Naipul, decided to live in London.

Postcolonial criticism has its beginnings in 1978 with the seminal *Orientalism* by Edward Said, which criticized the exotic nature of the West’s depiction of the Orient, contributing to a rethinking of the literary imaginary of the Orient by Western writers, leading to the demystifying of cultural stereotypes. Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak, along with Said, form what Robert Young (1990) calls the “Holy Trinity” of postcolonial theorists.

Said defines *Orientalism* as “Western style for dominating, restructuring, having authority over Orient” (1995, p. 3). This term refers to the historical and ideological process by which images of and myths about the Eastern or “Orient” world have been constructed in several Western discourses, including that of imaginative literature, paving the way for imperialism. Therefore, to a certain extent, the idea of difference and strangeness associated to the Orient, was fostered by the media, creating an ‘us’ and a ‘them’, with tints of an irrational and backward ‘them’, in need to become ‘civilized and modern’ in the European sense.

Accordingly, the Western attitude towards Orientalists is based on ignorance of the Eastern culture and literature, resulting mostly from the West’s dreams, fantasies and assumptions about what this radically different place represents. As the West has misrepresented ‘the Orient’ as a mystic place of exoticism, moral laxity, sexual degeneracy and so forth, in a series of negative terms, Leela Gandhi contends that “*Orientalism* is the first book in which Said relentlessly unmasks the ideological disguises of imperialism” (L. GANDHI, 1999, p. 67).

Said’s *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) continues to document the imperial complicities of some major works of the Western literary canon. Said, Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Columbia, is considered a founding figure of

post-colonialism. Born in Jerusalem, he was a passionate advocate for the political and the human rights of the Palestinian people. This testimony is evidence of his frame of mind:

I have spent a great deal of my life[...] advocating the rights of the Palestinian people to national determination, but [...] with full attention [...] to the reality of the Jewish people and what they suffered by way of persecution and genocide. [...] The struggle for equality in Palestine/Israel should be directed toward a human goal [...], co-existence. [...] Orientalism and modern anti-Semitism have common roots.(SAID:1995, p. xxiii)

Aiming at explaining that Orientalism is back once more, Said opens up his heart and draws our attention to the human component inherent in the relationship with the “Other”, be it in the West or the East:

Orientalism is very much tied to the tumultuous dynamics of contemporary history. I emphasize in it accordingly that neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability; each is made of human effort, partly affirmation, partly identification with the Other that these supreme fictions lend themselves easily to manipulation and the organization of collective passion has never been more evident than in our time, when the mobilization of fear, hatred, disgust and resurgent self-pride and arrogance—much of it having to do with Islam and the Arabs on one side, ‘we’ Westerners on the other—are very large-scale enterprises. (SAID: 2003, digital source)

By way of justifying their domination of the “Other”, Europeans, according to Said, have created an imagined geography of the Orient before European exploration, through predefined images of savages living in vast territories. During the initial exploration of the Orient, these myths were reinforced as travelers who came from the East and told accounts of monsters and stories of strange people and lands.

It seems that Postcolonial theory emerged from the colonized peoples’ frustrations, from their cultural clash with the conquering culture, from their uncertainty about their future and fear of losing their identity. The colonized response to changes in the language, curricular matters in education, race discrimination, the development of their own literature, all these elements became the main themes of postcolonial theories. As the project of postcolonialism also seeks to emancipate the oppressed, the deprived, the subaltern all over the world, it is important to keep G. Rai’s words in mind:

Postcolonialism is an enterprise which seeks emancipation from all types of subjugation defined in terms of gender, race and class. Postcolonialism, thus does not introduce a new world which is free from ills of colonialism; it rather suggests both continuity and change (RAI: 2005, p. 5).

“Postcolonialism”, in the words of Charles E. Bressler, concerns literature written in English in formerly colonized countries and it usually concentrates on writings from

colonized cultures in Australia, New Zealand, Africa and, South America. Like deconstruction and other postmodern approaches to textual analysis, postcolonialism comprises a heterogeneous field of study. It is so controversial, however, that it has different meanings with or without the hyphen. While the hyphenated term ‘post-colonialism’ marks a historical period (‘after colonialism’, ‘after the end of empire’, ‘after independence’); the term ‘postcolonialism’ refers to all the characteristics of a society or culture from the time of colonization to the present. (BRESSLER: 1997, p. 71)

As a historical period, the post-colonial stands for the post- Second World War decolonizing phase. It is important to keep in mind, though, that in spite of the independence of the colonies, the cultural and identity colonial values do not disappear so easily.

Meenakshi Mukherjee draws our attention to other aspects of the concept:

Post-colonialism is not merely a chronological label referring to the period after the demise of empire. It is, ideologically, an emancipatory concept particularly for students of literature outside the Western world, because it makes us interrogate many concepts of the study of literature that we were made to take for granted, enabling us not only to read our own texts in our own terms, but also to re-interpret some of the old canonical texts from Europe from the perspective of our specific historical and geographical location (MUKHERJEE: 1996, p. 62).

A seemingly unsolvable contradiction is that postcolonial theory in its universalizing and also globalizing stance, couples or absorbs critical race studies into a narrative of diaspora and migration. We shall return to this discussion in more detail, since modernity, postmodernism and trans-modernity have to do with our loci of enunciation, from which we speak and dwell.

As a white woman of Russian-Jewish descent, born in Brazil, seeking to unveil the official narrative of Western imperialism, while not disregarding the rich cultural traditions of

the West and the East, I aim at informing this thesis by a rather transgressive attitude towards hegemonic discourses of power and authoritarianism, so as to contribute to the celebration of intercultural dialogue and understanding among civilizations, since war is not an intelligent and sustainable option.

1.3 ANTI-COLONIAL RESISTANCE

An artist, a poet, a revolutionary, in my opinion, the key figure in the struggle against colonialism and any kind of imperialism, Aimé Césaire stands out as the most charismatic personality of the anti-colonial resistance, for his poems, his inspired critique of colonialism, neocolonialism and the European civilization. In his groundbreaking book -- *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955), he claims that due to both the long historical tradition of exploitation and racist practices, Europe is morally and intellectually helpless and that its false allegations of a moral and intellectual superiority must be regarded as lies.

Césaire's critical analysis of colonial barbarian traditions has parallels in the works of numerous other opponents of Colonialism and his approach is strikingly similar to that of Chinua Achebe, who narrated his experiences in Nigeria in a book called *Things Fall Apart* (1958), which we shall comment later.

Describing the postcolonial reality, Césaire also wrote plays, in which he portrays Congo's declaration of independence from Belgian rule as well as the betrayal and murder of Patrick Lumumba. Césaire most celebrated play is *A Tempest* (1969), written as a postcolonial response to Ernest Renan's racist reinterpretation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1623). *A Tempest* explores the relationship between the colonizer Prospero and his colonial subjects, Caliban and Ariel. The play draws upon the postcolonial relations in the French Caribbean, the postcolonial struggles of Africa, and the struggles of the Black Power and Civil Rights movements in the United States.

Césaire poetry identifies with '*Négritude*', which was initially a concept coined by him, used in a provocative way so as to confront the white supremacists' pejorative image of Blacks. It became a multi-faceted literary, ideological, philosophical and political movement

developed as a reaction to colonialism, whose major *raison d'être* was taking pride in black heritage and in the cultivation of African cultural, economic, social and political values opposed to those of the Western world. He was one of the most important poets of his time: a truly humanist, cosmopolitan and surrealist, whose poetry and philosophy have influenced thousands of intellectuals of the Global South. This poem expresses his imagination of the suffering of the human race torn by imperialism into despair:

To go away
 As there are hyena-men and panther-men, I would be a
 Jew - man
 A kaffir-man
 A Hindu-man-from Calcutta
 A Harlem-man-who-doesn't vote
 the famine-man, the insult-man, the torture-man you can
 grab anytime, beat up, kill—no joke, kill—without having to
 account to anyone, without having to make excuses to
 anyone
 a jew-man
 a pogrom-man
 a puppy
 a beggar (CÉSAIRE, 1983, p. 43)

This poem should be dedicated to the colonial apologists – “benefactors of mankind”, as Césaire ironically calls them, people who use universalizing humanist rhetoric in order to promote social hierarchies and an outrageous violence towards humanity. His next poem appeals to black solidarity and human community and, therefore, has a global dimension:

[...] entrenched as I
 am in this unique race
 you still know my tyrannical love
 you know that it is not from hatred of other races
 that I demand a digger for this unique race
 that what I want
 is for universal hunger
 for universal thirst (CÉSAIRE, 1983, p. 45)

Accordingly, ‘*Négritude*’ not only embraces a struggle for political emancipation, but also the decolonization of the African minds. In spite of claims about being an essentialist

movement, it has given rise to the Black Power and Civil Rights movements, by spreading the idea of liberation, stressing the importance of racial self-awareness and of an attitude of empowerment in the face of the oppressor.

Discourse on Colonialism, published in 1950, is a text of prevailing relevance for postcolonial literature as we can notice from these words:

A civilization that proves incapable of solving the problems it creates is a decadent civilization. A civilization that chooses to close its eyes to its most crucial problems is a stricken civilization. A civilization that uses its principles for trickery and deceit is a dying civilization. What is serious is that “Europe” is morally, spiritually indefensible. And today the indictment is brought against it not by the European masses alone, but on a world scale, by tons and tons of millions of men who, from the depths of slavery, set themselves up as judges. (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p. 1)

Answering the question: What is colonization? Césaire reveals us its true actors:

[...] To agree on what it is not: neither evangelization, nor a philanthropic enterprise, nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease, and tyranny, nor a project undertaken for the greater glory of God, nor an attempt to extend the rule of law. To admit once and for all, [...] that the decisive actors here are the adventurer and the pirate, the wholesale grocery and the ship owner, the gold digger and the merchant, appetite and force, and behind them, the baleful projected shadow of a form of civilization which, at a certain point in its history, finds itself obliged, for internal reasons, to extend to a world scale of competition of its antagonistic economies. (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p. 1)

And he goes on regretting the destruction of wonderful cultures perpetrated by the European greed under the guise of its ‘civilizing’ mission:

I see clearly what colonization has destroyed: the wonderful Indian civilizations—and neither Sterling nor Royal Dutch nor Standard Oil will ever console me for the Aztecs and the Incas. I see clearly the civilizations, condemned to perish at a future date, into which it has introduced a principle of ruin: the South Sea Islands, Nigeria, Nyasaland [...] Whenever there are colonizers and colonized face to face, I see force, brutality, cruelty, sadism, conflict, and, in a parody of education, the hasty manufacturer of a few thousand subordinate functionaries, “boys”, artisans, office clerks, and interpreters necessary for the smooth operation of business. (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p. 6)

For him, the colonizers equated Christianity to civilization, and paganism — to savagery, whose “victims were to be the Indians, the yellow peoples and the Negroes”. (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p. 6)

Another outstanding intellectual, the libertarian writer and professor Paulo Freire, who wrote many books on pedagogy, in his seminal book *The Pedagogy of The Oppressed* (1968), presents his views on oppression:

It is deeply rooted in the minds of both the “privileged” people and those who are under their oppression, and it dehumanizes both of them. Oppressors are materialistically oriented [...] that their consciousness tends to transform everything surrounding them into an object of domination. The earth, property, production, the creations of people, and people themselves, time—everything is reduced to the status of objects at their disposal. (FREIRE: 2000, p. 85)

To Freire, in order to restore the humanity of both parts, the subjugated people must not oppress the oppressors back, but help them to liberate themselves, which would end up by bringing about a new kind of human being as a result of the process of liberation.

One of the most disgusting reminders of totalitarianism, as well as imperialism, has to do with the neglected role of distinguished European intellectuals, such as the philosopher Ernest Renan, who defends with objectivity and rationally the ‘inferiority’ and natural ‘servitude’ of other races to the white race: “Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese race [...] ; a race of tillers of soil, the Negro; treat him with kindness and humanity, and all will be as it should; a race of masters and soldiers, the European race. [...] Let each one do what he is made for, and all be well.” (RENAN: 1972, p. 4)

Establishing a connection between colonialism and Nazism, as he analyzes the barbarian nature of the colonial enterprise, Césaire realized that the former was as cruel as the latter, because both relied on the same ideological reasoning: the superiority of a given race over the others. Césaire draws our attention to the reason why Nazism was so intensely repudiated: the color of its victims, who were predominantly white European people --- Jews and Russians: “Nazism is not criticized because of the barbarism itself, but because it was a crime against white men; since Europe had committed monstrous colonialist crimes against the Arabs of Algeria, the coolies of India and the blacks of Africa.” (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p. 10)

Césaire offers a moving defense of the non-European cooperative societies that were destroyed by imperialism:

[...] they were communal societies, never societies of the many for the few [...], but also anti-capitalist. They were democratic societies [...] cooperative, fraternal. I make a systematic defense of the societies destroyed by imperialism [...] millions of

men [...] taught to have an inferiority complex [...] kneel, despair [...] natural economies [...] disrupted--- harmonious and viable economies adapted to the indigenous population --- [...] food crops destroyed [...] agricultural development oriented solely toward the benefit of the metropolitan countries, about the looting of products, the looting of raw material. (CÉSAIRE: 1976, p.6)

Aiming at constructing the postcolonial identity of the *Haussa*, *Yoruba* and *Igbo* cultures from Nigeria, Chinua Achebe, considered the father of African literature, wrote a seminal book called *Things Fall Apart* (1958) , in which he depicts the advanced social institutions and artistic traditions of the *Igbo* people prior to the contact with the Europeans. He wrote this book as a response to novels such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), which he believes misrepresent Africa, for Africa is depicted as if it were "the other world". According to Achebe, Conrad denies "human characteristics" to the Africans, depriving them from language. Africa is portrayed as being the antithesis of Europe.

The arrival of European missionaries, who came to convert people to Christianity, had also disastrous effects for the *Igbo* culture. The title of the novel comes from William Butler Yeats's poem '*The Second Coming*':

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. (YEATS: 1994)

Finally, Césaire acknowledges the USA's imperialism, stating that the barbarism of Western Europe is only surpassed by North America's imperialism: "Violence, excess, waste, mercantilism, bluff, gregariousness, stupidity, vulgarity, disorder". (CÉSAIRE: 1972,p.23)

The warning sounds like a forecast:

I know that some of you, disgusted with Europe, with all that hideous mess[...] are turning [...] – toward America, and[...] looking upon that country as a possible liberator. "What a godsend" you think. The bulldozers! The massive investments of capital! The roads! The ports! But American racism! [...] ready to run the great Yankee risk. So, once again, be careful! (CÉSAIRE: 1972, p.23)

In his book *Discourse on Colonialism*, one can feel that Césaire foresaw the spread of American imperialism at a time when the U.S. could still be seen as a liberating force.

Imperial authority was thus based upon these two basic premises --- knowledge and power --- since the whole process of imperial dominance was informed by the concept of bringing knowledge or civilization to the so-called barbarian, primitive or indigenous cultures. As a collateral effect of colonization, Europeans were able to impose their literature, language, cultural practices and yet profit from the natives' wealth in terms of raw materials and other commodities.

The imperial control over the minds and the hearts of the colonized peoples, known as natives, brought about more than practices of displacement, slavery, migration and racial and cultural discrimination; it has shaped the face of the European metropolis and paved the way for the fascist ideologies such as Nazism that led to the Second World War.

Likewise, imperialism enabled the self-consolidating 'other' and the disarticulated 'subaltern', which seems to be the *raison d'être* of the imperialistic civilizing project. The Foucaultian premise of power/knowledge (FOUCAULT, 1980), which informs the representation of the Orient as the essentialized 'other' by the West, continues, therefore, as relevant today as it was in 1978, since information became the new currency of global relations.

Gayatri Spivak, one of the leading anti-colonial thinkers, has been taking advantage of "the resources of deconstruction 'in the service of reading' to develop a strategy rather than a theory of reading that might be a critique of 'imperialism' " (SPIVAK: 1986, p. 230). Her most significant contribution to feminism and subaltern studies is her postcolonial disclosure of the status of Indian women. She asks whether the Indian subaltern woman has a voice or even a voice consciousness. Her classical question: "Can the subaltern speak? Will she ever be heard?" echoes centuries of silenced voices as Spivak concludes that "the subaltern cannot speak" (L.GANDHI: 1999, p.3). In discussing the silence of the subaltern as a female, Spivak explains that she was not using the term literally; her concept implies that others cannot listen or do not know how to listen, because the subaltern's words cannot be properly interpreted. So, the silence of the female as a subaltern is a result of a failure of interpretation, and not of articulation: "[The European agent] is wording their own world, which is far from mere unscripted earth, anew, by obliging them to domesticate the alien as Master, a process generating the force to make the 'native' see himself as 'other' " (SPIVAK: 1988, p. 133).

Homi Bhabha, one of the most relevant theorists of post-colonial studies, by recovering the way through which the master's discourse was interrogated by the natives in their own accents, ended up by producing an autonomous position for the colonial within the limits of the hegemonic, thus, unveiling its discursive aggressiveness: "What is articulated in the doubleness of colonial discourse is not the violence of one powerful nation writing out another [but] a mode of contradictory utterance that ambivalently re-inscribes both colonizer and colonized" (BHABHA: 1985, p. 95).

For Spivak, imperialism's epistemic aggressiveness decimated the old culture, leaving the colonized without a basis from which they could utter confrontational words. For Bhabha, the subterfuges to which the native resorted destabilized the effectivity of the English book, but did not produce an alternative text. Bhabha maintains that an anti-colonialist discourse "requires an alternative set of questions and strategies in order to construct it" (BHABHA: 1983, p. 198).

As a way of explaining British colonialism, Bhabha has popularized the terms 'ambivalence', 'mimicry' and 'hybridity'. 'Ambivalence' describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. 'Mimicry' is an important term in post-colonial theory; because it describes the ambivalent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting his cultural habits, assumptions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of these traits, but a 'blurred' copy of the colonizer, which can be threatening, since it "is one of the most effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge" (BHABHA:1983, p. 35).

The British, according to Bhabha, wanted to create a class of Indians who adopted English values, so that these figures were just like Fanon's educated colonials depicted in *Black Skin, White Masks*. In fact, those are the 'mimic men', who learn to act English but do not look English, nor are they accepted as such. As Bhabha puts it; "to be Anglicized is emphatically, not to be English" (BHABHA: 1983, p. 87). The strategy of the mimic men in relation to the colonizers, to be "almost the same but not quite" is a source of anti-colonial resistance (BHABHA: 1983, p.89). 'Mimicry' then, gives rise to postcolonial analysis by subverting the colonial master's authority and hegemony. It acted as a weapon of anti-colonial civility, an ambivalent mixture of deference and disobedience. Also, Leela Gandhi comments

that “‘mimicry’ inaugurates the process of anti-colonial self-differentiation through the logic of inappropriate appropriation” (L. GHANDI: 1999, p. 150).

The term ‘hybridity’ stresses the interdependence and mutual construction of their subjectivities. It is a kind of negotiation, both political and cultural between the colonizer and the colonized. Hybridity represents, then, an integral part of postcolonial discourse, since it bridges the gap between East and West, which, in fact, cannot be completely separated. His aesthetics of difference – inferiority and immaturity — stands for the success of the colonial enterprise of dominance and consequent establishment of the hierarchy of the colonizer over the colonized. Surprisingly, it was precisely the first generation of anti-colonial nationalists and the intellectuals from the French colonies in Africa and The Caribbean who first produced critical theories that challenged colonialism.

1.4 DECOLONIZATION

Among those, we highlight the radical fight for freedom and independence led by Frantz Fanon, who in 1961 wrote the seminal book *The Wretched of the Earth* (2005), a masterpiece, which continues to be of great importance for modern liberation movements, because it teaches the oppressed people self-emancipatory lessons of how to set up revolutionary societies. Born in Martinique and educated in France, Fanon, also a psychotherapist, can be considered as the leading anti-colonial thinker of the 20th century, acting as a source of inspiration for anti-colonial movements, since Fanon denounced the cruel link between mental disease and colonial wars, confronting the unfair manipulation and supremacy of the Western superpowers over the still neo - colonized Global South.

Both Mahatma Gandhi and Fanon represent a style of psychological resistance to the political and cultural offensive of the colonial civilizing mission. Fanon asserts, “Total liberation is that which concerns all sectors of personality” (FANON: 2007, p. 250). In his view, the colonized has the ability to resist the cultural supremacy of Europe, while Gandhi feels sad about India’s attraction towards the glamorous superficiality of the West. Gandhi remarks: “We brought the English and we kept them. Why do we forget that our adoption of their civilization makes their presence in India all possible? Your hatred against them ought to

be transferred to their civilization.” (M. GANDHI: 1938, p. 66) Gandhi was also a kind of liberator to literary men, setting the enslaved Indian writers free, breaking the shackles all around him.

Fanon’s dialogical interrogation of European power and native insurrections, enact a process of cultural resistance and disruption, writing a text that answers colonialism back:

Face to face with the white man, the Negro has a past to legitimate, vengeance to extract [...] in no way should I dedicate myself to the revival of an unjustly unrecognized Negro civilization. I will not make myself a man of the past [...] I am not a prisoner of history; it is only by going beyond the historical, instrumental hypothesis that I will initiate the cycle of my freedom. (FANON: 1965, p. 625)

The enabling conditions for Fanon’s analysis are that an oppositional discourse born out of political struggle, where he invokes the past in order not to surrender to the colonizer’s humiliations, enabled him to refuse both the native’s traditions, as well as the colonialist system of knowledge, as can be grasped by Fanon’s words:

The colonialist bourgeoisie had in fact deeply implanted in the minds of the colonized intellectual that the essential qualities remain eternal in spite of all the blunders men may make: the essential qualities of the West, of course. The native intellectual accepted the cogency of these ideas and deep down in his brain you could always find a vigilant sentinel ready to defend the Greco-Latin pedestal. Now it so happens that during the struggle for liberation, at the moment that the native intellectual comes into touch again with his people, this artificial sentinel is turned into dust. All the Mediterranean values, -- the triumph of the individual clarity and of beauty — became lifeless, colorless knick-knacks of dead words; those values which seemed to uplift the soul are revealed as worthless, simply because they have nothing to do with the concrete conflict in which people are engaged (FANON: 1965, pp. 37-8).

Influenced by contemporary philosophers and poets such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Aimé Césaire, Fanon’s second most important book — *Black Skin and White Masks* (1952), examines the harmful psychological effects of colonial oppression on the psyche of the natives, realizing that the colonial world is a Manichean one, in which the native is faced with a hostile environment where he can be easily discarded as if he were a thing or an animal:

A world divided into compartments, a motionless, Manichean world [...] of statues: the statue of the engineer who built the bridge; a world which is sure of itself [...] apartheid is simply one form of the division into compartments of the colonial world. The first thing which the native learns is to stay in his place, and not to go beyond certain limits. [...] his dreams are of action and of aggression (FANON: 2008, p. 51).

Therefore, as a result of mental colonization, the native dreams of putting himself/herself in the place of the colonizer, for his/her position is unbearable as Fanon explains us: “All that the native has seen in his country is that they can freely arrest him, beat him, starve him” (FANON: 2008,p.43).According to Fanon’s clinical experience as a psychotherapist, he argues that it is only when the native realizes that ‘he is not an animal’, that he decides to fight for his independence.

Fanon goes on criticizing European wealth accumulation, another ugly legacy of colonization:

[...] in a very concrete way Europe [...] with the gold and raw materials of the colonial countries: Latin America, China and Africa. From all these continents [...] there has flowed out for centuries toward [...] Europe diamonds and oil, silk and cotton, wood and exotic products. Europe is literally the creation of the Third World. The wealth which smothers her is that which has been stolen from the underdeveloped peoples.[...] So when we hear the head of an European state declare with his hand on his heart that he must come to the aid of the poor underdeveloped peoples, we do not tremble with gratitude.[...] We say to ourselves: “It’s just reparation [...] (FANON: 1965, p. 100.)

Concerned with the atrocities committed by the United States in North Africa, Fanon is very critical of what the U.S. has become in the world scenario: “Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States of America became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions (FANON: 2008, p. 313.)

Accordingly, the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and protests in North Africa caused by the presence of U.S. military forces, show us that the U.S. is the new superpower, the ‘Big Brother’ whose eyes and Intelligence Services never shut down, for they have the secret mission to protect the citizens of the world against terrorism and injustice perpetrated by any nation anywhere in the world other than the United States. We should feel really grateful.

In a similar vein, Edward Said reached analogous conclusions:

Every empire in its official discourse has said that it has a mission to the others [...], that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it

uses force only as a last resort [...] a chorus of willing intellectuals say calming words about benign empires, as if one shouldn't trust the evidence of one's eyes watching the destruction and death brought by the latest mission "*civilizatrice*". (SAID: 2003, digital source)

Post-colonial literatures can be seen, thus, as a result of this interaction between imperial culture and the above example of a literature of combat. Since all post-colonial societies are still subject to overt or subtle forms of neo-colonial domination, the independence has brought about the emergence of new national corrupt elites, who embraced neo-liberal politics, thus perpetuating the unequal treatment of indigenous peoples, leading to internal prejudices based on race, language or religion discrimination --- all this scenario confirms the fact that post-colonialism continues to be an effective tool of resistance and reconstruction.

Abdul R. Janmohamed argues that "the colonialist literature can be split into two categories: the 'imaginary' and the 'symbolic', being the 'imaginary' text structured by the fetishism of the other (the native): the self becomes a prisoner of the projected image"(JANMOHAMED:1985, p.19).While negating the native by the projection of the inverted image, since his presence as an absence can never be cancelled, the colonialist's desire entraps him in the dualism of the 'imaginary', thus bringing about hatred of the native.This hatred depicts the native as having innate evil-like racial characteristics — in the 'blood' as if he were endowed by 'an evil magical essence':

The Natives were Africa in flesh and [...] [The various cultures of Africa, the mountains , the trees, the animals] were different expressions of one idea, variations upon the same theme. It was not a congenial upheaving of heterogeneous atoms, but a heterogeneous upheaving of congenial atoms, as in the case of the oak-leaf and the acorn and the object made from oak (DINESEN: 1970, p. 21).

If, as Dinesen has done, African natives can be collapsed into African animals and mystified as some magical source of the continent, then this 'fact' accounts for the

impossibility of establishing a common identity between the social, historical, cultured creatures of Europe and the savage Calibans of Africa. These constructed differences served as an excuse, then, to the endless endurance of the ‘civilizing’ process, about 400 years, leading to the inevitable emergence of a colonialist text, which is in fact antagonist to realism.

Aiming at strengthening the colonial rule, the English Indoctrination was introduced, as can be grasped by the often-quoted lines from Macaulay’s infamous ‘*Minute on Indian Education*’ (1835), an explicitly implemented colonial agenda:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich these dialects with terms borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them, by degrees, fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population (MACAULAY: 1835, digital source).

Gauri Viswanathan, in her *Masks of Conquest*, unmask the British educational mission, by saying that

They tried to ‘mask’ or disguise their real interest by representing colonial rule as an educational mission and popularize the human aspect of English culture. In contrast to the violence of European colonization, the English literary text becomes the mask for economic exploitation [...] successfully camouflaging the material activities of the colonizer (VISWANATHAN: 1989, p. 20).

The ‘symbolic’ text’s openness toward the other, according to Janmohamed, is based on a greater awareness of the ever-changing potential of identity as Forster acknowledges deliberately in *A Passage to India* (1924), in an attempt to overcome the boundaries of racial difference.

As a conclusion, Janmohamed argues that the Third World’s literary dialogue with Western cultures is characterized by

[...] a creative modification of Western languages and artistic forms [...] This dialogue merits our serious attention for two reasons: first, in spite of the often studied attempts by ethnocentric canonical authorities in English and other (Western) language and literature departments to ignore Third World culture and art, they will not go away; and, second, as this analysis of colonialist literature (a literature, we must remember, that is sued to mediate between different cultures), demonstrates that, the domain of literary and cultural syncretism belongs not to the

colonialist and the neocolonialist writers, but increasingly to Third World artists.(JANMOHAMED: 1985, p. 23).

Literature, according to Jonathan Culler (2000), is the place where ideology and identity are exposed and questioned. So, literature is, by the same token, a vehicle of ideology and a potential instrument for its undoing. Besides promoting the questioning of authority and social arrangements, it can enact a change in readers' outlooks and that can contribute to change(s) in society, encouraging resistance to capitalist values, engaging readers in a self-transformation through their identification with a character's struggle against social rules and expectations. This seems to be the case with marginalized groups, who assume or develop their identity as oppressed people by confronting the oppressor's tyranny, thus engaging in emancipatory politics.

Postcolonial studies in the U.S. deal, thus, with the critique and/or deconstruction of colonial discourses fostered by literature and cultural studies through the development of counterhegemonic theories so as to question unfair cultural, economic and political discriminatory social practices. In recent years, Dipesh Chakrabarty's work has promoted radical debates over historical issues. In the 1980's and 1990's, he belonged to the influential '*Subaltern Studies Collective*', a group of Indian theorists which was founded by Ranajit Guha whose object of research was the history of the Indian struggle for independence discussed from an alternative perspective – "from below", in an attempt to give voice to the socially marginalized groups. Peasants, factory workers, members of the lower castes, tribal groups and women are examples of such subaltern groups who were endowed with an oppositional "subaltern consciousness", whose reconstruction allowed them "to speak".

Since in the 1990's there was a shift from the neo-Marxist orientation to theoretical discourse of cultural studies concerning mainly Michel Foucault and Edward Said, the work of Chakrabarty epitomizes this conceptual shift quite well, as he himself, in the 1990's has also moved from the *Subaltern Studies* series on micro-studies of jute workers in colonial Kolkota towards the analysis of more theoretical aspects of historiography.

In the book *Provincializing Europe* (2000), which was widely read by members of the US academic mainstream, Chakrabarty undertook the ambitious task of criticizing the "methodological Eurocentric" approach that has dominated global historiography. The West had established a hierarchy which relegated "the rest" (the peripheral and semi-peripheral

regions of the world) to a long wait, which only ended when stragglers — through the diffusion of Western knowledge and Western values — could reach the developmental level of the metropolis, thus being accepted as an equal partner.

Chakrabarty deplored the tacit acceptance of an “asymmetric ignorance”, whereby a deep knowledge of European history was a professional prerequisite for Asian and African historians, whereas a superficial knowledge of non- Western history was considered satisfactory for their Western counterparts. He considers that the solution to the dilemma of the “simultaneous indispensability and inadequacy” of Western concepts and categories in non- Western contexts has not to do with a relapse into nativism or cultural relativism, but should undergo a critical assessment of their “ethno-centric” origins and have the willingness to translate them and, if necessary, to build upon and modify them.

In Chakrabarty’s opinion, Europe should be “provincialized”— i.e., its status should be set back to be regarded as one particular region, among many others. In this way, the idea of universal applicability of the continent’s intellectual achievements would give way to an image of universal knowledge. His call for provincializing met with particular interests among historians working on the history of transfers and specialists in world and global history, for whom the question of suitable methodology and problems surrounding cultural translations have an apparent relevance.

The historian maintains that “there are multiple ‘Europes’ to provincialize”. *Provincializing Europe* implies assuming a critical stance, concerning one’s theoretical background, particular position of speaking and geographical place. Writing from within the perspective of the Indian middle class, Chakrabarty’s own objective is to “provincialize” an idealized image of Europe that functions as the prototype of political modernity within India. He critiques the Western universalism applied to the concept of “nation”, in face of the need to liberate history from the meta-narrative of the nation-state.

During *The International Workshop: Provincializing Europe? Potential and Pitfalls of Non- Western Approaches to History*, conducted among historians, two major questions crystallized as the core of the discussion, allowing inspiration for further investigation:

How can we as historians grasp the otherness of non-Western experiences in the process of writing history? As the contributors suggested, accounting for “difference” requires self-reflection on the part of a historian about his/her own

ideological, cultural and emotional involvement and the acknowledgment of the craft's methodological limits. --- How should we "provincialize" the "Europeanness" of concepts and theories in social sciences and humanities? (CHAKRABARTY: 2005, p. 41).

In spite of the existence of different and at times contradictory approaches, as Chakrabarty puts it, the claim for "universal" as "something generally human in all of us" is reasonable. The author emphasizes, however, that he has not written this book as an act of colonial vengeance:

European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought may be renewed from and for the margins. (CHAKRABARTY: 2005, p. 16).

2 BEHIND THE DIVISION OF CULTURES

2.1 THE POLARIZED WORLD OF GLOBALIZATION

According to Vandana Shiva,

The project of corporate globalisation is a project for polarising and dividing people – along axis of class and economic inequality, axis of religion and culture, axis of gender, axis of geographies and regions. Never before in human history has the gap between those who labour and those who accumulate wealth without labour been greater. Never before has hate between cultures been so global. Never before has there been a global convergence of such three violent trends – the violence of primitive accumulation for wealth creation, the violence of "culture wars", and the violence of militarized warfare (SHIVA: 2005, digital source).

In his book *The World is Flat*, Thomas Friedman (2005) argues that globalisation is a “leveller of inequalities in societies”. However, when you look at the world through Vandana Shiva’s eyes, you realize that Friedman ignores the reality of the ones

who have lost their livelihoods, lifestyles, and lives - farmers and workers everywhere – [...] and he [Friedman] sees the dismantling of these ecological and social protections for deregulated commerce as a "flattening". But this flattening is like the flattening of cities with bombs, the flattening of Asia's coasts by the tsunami, the flattening of forests and tribal homelands to build dams and mine minerals. Friedman's conceptualization of the world as flat is accurate only as a description of the social and ecological destruction caused by deregulated commerce or "free – trade (SHIVA: 2005, digital source).

Friedman’s account of globalization disregards the fact that it means different things for different people. As Nigerian writer Chimamanda Adichie warns us, ‘the danger of a single story’ leads to the construction of stereotypes and misleading realities. For some peoples, as the Native Americans, globalization began in 1492 with the ‘discovery’ of America and has not ended yet. Vandana denounces the hideous effect globalization or recolonization is having on India:

[...]It began in the 1980's with the structural adjustment programmes of World Bank and IMF imposing trade liberalisation and privatization, and was accelerated since 1995 with the establishment of World Trade Organisation[...] Their world is shaped by and focussed in Cargill – our world is shaped by and focussed on 300 million species and 6 billion people. Instead of telling the story of TRIPS (Intellectual Property Rights Agreement) and how corporate and WTO led globalisation is forcing India to dismantle its democratically designed patent laws, creating monopolies on seeds and medicines, pushing farmers to suicide and denying victims of AIDS, Cancer, TB, and Malaria access to life saving drugs, Friedman engages in another dishonest step to create a flat world. He presents the open source Software Movement initiated by Richard Stallman, as a flattening trend of corporate globalisation when Stallman is a leading critic of intellectual property and corporate monopolies, and a fighter against the walls corporations are creating to prevent farmers from saving seeds, researchers from doing research, and software developers from creating new software. By presenting open sourcing in the same category as outsourcing and off - shore production, Friedman hides corporate greed, corporate monopolies and corporate power, and presents corporate globalisation as human creativity and freedom. This is deliberate dishonesty, not just result of flat vision. The freedom we seek is freedom for all, not freedom for a few. Free-trade is about corporate freedom and citizen disenfranchisement. What Friedman is presenting as a new "flatness" is in fact a new caste system, a new Brahmanism, locked in hierarchies of exclusion. The control is in the hands of the corporations in U.S. They are the Brahmins who monopolise knowledge through intellectual property. Outsourcing and off-shoring is like the "putting out" work in the industrial revolution. These are old tools for maintaining exploitative hierarchies – not new flat earth linkages between equals, equal in creativity and equal in rights. Free trade freedom is flat earth freedom. Earth democracy is full earth freedom and round earth freedom – freedom for all beings to live their lives within the abundant, renewable but limited bounds of the earth. We do not inhabit a world without limits where unbounded corporate greed can be unleashed and allowed to destroy the earth and rob people of their security, their livelihoods and their resources. Full earth freedom is born in free societies, shaped by free people recognizing the freedom of all. Diversity is an expression of full earth freedom. "Flatness" is a symptom of the absence of real freedom. Fascism seeks flatness (SHIVA: 2005, digital source).

We could translate flatness into uniformity, as Vandana celebrates diversity as the only source of resilience in the fight for bio-safety:

Every dictatorship has used uniformity whether it was dictatorships of religion or the dictatorships based on race like Apartheid [...] Freedom was on and on and on [...] It's a non-separable world in terms of quantum theory. Lies will not last and truth always wins. Fearless and courage win [...] Dividing people is anti-democratic, terrorist act in our times. And we'll have to transcend it for real freedom. 2014 will be a year where we will join hands and be stronger and stand together in stronger solidarity till as Rumi said "in this field/in this beautiful field/we will only sow seeds of love". (SHIVA: 2014, digital source)

2.2 UNITY OF WEST AND EAST CULTURES IN DIVERSITY

Accordingly, Anis Shivani, in the face of the war on terror and the U.S.A. Patriotic Act in 2001 and its devastating impact on the lives of immigrants in general, either from Asia,

Africa or even non-white American citizens from Latin America descent, uses his writing to denounce all forms of authoritarianism, such as torture and several other forms of surveillance and oppression. His characters, mostly immigrants of color, are represented in a chaotic and unpredictable way, sometimes as mere shadows, fighting for freedom and belonging.

As America was populated through immigration, initially from England, discriminatory immigration policies passed over the years privileged the entry of other white European populations in detriment to the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Indian, not to mention the Arabs and “Chicanos/as”. Nevertheless, just before the ethnic empowerment movements of the 1960s and 1970s, immigrants were encouraged to dissolve their specific characteristics in the melting pot of “American” identity.

South Asian America experience is of diaspora, which is not a new feature of human history and its hybrid literature reflects these phenomena of global mass migrations (voluntary or forced), and these deterritorialized people gave rise to the emergence of diasporic writers, such as Shivani, who deconstructs the migrants’ stories, delivering us a global, ecumenical perspective, while focusing on highly individual, often contested and marginalized histories, such as those of refugees and Indian indentured workers in Dubai. In 1989 with the end of the Cold War and the consequent decline of the nation-state and the rise of globalization from 2000 onwards, the U.S. has consolidated its position as the global hegemonic superpower. Outsiders like Shivani, though living inside the empire, cannot be labeled as anti-American or pro-America, for he considers himself to be a cosmopolitan citizen, who uses his writing to challenge stereotypes and denounce inequalities done on the behalf of democracy, through the deployment of multiple individual stories, in an attempt to reinforce human dignity.

Drawing on cosmopolitanism, Vinay Dharwadker’s awareness of oneself as part of a global community of fellow beings sets the foundations of the idea of cosmopolitanism, formulated in ancient society by the Buddhists (c.500 B.C.) and the Stoics (330 B.C. to A.D. 200):

As invented by the Buddhists and the Stoics, cosmopolitanism in antiquity is already a validation of inclusive, egalitarian heterogeneity, of the toleration of difference and otherness, of the equitable (re) distribution of resources and privileges, of recognition of others’ freedoms, of (comm)unity in diversity, or very simply, of the unqualified practice of fairness, kindness, and generosity. Instances like these suggest that for almost 2,500 years, cosmopolitanism has continuously – though variably — aligned itself with what we now call universal human rights, equal opportunity, nondiscrimination and social justice (DHAEWADKER: 2001, p. 13)

In a similar vein, Iain Chambers's remarks on art apply to the pluralistic nature of culture (literature), as it creates "subjectivity, identity and citizenship", while dismantles stereotypes:

The aesthetics/ and ethics/ of disturbance that reveal a gap, an interval in the world, that signals a limit and establishes a transit, a passage elsewhere. In this space, which such a term as the sublime or the uncanny, the pedagogical languages of institutional identity, busily seeking to legitimate the narration of nation, citizenship and cultural subjectivity, are interrupted by what refuses to make sense or speak in that prescribed way[...] The art of the interruption, art as interruption, brings to light our prescribed state—its limits on time and space — while also opening the possibility of revisiting, reciting (in the sense of reworking), and resiting (in the sense of transporting), languages everywhere (CHAMBERS: 2002, p. 24).

Gayatri Spivak, by the same token, says that "we read the world as a text", even when we do not realize so. In a 1988 Conference at the Riyadh University Center for Girls, in Saudi Arabia, Spivak delivered a lecture titled "Literature and Life", and here we quote her answer to a student's question: "It's all very well to try to live like a book; but what if no one else is prepared to read? What if you are dismissed as an irresponsible dreamer?" Spivak then answered the girl's question, fully aware, though, of the difficulty of such proposal, due to the patriarchal repressiveness of Saudi Arabia's regime:

Everyone reads life and the world like a book, even the so-called illiterate. But especially the "leaders" of our society, the most "responsible" non-dreamers: the politicians, the businessman, the ones who make plans. Without the reading of the world as a book, there is no prediction, no planning, no taxes, no laws, no welfare, no war [...] the world actually writes itself with the many-leveled unfixable intricacy and openness of a work of literature. If, through our study of literature, we can ourselves learn and teach others to read the world in the "proper" risky way, and to act upon that lesson, perhaps we literary people would not forever be such helpless victims (SPIVAK: 1987, p. 95).

I do agree with Spivak's words, for literature is a reflection of the world, of ourselves, of a certain historical period, words express who we are, how we think we are, and how we would like to be seen by others; in a nutshell, it expresses our humanity.

2.3 A COSMOPOLITAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Speaking of humanity, the ubiquitous discourse of polarization between the “enlightened and scientific” West vs. the “religious and traditional” East was approached in a rather lucid way by the Hindu economist Amartya Sen, who, in a vigorous address at the World Newspaper Congress in Belgium, from May 26th to 29th, 2002, confronted Samuel Huntington’s limited “clash of civilizations” discourse (SEN: 2002, digital source).

Drawing on the religious tolerance of the emperor Asheka (Third Century B.C.) , and the Mughal emperor Akbar (1556 -1605), both in India, where religious freedom was a counterbalance to Europe’s intolerance (Inquisition), while, at the same time, amazing achievements in mathematics, and science were taking place in China, India, Persia, and the Arab world, Sen pontifies: “The deficiency of the clash thesis, I would argue, begins well before we get to the point of asking whether the disparate civilizations must clash. The problem begins with an impoverished vision of a singularly categorized world, divided into little boxes”. [...] (SEN: 2002, digital source)

Furthermore, according to Sen (2002), civilizational categories are far from clear-cut, and the simulated history that goes with the thesis of clashing civilizations constructs a make-believe world of thoroughly hardened contrasts (partly by ignoring the heterogeneities within each culture) and also ignoring historical interactions between them. Sen is well aware of the fact that extremists from both sides might take advantage of this rhetoric as an official intellectual excuse to legitimate and reinforce the religious differences between them.

In the West, according to Sen,

often-repeated public rhetoric on the contrast between ‘Western science’ and ‘non-Western-cultures’, as well as crude civilizational classifications have tended to put science and mathematics well inside the basket of ‘Western civilization’, leaving the civilizations to mine their pride only in religious depths. (SEN, 2002, digital source)

With such divisions, it can be

very easy for the anti-Western activists, including religious fundamentalists and cultural militants, to secure leadership roles through focusing on those issues that separate the non-Western world from the West (such as religious beliefs, local customs and cultural specificities, rather than reflect positive global interactions running through history (including science, mathematics, and so on). (SEN, 2002, digital source)

In a similar vein, Amartya Sen quotes Rabindranath Tagore, one of the first thinkers in the modern world, who both theorized and put into practice a cosmopolitan education:

Now the problem before us is of one single country, which is this earth, where the races as individuals must find both their freedom of self-expression and their bond of federation. Mankind must realize a unity, wider in range, deeper in sentiment, stronger in power than ever before (TAGORE: 1980, p. 171)

For Tagore, the unity of humankind is based on "differences in man that are real," and at the same time, on the "consciousness of our unity." He continues by saying that the "perfection of unity is not in uniformity, but in harmony." Tagore's concept of 'unity as harmony' as distinguished from 'unity as uniformity,' draws on 'cosmopolitanism'. Tagore's distinction between the two forms of unity may be formulated concerning the pervasive confrontation between the postmodern and the modern rhetoric. The postmodern contestation of modernity is a well-known episode in recent theoretical developments. In order to set these matters straight, it is best not to take the notions of modern and postmodern as historical periods; rather, it is wiser to understand these notions as controversial foundational philosophical positions. According to postmodern theorists, modernist discourses privilege homogeneity, disrupting the rhetoric of plurality. For postmodern thinkers, the neglect of the discourse of plurality and cultural diversity, seen as a defining characteristic of modernity, is vehemently contested.

Accordingly, this approach of 'unity as uniformity' has to do with a modernist notion, which stands for the unity of men or the unity of cultures; in other words, it has to do with the construction of unities through strategies of exclusion in the name of development and progress. Such narratives of progress constitute what Lyotard, a leading postmodern theorist, has called terror. In the postmodern scenario, the language of unity is replaced by, quoting Lyotard, "many different language games - a heterogeneity of elements." These elements "give rise to institution in patches - local determinism" (LYOTARD: 1993, p. xxiv). The sense of unity that is being contested by postmodern theory and Tagore's, may be called after Tagore, 'unity as uniformity' because unity is achieved through strategies of exclusion. According to this viewpoint, unity is achieved through a reductive move whereby an attempt is made for the exclusion of difference from the cultural sphere. Lyotard acknowledges this

move in the following dictum: "Adapt your aspirations to our ends --- or else," and characterizes it as a terrorist attitude (LYOTARD: 1993, p. xxiv). The postmodern quest for plurality is, on the other hand, grounded in an attempt to deconstruct the exclusionary account of 'unity as uniformity'. Fragmentation, although opposing and subverting the modern logic of unity as sameness, seems, however, to fail to provide a positive prospect for a cultural openness to dialogue across divides.

According to Saranindranath's position (2003), it is precisely in the insistence of framing cultures as fragments, where unity is artificial and can only be constructed and imposed, that postmodernism exposes its failure to implement intercultural conversations, which contemplate unities without disregarding differences. There is another sense of unity – the one endorsed by Tagore – based on a respect for difference. This sense entails the notion of 'unity as harmony'. Drawing on Tagore, Martha Nussbaum has recently developed a stance of cosmopolitanism, which is neither modern nor postmodern. In developing her notion of cosmopolitanism, Nussbaum analyzed Tagore's novel, *The Home and The World* (1996). Taking place during the *Swadeshi* movement of 1905, the novel tells the story of Nikhil, Nikhil's wife Bimala, and Nikhil's friend Sandip, and their protest against the political division of Bengal. Tagore himself took an active part of the anti-colonial movement; however, the adoption of violent strategies made him draw apart from the movement. The novel, then, reflects, in part, his personal experiences and contributions to the movement. The difference between Sandip and Nikhil, in Nussbaum's treatment of the novel, provides a rich literary account of her own distinction between the patriot and the cosmopolitan. Sandip is a nationalist whose patriotic fervor translates into the burning of foreign goods and the call for violence. Nikhil is the critic of harmful nationalism, and stands for cosmopolitan virtues that transcend what Nussbaum calls "ethnocentric particulars".

In the novel, Bimala is attracted by Sandip's nationalist passions, but tragically realizes too late, after Nikhil is killed, that her husband's cosmopolitan moral position is more sensible than the narrow nationalism advanced by Sandip. Martha Nussbaum argues that, in the character of Nikhil, Tagore is depicting a position where the absolute privileging of national identity at the expense of broader forms of identity is morally blameworthy. Indeed, she argues that narrow nationalism subverts the very virtues that hold a nation together:

I believe Tagore sees deeply when he observes that, at bottom, nationalism and ethnocentric particularism are not alien to one another, but akin ---- that to give

support to nationalist sentiments subverts, ultimately, even the values that hold a nation together, because it substitutes a colorful idol for the substantive universal values of justice and rights (NUSSBAUM: 1996, p. 5).

Much of Tagore's social philosophy was developed in the 1920s, in the period between the two World Wars. Furthermore, he was a major actor in India's decolonizing process. Thus, his critique of nationalism should be understood as a concrete manifestation of violence and domination. He argued in a series of lectures in Japan and the United States that the martial effects of nationalism can be checked through the (re)privileging of other forms of human identity that can be found in civil life (TAGORE, 1950). The historian E.P.Thompson acknowledges the importance of Tagore's views on civil society: "More than any other thinker of his time, Tagore had a clear conception of civil society, as something distinct from and of more personal texture than political or economic structures" (TAGORE: 1950, p. iii).

Accordingly, I believe that Tagore's discussion of cultural identity helped to implement his integrating strand of cosmopolitanism, which is so badly needed today, to counter the prevailing discourse of hatred among civilizations and cultures. Needless to say, Nussbaum's account of cosmopolitanism is anchored in the cultural dimensions of civil life. Nussbaum understands cosmopolitanism in terms of world citizenship, where the world citizen is a person situated in one nation who, nonetheless, agrees to share the world with citizens of other countries. Thus, in the political vocabulary of nation-states, we all are citizens of a nation, but in the cultural sense we are (or perhaps ought to be) citizens of the world. Hilary Putnam understands this distinction, but objects to Nussbaum, in a different stance, by claiming that, morally speaking, the best kind of patriotism entails a loyalty to what is best in the traditions one has inherited. Indeed, for Putnam, loyalty to inheritance is indispensable (PUTNAM: 1996, p. 96). This objection can be easily understood by claiming – as Amartya Sen does in his defense of Nussbaum's thesis – that world citizenship does not logically avert loyalty to what is best in one's culture.

Sisela Bok states that "inheritance is important for cosmopolitanism by appealing to Tagore's philosophy of education" (BOK: 1996, p.43). As for Tagore, Bok writes, "children learn from the diffuse atmosphere of culture – one which keeps their minds sensitive to their inheritance and to the current that comes from tradition, and which makes it easy for them, to imbibe the wisdom of ages" (BOK: 1996, p.43). At the same time, inheritance is balanced by an outward-looking attitude where the student, in view of cosmopolitan education, must be so

equipped as no longer to be anxious about his own self-preservation; only through his capacity to understand and to sympathize with his neighbour can he function as a decent member of human society and as a responsible citizen (TAGORE: 1961, p. 63-4). Note Tagore's conceptual distinction here between "member of human society" (a civil conception) and "citizen" (a political conception), and his insistence that the two complement each other. The achievement of a balance between inheritance and world – the core of the cosmopolitan citizen – is the construction of 'unity as harmony'. As for Saranindranath (2003), 'unity as harmony' allows for the highly desirable cultural empathy, generating the capacity of incorporating elements of other cultural backgrounds (otherness) whereby one's worldview is initially grounded in inheritance, while being continually shaped by other absorptions. Unity here is an ideal that is never achieved as a final closure, but is always in the process of being formed. Saranindranath (2003) believes that 'unity as harmony' forms the philosophical basis of dialogue across cultures and faiths. As Tagore advocates, dialogue is not mere conversation, but has a transformative power, which can generate an empathic link between the dialogue partners. This dialogic link of empathy is a cosmopolitan virtue. Such a virtue is illustrated in Tagore's words: "Whatever we understand and enjoy in human products instantly becomes ours, wherever they might have their origin. I am proud of my humanity when I can acknowledge the poets and artists of other cultures as my own" (TAGORE: 1928, p. 82).

This attitude of empathic identification, the seeking of unity through harmony, transcends Walzer's (1996) legal definition of citizenship and embraces the world in a cultural understanding of belonging. Interfaith dialogue or intercultural dialogue, in general, paves the way for cosmopolitanism. Moreover, it must be clear, as well, that the notion of 'unity as harmony' rejects the postmodern claim that the concept of unity has to be displaced if plurality is to be saved. Cosmopolitanism allows for a nuanced understanding of unity, which allows for the play of difference.

The educational mission of the cosmopolitan is to help develop dialogic capacities, which enable persons to seek 'unity in diversity' even recognizing that a final and absolute unity is impossible. An example of such dialogic attitude is provided by the great Mughal emperor Akbar, who has deeply meditated on the matter of religious harmony in the context of the religiously diverse landscape of northern India. He was probably the first political leader actively to facilitate a dialogue across religious discourses when he invited Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Jain, Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian scholars to debate theological issues

and establish common beliefs across faiths. Such an effort, on the part of Akbar, was directed toward the consolidation of 'cultural empathy.' Such efforts were part of the deep cultural exchanges between the Hindu and the Islamic civilizations. A very good example of a product of cultural empathy is the development of North Indian classical music, which continues to be a vibrant musical tradition both in India and abroad. North Indian classical music followed a developmental pattern that smoothly joined Hindu and Islamic (specifically, Persian) traditions in creating one of the great musical cultures of the world. Civilizational accomplishments of this nature nourish Akbar's cosmopolitan argument that our future turns on dialogic harmony and on the avoidance of unity that is based on exclusion. Amartya Sen explicitly appeals to Akbar in arguing for cosmopolitan education:

In dealing with controversies in US universities about confining core readings to the 'great books' of the Western world, Akbar's line of reasoning would suggest that the crucial weakness of this proposal is not so much that students from other backgrounds should not have to read Western classics, as that confining one's readings only to the books of one's civilization reduces one's freedom to learn about and choose ideas from different cultures in the world (SEN: 2000, p. 83).

Tagore anticipated the cosmopolitan broadening of the curriculum, a successful contemporary trend in many educational systems both in the East and the West, in his educational institution in *Shantiniketan* where Sen spent his formative years. Influenced by a cosmopolitan spirit, Tagore adopted the motto "the world in one nest" for his *Visva-Bharati* University. He inaugurated institutes for the study of foreign cultures, placed emphasis on foreign language education, and used his worldwide influence to attract an international faculty and students. Needless to say, these efforts were visionary for his time, when international cooperation in education was not a matter of course as it is now. Deeply committed to the practical implementation of his educational ideals, Tagore used the money from the Nobel Prize and substantial book royalties in the early development of the institution. Amartya Sen, who was for many years a student in Tagore's school, vividly recalls the cosmopolitan experience of his formative experience:

I am partial to seeing Tagore as an educator, having myself been educated at Shantiniketan. The school was unusual in many different ways, such as the oddity that classes, excepting those requiring a laboratory, were held outdoors (whenever the weather permitted) [...] There was something remarkable about the ease with which class discussions could move from Indian traditional literature to contemporary as well as classical Western thought, and then to the culture of China and Japan or elsewhere (SEN, 1997, p. 83).

Another famous student of Tagore's educational institution, Satyajit Ray, acknowledged as one of the masters of world cinema, also comments on the cosmopolitanism of Tagore's educational vision:

I consider the three years I spent in Shantiniketan as the most fruitful of my life [...] Shantiniketan opened my eyes for the first time to the splendours of Indian and Far Eastern art. Until then I was completely under the sway of Western art, music and literature. Shantiniketan made me the combined product of East and West that I am (RAY: 1991, p. 27)

These remarks depict an educational process that is itself a dialogue across cultures. Moreover, such dialogues provided the foundations for a philosophy of education that prioritizes cosmopolitanism. The philosophy claims that worthwhile education enriches life through an ideal unity which is capable of cultural empathy. As observed earlier, the postmodern notion of 'cultures as uniform fragments' is highlighted as a way of criticizing the modernist notion of 'unity as exclusion'. To be educated as world citizens, regulated by the ideal of the alternative conception of 'unity as harmony', means the refusal of the modernist terror mantra: "Adapt your aspirations to our end – or else". At the same time, it does not subscribe to the view that persons are totally determined by local inheritance. In other words, neither modernity nor postmodernity can fully adopt the dialogic posture.

So far I have considered, drawing on Tagore, some of the philosophical issues at stake in developing a cosmopolitan philosophy of education. Given the theme of cosmopolitan education, I have attempted to provide the theoretical connections between the philosophy of education, and the dialogic encounter among cultures, religious and otherwise. The comments are inspired by the recognition that now, more than ever, we need to enlarge our worldview through dialogue with our brothers and sisters, independent from their religious beliefs or cultural heritages. In this thesis, however, I shall discuss an epistemic alternative to both modernism as well as postmodernism: transmodernity. For the time being, let us explain that Tagore's philosophy of education, offered the rationale for the implementation of a deep cosmopolitan education.

The writings of Rabindranath Tagore steadfastly endorse and explore the ramifications of this fundamental belief. Drawing on Tagore, one realizes that the very act of

dialogue, in a most basic sense, is elicited by a cosmopolitan philosophy of education. It is through the educational process that openness can be nurtured, not through a repetitive learning, but one that privileges the development of empathetic capacities. Tagore gave shape to a philosophy of education that can best serve the purposes of dialogic encounters through the notion of deep cosmopolitanism. Dialogue as a process ought not to be limited to formal institutional gatherings, but ought to be a formative structure of a person's world view. Deep cosmopolitanism calls for a dialogical and transdisciplinary pluralist model of education, which aims at negotiating differences among cultures through the paradigm of 'unity as harmony', in a clear refusal of 'unity as uniformity', the present paradigm of the proponents of neo-liberal multicultural education in the United States.

Today, amidst global existential/cultural/religious/political/social/economic uncertainties and inequalities engendered by the production of an uneven globalization, in a world polarized between the cultural constructs of West and East, the adoption of a truly deep cosmopolitan educational agenda would enhance the prospect of peace and understanding among humankind, since knowledge production would be delinked from an universalizing Euro-American "single story" approach, privileging a multitude of versions of truth and world views: a 'pluriversal' perspective of many worlds in one world, as Mignolo and a myriad of other theoreticians from the Third World, such as Ramón Grosfoguel, the philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel, Aníbal Quijano, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, and Glória Anzaldúa, among others, propose.

2.4 A THIRD-WORLD PARADIGM

Accordingly, in an attempt to demonstrate that the co-existence among cultures and civilizations is possible and highly desirable, I have discussed Rabindranath Tagore's iconic model of 'deep cosmopolitan education' commented by his great grandson Saranindranath Tagore. However, in order to achieve effectively an inter-cultural North-South dialogue, the terms of the conversation, as Mignolo usually repeats, must change. Such dialogue between the colonizing North and the colonized South requires decolonization of global power relations, as Ramón Grosfoguel puts it in his article "Transmodernity, border thinking, and global coloniality" (2013). Throughout the article, he examines important concepts such as

‘border thinking, ‘coloniality of power’ and ‘transmodernity’. First, it is necessary to conceptualize ‘coloniality of power’, since Grosfoguel makes use of this epistemology to criticize both world-system analysis and postcolonial/cultural studies, presenting it as an answer to the ‘culture versus economy dilemma’. As a Latino living in the United States, Grosfoguel employs a quite interesting epistemic strategy in his article. He shifts the locus of enunciation from the European man to an Indigenous or subaltern locus of enunciation, producing a shift of the geopolitics of knowledge. As Grosfoguel contends,

the first implication of shifting our geopolitics of knowledge is the recognition that what arrived in the Americas in the late 15th century [...] was a more complex world-system than what political-economy paradigms and world-system analysis portray. A European/capitalist/military/Christian/patriarchal/white/heterosexual/male arrived in the Americas and established simultaneously in time and space several entangled global hierarchies [...]: 1- a particular global class formation of labor (slavery, semi-serfdom, wage labour, petty-commodity production)[...] organized by capital for the production of surplus value through the selling of commodities for a profit in the world market; 2-an international division of labour of core and periphery where capital organized labour at the periphery around coerced and authoritarian forms (Wallerstein 1974); 3-an inter-state system of politico-military organizations controlled by European males [...]; 4- a global racial/ethnic hierarchy that privileged European people over non-European people (Quijano 1993;2000); 5- a global gender hierarchy that privileged males over females and European patriarchy over other forms of gender relations (Spivak 1988; Enloe 1990); 6- a sexual hierarchy that privileged heterosexuals over homosexuals and lesbians [...]; 7- a spiritual hierarchy that privileged Christians over non-Christian/non-Western spiritualities institutionalized in the globalization of the Christian (Catholic and later Protestant) Church; 8- an epistemic hierarchy that privileged Western knowledge and cosmology over non-Western knowledge and cosmologies, and institutionalized in the global university system (Mignolo 1995, 2000; Quijano 1991);9- a linguistic hierarchy between European languages that privileged communication and knowledge/theoretical production in the former and subalternized the latter as sole producers of folklore or culture but not of knowledge/theory. (GROSFOGUEL: 2008, digital source)

Challenging the traditional conceptualization of the world-system by a decolonial perspective of the South, the Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano argues that

he could conceptualize the present world-system as a historical-structural heterogeneous totality with a specific power matrix, which he calls a ‘colonial power matrix’ (*patrón de poder colonial*). This matrix affects all dimensions of social existence, such as sexuality, authority, subjectivity and labour (QUIJANO: 2000, p. 560).

Following this conceptualization, Grosfoguel shares with the reader his understanding of ‘coloniality of power’:

I conceptualize the coloniality of power as an entanglement or, to use US Third World feminist concept, intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989; Fregoso 2003) of

multiple and heterogeneous global hierarchies (“heterarchies”) of sexual, political, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination and exploration (GROSFUGUEL: 2000, digital source).

As for Quijano, “what is new in the “coloniality of power” perspective is how the idea of race and racism becomes the organizing principle that structures all of the multiple hierarchies of the world-system (QUIJANO: 1993, 67).

This whole epistemology is extremely important for the analysis of the most comprehensive short-story of *Anatolia and Other Stories*, “Repatriation”, since according to Quijano the different forms of labour are determined by this racial hierarchy, which permeates all power relations within a capitalist world-system. Further, Grosfoguel continues his analysis of “coloniality of power” arguing that

the old division between culture and political-economy approaches is overcome (Grosfoguel 2002).[...] In the “coloniality of power” approach, what comes first, “culture or the economy”, is a chicken - egg dilemma that obscures the complexity of the capitalist world-system (Grosfoguel 2002). Coloniality is not equivalent to colonialism [...] Coloniality and modernity constitute two sides of a single coin. Anti-capitalist decolonization and liberation [...] require a broader transformation of the sexual, gender, spiritual, epistemic, economic, political, linguistic and racial hierarchies of the modern/colonial world-system. The “coloniality of power” perspective challenges us to think about social change and social transformation in a non-reductionist way [...] and as Anibal Quijano (1993, 1998, 2000) has shown with his “coloniality of power” perspective, we still live in a colonial world and we need to break from the narrow ways of thinking about colonial relations, in order to accomplish the unfinished and incomplete 20th century dream of decolonization (GROSFUGUEL: 2008, digital source).

Another important concept to consider is that concerning “heterarchies”, or “heterarchical thinking”. According to Kontopoulos,

an attempt to break with the liberal paradigm of nineteenth century social science [...] heterarchies move us beyond closed hierarchies into a language of complexity, open systems, entanglement of multiple and heterogeneous hierarchies, structural levels, and structuring logics [...] the idea here is that there is neither autonomous logics nor a single logic, but multiple, heterogeneous, entangled, and complex processes within a single historical reality (GROSFUGUEL: 2008, digital source).

Since its onset, the endless accumulation of capital enacted by the capitalist world-system, has been entangled with racist, homophobic and sexist ideologies.

“Critical border thinking” is “the epistemic response to the Eurocentric project of modernity, [...] and is proposed by Walter D. Mignolo (2000), following Chicano/a thinkers Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) and José David Saldívar (1997), [...] and instead

of rejecting modernity to retreat into a fundamentalist absolutism, border epistemologies subsume/redefine the epistemologies of the subaltern, located in the oppressed and exploited side of the colonial difference, towards a decolonial liberation struggle for a world beyond Eurocentred modernity, [...] producing a redefinition/subsumption of citizenship, democracy, human rights, humanity, economic relations beyond the narrow definitions imposed by European modernity [...] It is the decolonial transmodern response of the subaltern to Eurocentric modernity (GROSFOGUEL: 2008, digital source)

Transmodernity or critical cosmopolitanism as utopian projects

is the Latin American philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel's utopian project to transcend the Eurocentric version of modernity (Dussel 2001) [...] it is Dussel's project to fulfill the 20th century's unfinished and incomplete project of decolonization. In Walter Dignolo's interpretation of Dussel, transmodernity would be equivalent to "diversality as a universal project", which is a result of "critical border thinking" (Dignolo 2000). Liberation philosophy for Dussel can only come from the critical thinkers of each culture in dialogue with other cultures. Quijano's (2000) proposal for a "socialization of power" as opposed to a "statist nationalization of production" is crucial here [...] This is a process of empowerment and radical democratization from below that does not exclude the formation of global public institutions to democratize and socialize production, wealth and resources at a world – scale. The socialization of power would also imply the formation of global institutions beyond national or state boundaries to guarantee social equality and justice in production, reproduction and distribution of world resources [...] In sum, the solution to global inequalities requires the need to imagine anti-capitalist global decolonial utopian alternatives beyond colonialist and nationalist [...] This new form of universality. I will call a "radical universal decolonial anti - capitalist diversality or pluriversality" as a project of liberation [...], a concrete universal that builds a decolonial universal by respecting the multiple local particularities in the struggles against patriarchy, capitalism, coloniality and Eurocentred modernity from a diversity of decolonial epistemic/ethical historical projects. This represents a fusion between Dussel's "transmodernity" and Quijano's "socialization of power". Dussel's transmodernity leads us to what Walter Dignolo (2000) has characterized as "diversality as a universal project" to decolonize Eurocentred modernity [...] This is a call for a universal that is a pluriversal (Dignolo 2000), for a concrete universal that would include all the epistemic particularities towards a "transmodern decolonial socialization of power." As the Zapatistas say, "*luchar por un mundo donde otros mundos sean posibles*" (GROSFOGUEL: 2008, digital source).

2.5 THE CLASH VS. THE DIALOGUE OF CIVILIZATIONS

2.5.1 Edward Said vs. the Myth of the Clash of Civilizations

As we are all members of one race — the human race, and share this blue planet with all the other living creatures, I felt the necessity to demystify Huntington's clash of

civilizations and cultures' thesis, so as to unveil its blatant contradictions and biased argumentation. Edward Said's essay "The Myth of 'The Clash of Civilizations' (1998) criticizes Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' theory (1993) and due to its relevance for the understanding of North America's insularity and hostility toward the 'rest' of the world, I thought it would be elucidating to highlight certain ideas proposed by Said, since Anis Shivani's characters are mostly non-Western immigrants dwelling in an imperial Western world. These characters fight for freedom over security and want to belong, to be part of the world, since they are willing to transcend issues of segregation such as racism, sexism, homophobia and all sorts of human rights' violations.

Therefore, let us analyze Huntington's propositions, which I deem to be biased and harmful for the achievement of intercultural and interfaith dialogue among civilizations. He only reinforced conflicts with his strategically devised racist arguments. Said quotes Huntington: "The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics". Said condemns Huntington's ideology that places the West as the locus of enunciation around which all the other civilizations must revolve. To start the discussion, Said introduces us to Huntington's main argument,

The West must exploit differences and conflicts among Confucian and Islamic states to support other civilizations' groups sympathetic to Western values and interests. It must also strengthen international institutions that reflect and legitimate western interests and values, and to promote the involvement of non-western states in those institutions (HUNTINGTON: 1993, p. 35).

Said considers this discourse highly interventionist, since Huntington reproduces the apology of the Cold War, placing the West, that is, the U.S., as the hegemonic civilization, by saying that "not only will conflict continue, but, the conflict between civilizations will be the latest phase in the evolution of conflict in the modern world". (SAID: 1998, digital source) To Said this argument should be understood as a

crudely articulated manual in the art of maintaining a wartime status in the minds of Americans and others; Huntington is more interested in policy prescriptions than he is either in history or careful analysis of cultures. Huntington, in my opinion, is quite misleading in what he says and how he puts things. A great deal of his argument, first of all, depends on second and third hand opinion that scants the enormous advances in our concrete understanding and theoretical understanding of how cultures work, how they change, and how they can best be grasped or apprehended. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Although Huntington coined Bernard Lewis's phrase 'the clash of civilizations', what really strikes Said is "how Huntington has picked up from Lewis, in the classic kind of Orientalist gesture, the notion that civilizations are monolithic and homogeneous and second how, again from Lewis, he assumes the unchanging character of duality between us and them." (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Said also emphasizes the reductionist character awarded to the Islamic civilization as well as the excessive attention given to their supposedly anti-Westernism,

as if about a billion Muslims scattered through five continents, dozens of differing languages and traditions and histories where [...] all enraged at western modernity, as if a billion people were really only one person and western civilization was no more complicated a matter than a simple declarative sentence. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

In fact, Huntington is "a partisan, an advocate of one civilization over all the others." By way of convincing us about the veracity of his argument, Lewis states that "Islam has never modernized, that it never separated between Church and State, that it's incapable of understanding another civilization"; Said deconstructs Lewis's stereotyped ideas, refuting "all of them as complete untruths", while drawing attention to the fact that "the Arabs and Muslims have traveled well before the Europeans in the East, in Africa, and in Europe, and were great discoverers of other civilizations well before Marco Polo and Columbus." (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Said continues his demystifying of Huntington's misleading views by telling us that for Huntington "Islam, Confucianism, and the other five or six civilizations, Hindu, Japanese, Slavic, Orthodox, Latin American and African that still exist, are separate from each other and consequently potentially in a conflict, which he wants to manage, not resolve." (SAID: 1998, digital source) For Said, Huntington's rhetoric is grounded in "easy to quote ideas, [...] passed off as pragmatic, hard-headed, practical, sensible, clear." (SAID: 1998, digital source) Further, Said questions the 'clash of civilizations' feasibility, asking to whom it interests and the relevance of this thesis for the world progress and stability:

Doesn't this in effect prolong and deepen conflict? Do we want the clash of civilizations? Doesn't it mobilize nationalist passions and therefore nationalist murderousness? Shouldn't we be asking the question, why is one doing this sort of thing? Is it to understand or to act? Is it to mitigate or to aggravate the likelihood of conflict? (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Said comments that the increasing attitude of people to miss the big picture, makes them fall into manipulative “abstractions like 'the West' or 'Japanese culture' or 'Slavic culture' or 'Islam' or 'Confucianism', [...] labels that collapse particular religions, races and ethnicities into ideologies that are considerably more unpleasant and provocative than Renan did 150 years ago” (SAID: 1998,digital source).

Having said that, I remind the reader of Renan’s racially equivocated prejudice, back in the XIX century, by contextualizing the international scenario of that time. It was a time of territorial expansion shared by the great Europe — France, Britain, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, and North America. Both aimed at the empty land in Africa, the so - called Dark Continent and Asia. The European countries, in order to justify their imperialistic guise, played the good - Samaritan game, they were there to ‘bring light’ or ‘enlighten’ the so-called primitive or barbaric nations of Africa and Asia. They imposed on the colonized peoples the French concept — ‘la mission civilizatrice’— a rather discriminatory notion, which implied that some cultures and races are superior than others, that is, in Said’s words, “ this gives the more powerful, the more developed, the more civilized, the higher, the right to colonize them, not in the name of brute force, or plunder, both of which are standard components of the exercise, but in the name of a noble ideal”. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Drawing on Conrad's famous story, *Heart of Darkness*, Said reflects on the logic underlying this civilizing mission: “an ironic, even terrifying enactment of this thesis as Conrad’s narrator puts it, quoted by Said,

The conquest of the Earth which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion, a slightly flatter nose than us is not a pretty thing, when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea. An idea at the back of it, not a sentimental pretense but an idea, and an unselfish belief in the idea, something you can bow down before and sacrifice to. (SAID, 1998: digital source)

Interpreting Conrad, Said ironically says that these “ ‘redeeming’ (the emphasis is mine) ideas dignify the practice of competition and clash, whose real purpose as Conrad quite accurately saw, was self-aggrandizement, power, conquest, treasure, and unrestrained self-pride”. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Said links the greedy logic of competition of those imperial times to the present rhetoric of identity:

I'd go so far as to say that what we today call the politics or the rhetoric of identity, by which a member of one ethnic or religious or national or cultural group, puts that group at the center of the world, derives from that period of imperial competition at the end of the last century, and this in turn, provokes the concept of worlds at war that quite obviously is at the heart of Huntington's article. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

At this point, we could ask ourselves: Is it true that each race has a special destiny, a psychology and an ethos? As for Renan, a philosopher during the XIX century, the Chinese race is meant to serve, since they are a docile people. The Black race must be the bearers, the laborers of mankind because they are strong in physique and can work hard. Said rightfully identifies these sets of ideas as being at the core of “the clash or conflict between worlds” or civilizations.

Can we still continue to label cultures or civilizations according to dated stereotyped or prejudiced Euro-American concepts? First of all, we must keep in mind that countries like Algeria, East Africa, India and others during the fight for their independence and liberation from imperial control, were already informed by ‘the us versus them’ logic, as Said explains:

A rhetoric of cultural self-justification [...] a responding rhetoric among the colonized people, one that speaks in terms of African or Asian or Arab or Muslim unity, independence, self-determination. In India, the Congress party was organized in 1880 and by the turn of the century, had convinced the Indian elite that only by supporting Indian languages, industry and commerce could political freedom come. These are ours and ours alone, runs the argument, and only by supporting our world against theirs, note the “us versus them” construction, can we finally stand on our own. One finds a similar logic at work during the Meiji period in modern Japan. Something like this rhetoric of belonging is also lodged at the heart of each independence movement, nationalism. And it achieved the result shortly after World War II, not only of dismantling over a period of about twenty years the classical empires but of winning independence for dozens of countries thereafter. India, Indonesia, most of the Arab countries, Indochina, Algeria, Kenya, etc, all these emerged onto the world scene sometimes peacefully, sometimes as the effect of internal development as in the Japanese instance, or of ugly colonial wars and wars of national liberation” (SAID: 1998,digital source).

We should bear in mind, though, that two different rhetoric constructions were at work at the foundation of the post-Colonial scenario: a utopian line that insisted on an overall pattern of integration and harmony between all peoples; the other, a line that suggested as to how all cultures were so specific and jealous as to reject peace and declare war on all the others. The United Nations and other institutions founded after World War II, aimed at the “coexistence, voluntary limitations of sovereignty, the integration of peoples and cultures in a harmonious way”, somewhat similar to Tagore’s concept of ‘unity in harmony’, which was at

the core of deep cosmopolitanism. The problem lies at the heart of the ‘our essence’ entitlement to exist in detriment of others, as Said so lucidly acknowledges:

In the Islamic world there has been a resurgence of rhetoric and movements stressing the innate opposition between Islam and the West, just as in Africa, Europe, Asia and elsewhere movements have appeared that stress the need for excluding or exterminating, as in Bosnia, others as undesirable. White Apartheid in South Africa was such a movement as is the Zionist idea that Palestine should be for the Jews only and the Palestinians as non-Jews should have a lesser place. Afrocentricity and Islam-centricity are movements that also stress the independence and separateness of cultures. Within each civilizational camp we will notice that there are official representatives of that culture who make themselves into its mouthpiece, who assign themselves the role of articulating 'our' or for that matter 'their' essence. The period that we're living in is not the clash of civilizations but the clash of definitions. Anyone who has the slightest understanding of how cultures really work, knows that defining the culture, saying what it is for members of that culture, is always a major and even in undemocratic societies, an ongoing contest. There are conical authorities to be selected, regularly revised, debated, selected and dismissed. There are ideas of good and evil, belonging or not belonging, hierarchies of values to be specified, discussed, and re-discussed. Each culture moreover defines its enemies, what stands beyond it and threatens it, and other to be despised and fought against. But, cultures are not the same. There is an official culture, a culture of priests, academics, and the state. It provides definitions of patriotism, loyalty, boundaries and what I've called belonging. It is this official culture that speaks in the name of the whole (SAID: 1998, digital source).

We have come to an argument which is central to the claim of my thesis: the fact that Huntington fails to mention in his passionate defense of the ‘clash of civilizations’ logic, that there is another kind of culture besides the mainstream or official culture, besides the one that strives at authoritarianism and competition. The culture that interests me to focus on is the counter-culture, the culture of the marginalized, of the “losers” in the eyes of the system, the

dissenting or alternative, unorthodox, heterodox, [...] antiauthoritarian themes, [...] an ensemble of practices associated with various kinds of outsiders, the poor, immigrants, artistic Bohemians, workers, rebels, artists. From the counter-culture comes the critique of authority, which challenges what is official and orthodox. No culture is understandable without some sense of this ever-present source of creative provocation from the unofficial to the official. To disregard the sense of restlessness in the West, in Islam, in Confucianism within each culture and to assume that there's complete homogeneity between culture and identity, is to miss what is vital and fertile in culture (SAID: 1998, digital source.)

I would add that this way of seeing the world seems to be grounded in anarchism, a libertarian movement which seeks to identify and dismantle structures of power and authority that limit human development and freedom, focusing on the reframing of society from below, grounded in utopian movements such as pacifism, feminism, the human rights’ movement and the environmental movement.

Drawing on the new groups in American society, Said maintains that he believes that American history should be told from the viewpoint of the poor, “the slaves, servants, laborers and poor immigrants, who played an important, but as yet unacknowledged role” (SAID:1998, digital source).He goes on adding that the narratives of such people, silenced by the great discourses whose source was Washington, the investment banks of New York, the universities of New England, and the great industrial fortunes of the middle and far west, have come to disrupt the slow progress and unruffled serenity of the official story. They ask questions, interject the experience of social unfortunates, and make the claims of lesser peoples, of women, Asian and African Americans, and various other minorities, sexual as well as ethnic.

Said emphasizes that for the theorists of the official culture, civilization identity is a rigid, fixed and stable category, unquestionable; Said, obviously, warns us that a new paradigm is necessary, the paradigm of cosmopolitanism, which has been a concern of Western scholarship in the last two decades or so. Meanwhile, I would like to focus on Said’s views on cultures’ commonalities, then, afterwards I shall concentrate on Shivani’s approach to his characters through the perspective of world literature.

Said claims that instead of spending a great deal of energy engaging in the ‘clash of cultures’ discourse, we should pay attention to the dialogue between cultures for centuries, that there is no such a thing as a pure, uncontaminated, untouched culture or civilization. This is a myth or a blatant lie that aims at obfuscating “[...] a great and often silent exchange and dialogue between them. What culture today, Said continues, whether Japanese, Arab, European, Korean, Chinese, Indian, has not had long intimate and extraordinarily rich contacts with other cultures?” (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Said is a humanist, and he extends his analysis toward literature: “Much the same is true of literature where readers for example of Garcia Marquez, Naguib Mahfuz, Kenzaburo Ore exist far beyond the national or cultural boundaries imposed by language and nation.” I continue quoting Said,

In my own field of comparative literature, there’s a commitment to the relationships between literatures as to their reconciliation and harmony despite the existence of powerful ideological and national barriers between them. And this sort of cooperative collective enterprise is what one misses in the proclamations of an undying clash between cultures. The lifelong dedication that has existed in all modern and ancient societies among scholars, artists, musicians, visionaries and prophets, to try to come to terms with the other, with that other society or culture that seems so foreign and so distant (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Said then reflects on solidarity:

It seems to me that unless we emphasize and maximize a spirit of cooperation and humanistic exchange, and here I don't speak simply of uninformed delight or amateurish enthusiasm for the exotic, but rather a profound existential commitment and labor on behalf of the other, we are going to end up superficially and stridently banging the drum for our culture in opposition to all the others. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Drawing on Eric Hobsbawm, on the issue of the invention of tradition, Said reminds us of the fact that even traditions are not stable categories, since they can “quite easily be created, destroyed and manipulated” (SAID: 1998, digital source).

2.5.2 Is Islam so Irrational?

As Said has put it in his books, Europe and the United States describe Islam as a homogeneous crowd, through the discourse of Orientalism, aiming at creating hostilities, not just because of prejudice, but, mainly due to its geopolitical power — oil — ,to its menace to Christianity, and to its historic competition with the West. The point is that Huntington's thesis aims at exacerbating the West's lack of knowledge regarding the true face of Islam, which is far from being fixed and homogeneous; on the contrary, Islam in Indonesia is different from Islam in Egypt,

where the secular powers of society are in conflict with various Islamic protest movements and reformers over the nature of Islam and in such circumstances the easiest and least accurate thing is to say, that is the world of Islam, and see how it is all terrorists and fundamentalists and see also how different and how irrational they are compared to us? (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Concluding his speech on the myth of the clash of cultures and civilizations' thesis, Said argues that we live in “a world of mixtures, of migration and of crossings over, of boundaries traversed”, and that the Western countries like France, Britain and the U.S. are facing a crisis without precedents because they have realized that “no culture or society is purely one thing” and Said keeps invalidating Huntington's arguments:

There are no insulated cultures or civilizations. Any attempt made to separate them into the watertight compartments alleged by Huntington and his ilk does damage to their variety, their diversity, their sheer complexity of elements, their radical hybridity. The more insistent we are on the separation of the cultures, the more inaccurate we are about ourselves and about others. The notion of an exclusionary civilization is to my way of thinking an impossible one (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Said believes that in face of the interethnic and intercultural conflicts between us, it is an extremely selfish and irresponsible attitude from the U.S. and Europe to continue ignoring members of the other cultures' right to their self-determination, while making this huge effort to keep them away from the Western borders. In the same vein, Said is well aware of how Huntington's essay was used to justify the U.S. Cold War policy to a whole new level, while extending it to a new audience.

Displaying an extraordinarily cosmopolitan attitude, Said urges us to develop a "new global mentality or consciousness that sees the dangers we face from the standpoint of the whole human race". Now, Said specifies such dangers:

These dangers include the pauperization of most of the globe's population, the emergence of virulent local, national, ethnic and religious sentiment as in Bosnia, Rwanda, Lebanon, Chechnya and elsewhere, the decline of literacy and onset of a new illiteracy based on electronic modes of communication, television and the new information global superhighway, the fragmentation and threatened disappearance of the grand narratives of emancipation and enlightenment (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Confronting Huntington's thesis of the clash of cultures and civilizations, as a way of reinforcing the need for the "emergence not of a sense of clash but a sense of community, understanding, sympathy, and hope", Said quotes the beautiful lines of the visionary Martinican poet Aimé Césaire,

the work of man is only just beginning and it remains to conquer all the violence entrenched in the recesses of our passion and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty, of intelligence, of force, and there's a place for all at the rendezvous of victory (SAID, 1993, p. 85).

These sentiments imply, Said acknowledges, that

they prepare the way for dissolution of cultural barriers as a kind of blockage between cultures as well as of the pride that prevents the kind of benign globalism already to be found, for instance in the environmental movement, in scientific cooperation, in the women's movement, and the universal concern for human rights, in concepts of global thought that stress community and sharing over racial, gender or class dominance (SAID:1998, digital source).

2.5.3 A Recipe for an Intercultural Understanding

Said argues that cultures have many things in common; that they are not “separate entities that exist all by themselves with occasional interruptions by people with darker skin or whiter skin” (SAID: 1998, digital source). Then he reaffirms the role of education in the “invention” and spread of ‘our’ tradition, that is, education’s widely nationalistic tradition, which is spread through the learning of our books, our language and our culture. Interestingly enough, let us now focus on Said’s recipe for an intercultural understanding: “de-nationalizing of education”. Said explains the whole epistemology behind his revolutionary argument as well as the shameful consequences of the clash of cultures’ monotheistic ideology:

As we live in a very complex and mixed world in which you can’t separate cultures and civilizations from each other, history ought to be taught as the exchange and of course the clash of civilization. I think that’s the first step and once you go from there then I think we have a better understanding of the way certain kinds of conflict are wasteful and hopeless. I mean ethnic cleansing, the idea of Apartheid, all of these schemes for isolating people. And so on and so forth. I think it’s fairly clear and straight forward. Alas, it requires a lot of work because you’re bucking a very, very strong entrenched position, which says that we are the center of the world, whoever we are. And all of what I’ve said is really intended as a critique of that kind of monotheistic position. Then, at this point of his speech, Said was obviously questioned about “difference” (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Said gave the logical answer, that he was against uniformity, homogenization, univocal thinking; but, that, at the same time, he couldn’t buy that fabricated discourse of the clash of cultures as if it were something completely natural and desirable, as if cultures have not been interacting for the past centuries and there has never been a harmonic relationship between civilizations throughout history.

Here is what Said has to say as to the quality of “difference”:

There is the other alternative, which I call coexistence, but coexistence with the preservation of difference, [...] that you be able to live with those who are different from you in all kinds of way, assuming that there’s a kind of, as English poet Jared Manley Hopkins says, a kind of radical inscape to each individual. There’s a different kind of construction to all people in some way, which applies to all languages, to all cultures, if you want to use that phrase. And so it’s the idea of respecting the difference but living with it. Human history is really a long history of compelling difference, either by assimilation or by extermination, by domination (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Said insists on “the preservation of difference”, on recognizing that difference is all. But the co-existence between them, rather than saying we are different therefore you have to stay away from us or, we have to protect ourselves against you, or we should destroy you. Said doesn’t seem to believe in a universal formula, but relies on “a benign global consciousness”, for example in the environmental movement where environments differ but they are all threatened [...] and have to be preserved and studied according to those differences” (SAID: 1998, digital source).

As a way of fighting against Huntington’s clash of civilizations or cultures’ thesis, Said summons the American intellectuals to address the moral and political issues that underlie American interventionist policy over the rest of the world. Said thinks that it is extremely important that they at least acknowledge that the U.S. has stored “nuclear devices [...] and B-2 bombers, a vast military budget that is supposed to police the world” (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Said also comments; on a rather pessimistic fashion, about the U.S. support of Israel’s imperialistic policy towards Palestinians. There is not a possibility for peace, unless certain pressing issues are met:

First of all, and I think one of the obvious attitudes on behalf of Israel would be to stop with the building of settlements for good. Of course, I am not a political strategist, but I have already spent six months in Israel a long time ago, before the Intifadas and I have spoken to some Israeli and Palestinian writers and intellectuals and most of them are pacifists and believe that through an honest and respectful intercultural dialogue, taking into account pluralistic needs and stories, peace could be more than a’ utopia’. (SAID: 1998, digital source)

There is, however, another drawback, which undermines the rhetoric of peace. According to Said, what is making things worse, besides the Palestinian weak and confused leadership — Arafat ---, is the unequal financial aid the U.S. gives to Israel: about \$ three billion, against a much smaller sum to the Palestinians. He also reminds us that the

refugees cannot travel, since they do not have passports and there are seven million Palestinians in the world today and [...] the people on the West Bank and Gaza lost 50% of their income,[...] unemployment is up to 30 % and 60% and houses are constantly being destroyed and property is taken from Palestinians and new settlements are being built and Jerusalem is being Judaized (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Finally, Said touches a sensitive point: the connivance of the Jewish people with this state of affairs, for Said believes that it all has to do with a change of attitude, which entails questioning and an effort to develop a consciousness of justice and fairness, in face of the unbearable violations of human rights perpetrated by the Israeli government. I share Said's view that two peoples share this historic land and that peace will prevail only when Palestine is re-born and Israel, by its turn, recognize that it "was constructed on the ruins of another society and by the mass dispossession of another people who remain unacknowledged as just sort of obscure natives in the background, back to the desert" (SAID: 1998, digital source).

So as to show his sorrow with the fact that The Oslo Accords specifically say that Israel bears no responsibility for the costs of the occupation after twenty-six years of military occupation, Said quotes an Israeli journalist:

We took over the country in 1948 from the British. The British left us the Port of Haifa, a road system and an electrical system, a large number of municipal buildings and lots of prisons and we could build Israel. Without that there would be no state today. If we had taken Palestine in 1948 the way we left Gaza for the Palestinians, there would be no Israel. We destroyed the economy; we deported most of the capable people, we forced the people to live in hovels and refugee camps over a period (SAID: 1998, digital source).

Now, Said's final words at this speech are a vehement plea for justice:

I mean, anybody's been to Gaza it's one of the most criminal places on earth because of Israeli policy of occupation. And they bear no responsibility for it. I mean that's simply unacceptable even for the Jewish people who have suffered so much. It's unacceptable. You cannot continue to victimize somebody else just because you yourself were a victim once. There has to be a limit (SAID: 1998, digital source)

Edward Said died in 2003, and after that, the clash of civilizations' dilemma has been analyzed by many scholars. I shall now discuss this recurring paradigm through the lenses of one of the most polemical intellectuals and activists of the world: Noam Chomsky.

2.5.4 Chomsky on the Clash of Civilizations

Drawing on Chomsky's lecture (2001), at a public forum during which he was asked whether he thought that 9/11 could be understood as part of the omnipresent "clash of

civilizations” thesis supported by Samuel Huntington, Chomsky reminds us that this thesis was used as an excuse for the Cold War atrocities perpetrated for fifty years by the bad guys, the Russians, or by ‘the heroes’, saviors of the Western civilization, ‘the good guys’, the Americans, the inhabitants of the land of ‘unbounded opportunities and perpetual happiness’. Who doesn’t remember the way the Russians were portrayed in the American movies or by the media? According to Chomsky, after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, Reagan administration had to make up another excuse to justify the need for a huge military budget. At that time, the target was the “international plague of terrorism”. (CHOMSKY: 2001). As Coetzee puts it, “time goes by, but things remain the same”. (COETZEE: 2013). Who are they? Are they known or invisible? To whom do they work? In March 1990, it was Bush’s first administration and as usual the U.S. needed to protect its defense industrial base, that is, its high-tech industry. The reasons may change, at that time the threat came from the “technological sophistication of Third World” (CHOMSKY: 2001).

Interestingly, Chomsky argues that at that time Saddam Hussein was a good guy, an ally of the United States; in other words: a commercial partner. So, the fact is that the U.S. Foreign Affairs do not really care that much about human rights’ issues; on the contrary, US policy has always been oriented towards the preservation of its interests, no matter where and what those interests might be. All that matters is the achievement of American goals. If Saddam Hussein, for example, murdered almost a million Kurds with poisonous gas is outside the point; that is not relevant as long as he does not mess with the US’s interests. Simple like that. After a certain time, however, Saddam Hussein decided to take control over his own destiny, that is, to play his own game concerning oil; then, all of a sudden, he became the bad guy in America’s glorious eyes and he deserved to be punished.

The U.S. is not ashamed to “support oppressive states, like Saudi Arabia and others, as long as the profits from oil flow to the people who deserve it: rich western energy corporations or the US Treasury Department or Bechtel Construction, and so on.” (CHOMSKY: 2001). Drawing on Huntington’s thesis, Chomsky enlightens us as to the real nature of the clash, telling us that Huntington

As a respected intellectual can’t say the truth --- look, the method by which the rich run the world is exactly the same as before, and the major confrontation remains what it has always been: small concentrated sectors of wealth and power versus everybody else. You can’t say that. And in fact if you look at those passages on the clash of civilizations, he says that in the future the conflict will not be on economic grounds. So let’s put that out of our minds. You can’t think about rich powers and corporations exploiting people, that can’t be the conflict. It’s got to be something

else. So it will be the ‘clash of civilizations’ – the western civilization and Islam and Confucianism (CHOMSKY: 2001).

As a matter of fact, Chomsky’s thesis makes sense, since the capitalist system always needs a scapegoat, in order not to reveal its real goal — profit no matter at what or whose expense. The financial capital has no nationality or belief; it is hybrid and crosses all borders; so as culture has been theorized in the Euro-American neo-liberal West as a commodity, nothing more convenient than play the cultural card, which is so praised by all the post-modern intellectual artistic ‘tribes’ throughout the First World.

Therefore, we might as well ask: is there a real clash among cultures or civilizations or is it another fiction of post - modernity? It is not a matter of being anti - American or anti-West, since I consider myself a Westerner. My whole education was based on Euro-American history, philosophy and knowledge systems and so on. Am I colonized as well? Am I a poor and limited South American? All I know is that we cannot be naïve, we may love the American way of life, that is not a crime, as far as I am concerned, but we must not forget to question reality, and that is precisely what I am doing. Nobody owns the truth, since it does not exist. All there is are versions of truth. And the one I am presenting you is Chomsky’s version of the facts. It seems pretty logic to me, though. But my reader is free to make her or his choice, since this thesis is not part of an authoritarian political platform; it is rather a kaleidoscope of fragments of reality. I follow Shivani’s attitude, the way he addresses the world seems quite interesting to me. He is an anarchist, and is interested in the interaction of cultures, in the transforming attitude of literature, he is a non - conformist and his characters depict the true “universality” of the human struggle for freedom, dignity and self-expression; in two words, he is a true humanist and cosmopolitan, a citizen of the world, who feels free to demystify rigid hierarchical structures of power as well as to depict the life of a successful immigrant. He has no obligations whatsoever. He struggled very hard to be entitled to have his own voice.

By the way, I am not sure if my reader has realized that I am writing in circles, as a way to achieve the center or multiple centers situated at some hybrid deterritorialized periphery of my/your brain, so as to add a new patch to this mosaic of ideas; let us not forget that the US follows a predictable agenda, which facilitates our understanding of Chomsky’s point. In spite of the fact that Saudi Arabia was the most extremist Islamic fundamentalist state at the time he gave this speech, 2001, it might have been succeeded by the Taliban, who

knows? All that matters is that they “play the right role, it ensures that the wealth goes to the right people: not people in the slums of Cairo, but in executive suites in New York” (CHOMSKY: 2001). And now, I hope the human rights’ people who still have some faith in the system, the humanist easygoing liberals do not get so disappointed at the way things truly happen under the carpet of neo-liberalism or globalism, for these things do not happen only in the States, but all over our globalized capitalist world, but, remember these words, as long as they do that, deliver the money to the ‘right’ pockets, “Saudi Arabian leaders can treat women as awfully as they want, they can be the most extreme fundamentalists in existence, and they’re just fine. That’s the most extreme fundamentalist state in the world.” (CHOMSKY: 2001).

As we know, the ideology card can be pretty scary. Another patch of reality: did you know that Indonesia is the biggest Muslim state in the world? And that around 1965, the US supported the Indonesian Army to carry out a coup, when General Suharto murdered about a million people (“mostly landless peasants”)? ‘Peace’ was once more restored to Asia. Interestingly enough, in spite of keeping one of the bloodiest records in the late twentieth century:

Mass murder in East Timor, hideous tortures of dissidents, and so on, it was fine. It was the biggest Islamic state in the world, but it was just fine. Suharto was ‘our kind of guy’ the way Clinton described him when he visited in the mid-nineties. And he stayed a friend of the United States until he made a mistake. He made a mistake by dragging his feet over IMF orders.

Then, Suharto did not follow the IMF lead and broke the rules of the society. Next move: “the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, gave him a phone call, and said literally, ‘We think it’s time for a democratic transition.’” Merely by accident, four hours later he abdicated, but Indonesia remained a US favorite. (CHOMSKY:2001).

There are rumors that the Al Qaeda network of terror, which by now has subdivisions that are spreading death over the Arab world has been “created, trained, and armed to harass the Russians — not to help the Afghans.” (CHOMSKY: 2001) I doubt if you would be able to grasp the global picture: “They’re the creation of the CIA, British intelligence, Saudi Arabian funding, Egypt and so on. They brought the most extreme radical fundamentalists they could find anywhere, in North Africa or the Middle East.” (CHOMSKY: 2001).

Chomsky can be extremely revealing:” These guys were carrying out terrorism from the beginning. They assassinated President Sadat twenty years ago. But they were the main

groups supported by the US. So, where is the clash of civilizations?” (CHOMSKY: 2001). Let us move further. As this story is almost unbelievable, let us have it from Chomsky’s hand:

During the 1980s, the United States carried out a major war in Central America. A couple of hundred thousand people were killed, four countries almost destroyed, I mean it was a vast war. Who was the target of that war? Well, one of the main targets was the Catholic Church. The decade of the 1980s began with the assassination of an archbishop. It ended with the assassination of six leading Jesuit intellectuals, including the rector of the main university. They were killed by basically the same people – terrorist forces, organized and armed and trained by the United States. Hundreds of thousands of peasants and poor people also died, as usual, but one of the main targets was the Catholic Church. Why? Well, the Catholic Church had committed a grievous sin in Latin America. For hundreds of years, it had been the church of the rich. That was fine. But in the 1960s, the Latin American bishops adopted what they called a ‘preferential option for the poor.’ (CHOMSKY: 2001).

Now, where is the clash of civilizations? , Chomsky asks us and rightfully answers:

I mean, there is a clash alright. There is a clash with those who are adopting the preferential option for the poor no matter who they are. They can be Catholics, they can be Communists, they can be white, black, green, anything. Western terror is totally ecumenical. It’s not really racist – they’ll kill anybody who takes the wrong stand on the major issues. (CHOMSKY: 2001).

And now, let us revel in Chomsky’s last touch of irony:

But if you’re an intellectual, you can’t say that. Because it’s too obviously true. And you can’t let people understand what is obviously true. You have to create deep theories that can be understood only if you have a PhD from Harvard or something. So we have a clash of civilizations, and we’re supposed to worship that. But it makes absolutely no sense. (CHOMSKY: 2001).

3 ANATOLIA AND OTHER STORIES

3.1 PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

3.1.1- On the Author

When we search the internet after personal information about Anis Shivani, we find that he is a fiction writer, poet, and critic in Houston, Texas, who studied Economics at Harvard University. The ambiguous preposition *in* (in Huston) makes it impossible to find out if he is originally from Huston, or if he is staying there for a while. This mystery triggers the imagination. Was he born in the U.S. or in the East? What does the definition Pakistani/American mean? I believe that, in the case of Anis Shivani, what really matters is the fact that it simply does not matter any more where he was born. As an author, he is cosmopolitan, hybrid, and transmodern. As he says, “The human condition has a universality that bridges all temporal and spatial divides (SHIVANI: 2013, digital source).

The story “Dubai” has been awarded Special Mention for the Pushcart Prize. Shivani’s fiction, poetry, and criticism appear in *Georgia Review*, *Three penny Review*, *Iowa Review*, *Antioch Review*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Agni*, *Colorado Review*, *Boulevard*, *Pleiades*, *Harvard Review*, *North American Review*, *Times Literary Supplement*, *London Magazine*, and other journals. A member of the National Book Critics Circle, he frequently reviews books for newspapers and magazines. He is currently finishing a novel and a book of criticism. Online, Shivani has been reviewing, writing essays, and interviewing authors frequently for the *Huffington Post*.

His published books, so far, include *Anatolia and Other Stories* (2009), *The Fifth Lash and Other Stories* (2012), *My Tranquil War and Other Poems* (2012), *Karachi Raj: A Novel* (forthcoming, 2014), and *Soraya: Sonnets* (forthcoming, 2015), a novel in progress, *Abruzi, 1936*, and a poetry manuscript in progress, *Empire*. Recently finished books include

Literature in an Age of Globalization and *A History of the Cat in Nine Chapters or Less*. A selection of his political writings over the last decade is also forthcoming in 2015. In criticism, Shivani's books include *Against the Workshop* (2011), the recently completed *Literature at the Global Crossroads*, and a book in progress called *Plastic Realism: Neoliberal Discourse in the New American Novel*.

Shivani's debut in criticism, *Against the Workshop: Provocations, Polemics, Controversies*, was published in November 2011. The book consists of a selection of his reviews and essays; published over the last decade, and includes his Pushcart Prize-winning essay on creative writing programs. In his criticism, Shivani often explores the intersections of the political economy of writing with particular styles in fiction and poetry. A particular point of concern is what he considers the decline of American fiction and poetry since the peak of high modernism, and the current state of writing under the creative writing regime. Shivani is also a member of the National Book Critics Circle, and frequently reviews books for newspapers and magazines such as the *Boston Globe*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Antonio Express-News*, *Austin American-Statesman*, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, *Charlotte Observer*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *Kansas City Star*, *In These Times*, *Brooklyn Rail*, *Texas Observer*, and others. Since Shivani's critical fortune is still being formed, I considered it useful to bring some of the critical reviews, which are shown in Annex I. Likewise, in Annex II, I present some quotes by Anis Shivani which are representative of the things in which he believes.

3.1.2- On the Book

Shivani's literature has the power to represent, misrepresent, and debate matters related to different 'subaltern' subjects: the post-colonial subject, the poor other and the female subject. He believes that the task of literature today is to imagine a politics that transcends nations, delivering a world literature, depicting characters that come from a variety of cultures and time periods. *Anatolia and Other Stories* (2009) is Anis Shivani's debut collection of short-stories. I believe that the title of the book is suggestive, since the word Anatolia, in Greek, [Ἀνατολή, Anatolḗ] means "the place where the sun rises", or "east"

(MITCHELL, 1995). Also known as “Asia Minor” since the late Antiquity, the place represents a bridge between East and West, due to its geopolitical strategic location in terms of trade routes, culture, agriculture and military importance. After the times of Alexander the Great, and many small Anatolian kingdoms, the Romans captured what later became known as Asia Minor and ruled a large territory between 27 BC and 1453 AD. The Eastern Roman Empire, known as Byzantine Empire after Emperor Constantine, witnessed the spread of Christianity. The Romans established themselves in Anatolia in 190 BC, having *Ephesus* as the capital of the province they called Asia. During the period of the *Pax Romana*, trade and culture were increased in Asia Minor, and great Roman cities were built there, such as *Ephesus*, *Aphrodisias*, *Perge* and *Aspendes*, which were the most important cities. In 330 AD Constantine decided to move the capital of the empire from Rome to Byzantium, and renamed it Constantinople. In 1453, the Ottoman Empire conquered Constantinople and renamed it Istanbul. The Ottoman Empire lasted until 1922 and in 1923 Asia Minor became the larger part of the Turkish Republic. (MITCHELL, 1995) The reader shall have a better idea of Anatolia in the section where the homonymous short story is analyzed.

Despite the adage that we should not judge a book by its cover, the cover to the Black Lawrence Press first edition of *Anatolia and Other Stories* is a work of art. It consists of a beautiful collage of different contrasting images, which can probably provoke different impressions on different readers. I will now describe my reading of that cover. The lower part shows scenes of the ‘exotic’ Orient, which evoke part of the Western imaginary, as Said discusses in his seminal book *Orientalism* (1995), when he argues that Westerners have developed a stereotyped image of the East, one that does not correspond to reality; this has contributed to the stereotyping of the East as an inferior, backward civilization, in need of the Western rescue; or, in other words, the oppressive colonization of the Arab World. We also see, in the cover, a Vietnamese peasant riding a bicycle with his typical hat, carrying his things, because he probably lives far away from any city. He seems to be placed in a map. Next to him, we see the face of a pretty Gypsy woman with a penetrating look, gazing into a crystal ball as if she were conjuring the future of humanity. To the other side, we find an Ottoman prince riding a beautiful horse. He is dressed in sophisticated clothes and from the horse’s neck there seems to be hanging a lamp with legs, a surreal image; and there seems to be a map on the upside-down lamp. In the middle of the cover there are world maps, drawn onto an orange background. On the same background, there are pictorial records onto caves’ walls registering the history of an era of hunting nomads. Golden marks cross the whole page,

which can be interpreted either as scratches damaging the cover of the book, or as golden threads ornating it. They could also be read as sand shining on a dry desert. And there seems to be caravels sailing upwards heading to Europe. There are also a lute with some embroidered shawls and an intricate Byzantine or Arab design. On the top of the cover, there are two state-of-the-art buildings that seem to be featuring Dubai. Contrasting with Dubai's state-of-the-art technology, there is a huge camel as impressive as the colossal buildings, with an adamant look in his eyes as if he were a witness of ancient times and knew that all that luxury would turn into sand one day, and that when that day came, he would still be there, waiting for the next civilization to come and go ... As there is an incidence of light onto it, especially at night, some areas of the cover seem to shine as if they were made of gold. I see that as an allusion to the role money plays in the lives of the characters of this book, whose life trajectories got transformed in a way or another by the ubiquitous war on terror, an excuse for exclusionary immigration policies. The book design is by Steven Seighman, and I think it represents the semiotic translation of his interpretation of the book into the realm of visual arts. (SEIGHMAN: 2009)

3.1.3- Synthesis of Each Short Story

“Dubai”; “Repatriation”; and “Anatolia”, – the texts to be commented in the thesis – are, respectively; the first, eighth, and sixth, among the eleven stories in *Anatolia and Other Stories*. They can either be read independently, or as part of an unit that is formed in the book, in the same way that each of the images on the cover contribute to the ensemble of the final collage. I would like to comment each of the short stories at length; the only reason why this is not done is the limits in size and time inherent to the writing of a master's thesis. The choice of the short stories, and the order of their presentation, relate to the things I considered most important to say, in relation to what has been stated in the first two chapters of the thesis. Although I will not discuss the eleven short stories in depth, I present here a brief synopsis of each of the short stories that form the book.

3.1.3.1 “Dubai”

Place: Dubai, a large city in the United Arab Emirates, located in the Persian Gulf. Famous for its extremely sophisticated and modern architecture, which includes the artificial living

islands formatted like a palm tree and the world map, called respectively the Palm *Jumeiral* and The World Islands.

Synopsis: Ram, an illegal immigrant, a guest worker of Indian descent, who has worked for 35 years in the building of the modern city of Dubai, has a feeling that his life is in danger. The story takes place in 2006.

Theme: The authoritarian and subhuman conditions the undocumented workers who are building Dubai, the paradise of consumerism, are confronted with, in their struggle for a better future.

Form: An 18 - page-long story told in third-person voice, focusing on the perception of things by the protagonist, *Ram Pillai*. The story alternates what is happening at present with flashbacks of earlier events.

3.1.3.2 “Manzanar”

Place: Manzanar, located in California, is one of the ten internment camps where more than one hundred thousand people of Japanese ascendancy were kept incarcerated during World War II. Nowadays it has been transformed into a center (Manzanar National Historic Site) that studies and analyses the cultural legacy of Japanese-Americans in the United States.

Synopsis: An Issei Japanese man, named Jim Hosokawa, is detained in this camp; and must choose between cooperating and offering resistance to his camp jailers.

Theme: The persecution inflicted to Japanese people right after the beginning of the American involvement in World War II.

Form: A 23 - page-long story told in entries of a diary from August 2, 1942 up to December 28, 1942. The story is told in first-person voice intercalated with dialogues focusing on other characters’ voices. One wonders why the entries suddenly stop at the end of 1942, since the war lasted until 1945.

3.1.3.3 “Conservation”

Place: The story takes place at the MFA (Museum of Fine Arts, in Boston, U.S.A.) and in its neighborhood.

Synopsis: A Chinese-American young female conservator named Nancy Liu decides to smuggle a masterpiece — Antoine Watteau’s *La Perspective* — out of Boston’s Museum of Art in order to protect it from a restoration that, in her opinion, could ruin the painting’s beauty. This painting is actually one of the collection pieces in the MFA, accession # 23573. (WATTEAU: c. 1715).

Theme: The massification of the market of art versus the singularity of the artist.

Form: A 26 - page-long story told in third-person omniscient voice, focusing on the perspective of different characters, by discussing their ideas and exposing their feelings about the incident, such as Nancy, her boss, an investor, and the ghost of a predecessor conservator who haunts the place. It has an unconventional ending.

3.1.3.4 “Profession”

Place: Local places like a barber shop, the Farmers Market, a music store and the campus of Madison University at the end of Nixon’s administration.

Synopsis: A couple of white aging professors decide to adopt an eleven-year-old Vietnamese boy, whose parents died in the Vietnam War.

Theme: The dark side of the pursuit of happiness, as an academic couple hopes to revitalize their marriage. Transracial adoption explores the decadent relationship between the aging couple with opposing careers: Lauren is a superstar on Cultural Studies and Theory; while Arthur Fishbach, her husband, is an old-fashioned professor without any motivation.

Form: A 25 - page-long story told in third-person voice, mediated by Arthur’s conversation with the boy — Nam Loc Nguyen, and with his wife, Lauren.

3.1.3.5 “Go Sell It on the Mountain”

Place: “Green Mountain Conference” at a University in Vermont, U.S.A.

Synopsis: A professor named Simone Carpentier adds some charisma to a tedious writers’ retreat in Vermont, where writers discuss literary issues.

Theme: Academia mocking; MFA programs' satires; commercialization and artificiality of the "art" of writing; satire on academia's concerns with the obligation of being ethically correct.

Form: A 29 - page-long story narrated in first-person voice, focused on one of the writers' voice, Paul Madsen's, who discusses his views on literature as a background to convey the sub-plot unfolding beneath the Conference.

3.1.3.6 "Anatolia"

Place: Set in Anatolia (modern Republic of Turkey) in the eighteenth century, around the 1728s, under the rule of *Padişah Ahmed III*.

Synopsis: Traces life in the coastal Mediterranean town of Alanya, where a Jewish merchant from Venice, *Noah ibn Nehmias*, is being brought before a *Kadi* (a magistrate) of *Alanya*, wrongfully accused of tax evasion by the local merchants.

Theme: Commercial and cultural exchanges between The Ottoman Empire and Europe; religious fanaticism vs. intellectual discussion of European philosophers such as *Spinoza* and *Maimonides*, and the reception newly translated English books — *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* have in the Ottoman Empire. In fact, the discussion is between the irrationality of religious fanaticism vs. the rational humanism of philosophical and literary imagination.

Form: A 29 - page-long story told in third-person voice through an omniscient narrator, who showcases the inner worldviews of different characters, depicting contrasting arguments and escalating anxiety.

3.1.3.7 "Independence"

Place: Set in post-independence India, in a region to the South, known as Pondicherry, right before the partition.

Synopsis: It is the story of an unsatisfied Muslim industrialist called Saleem and his relationship with his two brothers, their wives, his meaningless relation with his wife and five-year-old son and his love-hatred relation with his aging father and patriarch of the family on the eve of India's independence and partition.

Theme: Discussion of the escalating conflicts between Hindus and Muslims following India's independence amidst French and British colonial influences.

Form: A 24 - page-long story told in third-person voice through an omniscient narrator who intercalates several points of view, although the narrative is mainly focalized through Saleem's eyes.

3.1.3.8 "Repatriation"

Place: A ship on the Atlantic Ocean heading from the coast of the United States towards Western Africa.

Synopsis: Fifty to sixty million people of definite foreign origin, non-whites, are to be repatriated after some undefined contamination has killed off white Americans on the coasts.

Theme: Echoes of the Atlantic African slavery; racial segregation and mass genocide inform American and European immigration policies from President George W. Bush onwards.

Form: Told in a diary form from a first-person survivor's perspective, an unnamed male narrator of Indonesian descent, the story is only 8 pages long. Although the entries have a date, the fictional author informs us that the story is learned by heart and recorded only on his memory, because the passengers are not allowed to write.

3.1.3.9 "Texas"

Place: Set in Houston, Texas in contemporary America.

Synopsis: Amy Beederman, a young white American teenager works as a nanny for a wealthy Malaysian couple in Texas.

Theme: The reversal of expectations as to the traditional narrative of (illegal) immigrants working for wealthy and oppressive Americans. Here, the native is the subaltern.

Form: A 9 - page-long story told from a third-person omniscient narrator, focalized through Amy's perspective.

3.1.3.10 "Gypsy"

Place: Set in Indiana, after World War II.

Synopsis: A Hungarian Gypsy family, recently escaped from Communist Hungary, is living in cultural isolation in rural Indiana.

Theme: A young Gypsy girl, *Marcса*, struggles against the limitations of her own Rom culture, which collide with new world expectations in rural Indiana, due to a deliberate refusal to assimilate the American mainstream's ways.

Form: A 22- page-long story told from *Marcса*'s perspective.

3.1.3.11“Tehran”

Place: Set in the north Tehran neighborhood of *Zafraniyeh*, in contemporary Iran, after the time of *Imam Khomeini*.

Synopsis: Ten people are killed in an explosion at a café in Tehran perpetrated by a young novelist from the *Baha'i* faith, who feels persecuted.

Theme: The hidden and the apparent; the censorship of books and ideas in general; political surveillance of the population at the post-Revolution country; lack of authenticity in a world of illusions; demystifying of *Khomeini*'s dictates.

Form: Story told from the perspective of the dead-to-be victims of the bomb attack at the Café. A 36 - page-long story focalized through the reasoning and feelings of a pregnant schoolteacher called *Shahnaz*; a white-turbaned young cleric, *Kazim*; a couple who are meeting *Kazim* at the Café, the *Moavenis*; *Farkhondeh*; and the *Baha'i* novelist *Keyvan Yazdani*. The narrative technique is extraordinary, for the reader feels totally enthralled by the characters' personal stories, which are fascinating because of the loyalty they show to their beliefs.

3.2 ANALYSIS OF THREE SHORT STORIES

3.2.1- “Dubai”

“Dubai” was first published in the journal *The Pinch* in the fall of 2006, and has been awarded special mention for the Pushcart Prize. This short-story, as to its form, is told in a third-person narrative, focusing on the perception of the protagonist, Ram Pillai. Sparse information is given concerning the protagonist’s past. We only learn that he came from India thirty-five years ago and that he is a lonely man with a few acquaintances in Dubai, and a man extremely reserved about his personal life. The reader, then, is responsible for filling in the gaps the way he/she pleases, constructing, thus, different narrative schemes. Ram is able to continue working in spite of his lack of documentation. Suddenly, after all these decades, he has a feeling that “Something tells him he must leave Dubai before he’s made to; why, after decades of never having had the slightest run-in with authorities, he should fear this, he doesn’t know.” (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 10) Slight shades and tones along the story lead the reader to sense that Ram is hiding a secret, a mystery he is eager to share with someone:

Still, Ram’s past is beginning to rear its monstrous head when he least expected it, as his heart becomes less supple and his body a less wieldy instrument. If only he could tell someone! If only there were someone to unburden with! But he hasn’t whispered a word of his secret to his most trusted friends. They know Ram has some leverage whereby he can remain in Dubai unmolested, in as “illegal” status, for a lifetime, but out of respect for his apparent sadness, they’ve observed limits in inquiring what advantage he’s acquired (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 10).

The setting of Dubai plays a relevant role in the story to the point of being metaphorically personified into a “not still shy bride, a virginal flower, a shadow in search of itself...” (SHIVANI: 2009: 9). The contrast between this delicate image and the aggressiveness of the overwhelmingly grandiose environment; generates the impression that Dubai has somehow lost her identity. Nevertheless, although the city has lost her naivety, that very fact makes her even more seductive. The allusion to the Spanish - born American philosopher, poet and humanist Santayana, who made important contributions to aesthetics, speculative philosophy, and literary criticism, attests to the inter-textual nature of any literary narrative. In one of the scenes of “Dubai”, Ram considers Santayana’s premise that: “Law and justice are abstract constructions, generalities which concrete facts usually make a mockery of” (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 10). Ram, like Dubai, has long lost his naivety, now he is able to see through the veil of illusion that permeates the renewed aspect of Dubai, he has lived enough to realize that justice is only an abstraction in theory, that it is not equally applied to everyone, attesting to the advantages the rich and powerful experience in real life. This quotation sets

the tone for this revelation about Ram's past: Ram has witnessed a young Sheikh from the merchant class run over an old Bedu man.

Ram was wandering close to the endless desert, when, all of a sudden, a Toyota hit a poor old Bedouin and he died. Everything happened so fast. Ram tried to calm the Sheikh, by telling him that the accident was nobody's fault; it was Allah's will. On second thought, Ram realized that whatever he did — if he reported the incident to the police, he would probably be deported; if he didn't, and someone found out that he was wandering off for some time, he could be even sent to jail or even worse than that... Dubai has an efficient way of dealing with its strangers and subalterns; so Ram was smart enough to suggest to the desperate Sheikh that he, the Sheikh, could leave the place that he, Ram, would take care of everything. The Sheikh thought for a while and realized that Ram's idea was quite reasonable, under the circumstances... After a few seconds the Sheikh took note of Ram's data, like name, address, passport number and from that moment on, Ram's life would never be the same. He enjoyed privileges: lived near work, had his own car.

Before the climax of the story, Dubai's contrasting faces are unveiled through Ram's cosmopolitan sagacity, "Not even Friday makes Dubai really slow down," and

Already, well before noon, the most devout among the Emirati worshippers are making their way to the Grand Mosque, their flowing white *dishdashas* starched and sparkling, their headscarves tightly tied by the black *aghal*". The mosque is the only place in Dubai where national and foreigner, citizen and guest, rich and poor, stand side by side, see each other's faces without feint or filter. In the mosque, all faces are empty of demand (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 11).

This statement is curious, since "demand" seems to be the word of order in Dubai. Everybody is demanded to fulfill the rules without failure; however, in the end, they would invariably be punished. That is precisely Ram's fault: allowing himself to play games with his own consciousness, in an attempt to fool it, to believe that he has escaped the inexorability of his own fate, when he has, actually, failed to consider the bigger picture, the fact that he is just a piece of a huge system, that there is no way out of Dubai's hierarchical structure, that ends either in deportation or death for people like him.

The paradox in all this is that – apart from all this commodification of life and people – one cannot let go unnoticed the egalitarian characteristic of Islamism, its humanistic stance amidst the cruel side of a market society, where secular human relations are dictated by a

huge gap between the poor and the filthy wealthy, where these two worlds rarely bump one into the other. Amidst Ram's preparations to leave Dubai, in his farewell visits to his Indian and Lebanese Christian friends, a sharp critique of Westerners' arrogance is delivered:

There are few resident white faces in traditional shopping districts like Deira. Over the years, the brazenness of Western visitors in such neighborhoods has visibly declined; now they act apologetically, as if they owed their presence to the sufferance of their kind hosts, speaking politely with the Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Indonesians, and Filipinos who're otherwise treated as invisible actors in fashionable Dubai (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 12).

The mockery of the Westerner's lack of insight regarding tradition, high culture and history continues:

The fondness of the Westerner for expensive junk is limitless. These are the same people who patronize the Emirates' many museums, [...] the type of people who spend entire days in the "heritage villages" in the Emirati hinterland, observing the feeding and milking of camels by the stern Bedu, and who can't tell that the many "forts" constructed along the Arabian Gulf [...] are actually of recent construction, made to look like antiquities (SHIVANI: 2009, p. 13).

"Dubai" was written at the beginning of 2006, precisely when the media started to uncover the miserable conditions of migrant workers from Asian countries, who upon arrival to Dubai were stuck in oppressive shantytowns very far away from the gleaming skyscrapers they were supposed to build. On top of that frustration of the workers' expectations, one has the authoritarian policies applied to them -- guest workers, or illegal immigrants, such as the seizing of their passports, the withholding of wages and the denial of basic needs — which determined the emergence of a new class of people, vulnerable to all levels of exploitation. As Dubai was meant to be the Westerners' neoliberal Arab Disney World or simply Dubai-land in the Middle East, it was grounded in a consumerist paradigm, driven by market needs: profit, competition, wealth accumulation, endless entertainment, and fantasy.

At the end of the story, when Ram is heading home, an Emirati informer or *mukhabarat*, approaches him: "He doesn't remove his dark sunglasses...carry symbolic walkie-talkies, drive black Mercedes... Officially, Dubai doesn't have spies of any kind. Officially, sometimes even the police and the military doesn't exist. Dubai's only business is business" (SHIVANI: 2009, p.21-22). Dubai is a dream, a lie, a mirage in the vast and lonely desert... The following words are quite unusual. I was quite sure that they had come out from

Ram's mouth and I was astounded when I realized that it was the cynical bureaucratic's discourse. There you go! Once more I am fooled by Shivani. That is amazing, because for a second, he makes you admire that "murderer". The Matrix-like guardian of the moral and good manners was capable of being humane and poetic for a moment. What a surprise, what a breaking down of paradigms!!! The torturer has feelings, he is even melancholic about the inevitable disappearance of a whole way of existence when he observes that

"Something about Friday, the end of the week — it makes you take stock of where you've been, where you're going [...] Even if you're not Muslim. They say our ancestors were great poets. Every man is a poet in his home. Imagine, pearl divers, impoverished Bedu, goat herders, dhow-builders, reciting poetry about the beauty of their mundane work. In touch with their essence, their being. A sweet, sweet harmony. But so much has passed away, so rapidly. In another generation — poof! — no one will have any memory of the way of our forefathers."(p. 21)

All of a sudden, the Emirati pulled himself together and was quickly back to his role of Dubai's special agent, praising Sheikh Mo's lust for progress and his competitive spirit. Once more, the agent was the personification of Dubai's cynicism and delusions of grandeur. I guess the Emirati was talking to himself. He felt scared, because he was carried away by his feelings about Dubai, poetry, his forefathers; he forgot how good was to be free just being human and eat fried plantains , sitting on a bench in the street, how delicious and liberating that could be.

What the Emirati informer/torturer calls progress, others would call the violation of the undocumented workers' basic rights as well as the destruction of a rich heritage of traditional wisdom in the name of neoliberal policies to attract Western investments in the name of "progress and modernization". As for the immigrants who are building Dubai, the law is inflexible; they are treated as modern slaves, who are supposed to withstand terrible working conditions and yet present a high level of productivity. In fact, Ram's "luck", has allowed him to enjoy some bourgeois privileges so far, such as buying a car and reaching a better standard of living in general; his friends are Indian shopkeepers; in a nutshell: he felt integrated into Dubai's life as he helped build the luxurious towers of Dubai and after having lived there for thirty-five years, he has also been seduced by Dubai's glitter.

Now, considering that the Emirati might have called Ram a coward, my contention is that he is a man oriented by his need to survive in a place informed by material injustice. He seems to be moved by his desire of integration, in a world of exclusion and competitiveness. At the end of the story, Ram refuses to play the role reserved for him in Dubai's make-believe

society and decides to leave the place. However, it is too late. He is caught by the intelligence service, for he became redundant and must be eliminated from Dubai. The dream is over, he will never be more than an undocumented Indian worker, no matter how cultivated, creative and generous he may prove to be. Ram is doomed; his final remark to the intelligence service agent, “Did you know there are almost no incidents of reported rape in Dubai?” (SHIVANI: 2009, p.26) alludes to the nature of Dubai: it is an illusion, a ‘utopia’, a city of appearances, eager to please its Western tourists. One realizes that even if there are rapes in the paradise of consumerism, nobody will dare to report them; after all, Dubai is officially a fairy-tale where everybody’s dreams come true, where wealthy tourists are allowed to have fun the Western way. Ram knows what is in store for him, though he is in denial, bewitched by Dubai’s unlimited gloss and lust. However, there is no way out of neoliberal dehumanization in a totalitarian system. The unwanted, ‘the wretched’ should surrender and accept that life under the capitalist system of classes leads to a miserable existence of escalating exploitation. “That’s the way things are”. What can one do?

Here we could also draw parallels to Shakespeare’s Macbeth who, like Ram, is tempted, falls and is eventually destroyed. Ram is doomed, whichever path he chooses to follow; he will have to face charges. The only way out of social injustice seems to be embracing the paradigm of cosmopolitanism from below, since it entails counter-hegemonic strategies of resistance to cultural uniformity, and proposes a truly democratic cultural diversity, where not only the voices of the cool Western elite will be heard. But Ram’s voice is very low at the moment. He doesn’t have any support — his friends are jealous of his privileges; and the control mechanisms of the system are after him, because he was able to fool them for twenty-five years; so, he could count with no empathy. He was doomed.

“Dubai” also symbolizes a parody of the Westernized fake concepts of freedom, democracy, truth and justice that the West is eager to impose all over the world as a universal paradigm, while disregarding the existence of non-Western wisdoms, faiths and values. I believe that “Dubai” can be read as a statement for the decolonization of literature, too. There is an allusion to “the discussion of ignored Malayalam writers.” (SHIVANI, 2009: 16). This attests to the emergence of an inter-cultural dialogue among literatures, which is best depicted by the mixture of indigenous words with English. This is known as world literature, a tendency of the present publishing houses throughout the world.

The point here is: can people from different cultural and religious traditions understand one another and share similar ways of reading the world? Is there a universal literary aesthetic pattern, which dictates what is valid in terms of literature or multiple ways of seeing the world and a plurality of options and versions of truth? As Dubai is a cosmopolitan city, where about 186 languages are spoken on a daily basis and where people from different nationalities live and work, we can consider; for our purposes, the existence of two Dubais: one Westernized Dubai, where everything is allowed and pleasure is all that matters, an island of prosperity and freedom in the authoritarian and extremist Middle East. This is the image sold by the Western and Emirati media. The other Dubai is a place where about 170.000 migrant workers manage to live on less than \$2 a day; a place where workers are trafficked by agents who promise them a better life than the one they have at home; a place of appearances, of false promises; a place with a devastating gap between the colossal building and luxurious hotels and malls and the miserable working conditions of those who are building this wealthy paradise. While the first Dubai is busy, breathing commercial transactions, investments, constructions, tourism, night life, fancy restaurants; the second Dubai is invisible, it is hidden from the eyes of the regular Emirati and Western population. The exploitation is carefully obfuscated by a strategy of collective denial. The workers are stuck at labor camps, located 10 minutes away by bus, under terrible living conditions: a room may be shared by twelve people; their wages are delayed; workers are not free to leave their jobs, as we can infer from our reading of this short story.

In “Dubai” we feel that the story is built upon contrasts: tradition vs. modernity; foreigner vs. native; rich vs. poor; official vs. unofficial; hidden vs. apparent; artificial vs. real; scarcity vs. abundance; visibility vs. invisibility; old Bedouin vs. young Sheikh; sophisticated buildings vs. shantytowns; religion vs. consumerism; calm vs. frantic. In fact, modernity (the young Sheikh) took over, running over the old and traditional Dubai (the old Bedouin), since its unregulated Westernized capitalism gave rise to an unequal growth, leading to the emergence of a new class of modern slaves.

The migrants who build the visible city, coming mostly from Southeast Asia, are regulated by the state as “guest workers,” like Ram, and live in the invisible parts of the city, in the eastern area, a ten-minute drive from Deira, near the city’s oldest shopping mall: *al-Mulla*. These undocumented workers represent the sordid face of a totalitarian state that survives at the expense of people’s surveillance, censorship and punishment; as can be

attested by Ram's being targeted by the system as a scapegoat. The atmosphere of distrust is ubiquitous.

At this point, it is obvious that I am referring to two opposing scenarios of globalization: one from above, where there are no rules, one where according to the manipulative media, all the children have access to education, one where everybody can go shopping and travel, where war, violence and human rights' violations can only be seen on TV news; and one from below, a planet where people's basic needs are systematically denied, where violence, prison, war and death are the current fashion, a world without any guarantees whatsoever, where people are enslaved to serve the needs of a savage capitalist structure, that is, the building of luxurious hotels and buildings for the wealthy and powerful citizens of the Emirati and of the Western world.

As one may notice, in "Dubai", Ram attempts to challenge the system of inequality by trying to leave Dubai. In the end he realizes, however, that one cannot leave Dubai or else the bubble that protects it will burst and the whole system will collapse. Ram is a survivor of a structure constructed around the financial capital, a structure based on special agents designed to control the entrance and the exit at any cost. If they lose control over "Dubai", chaos or anarchy will prevail and this is the opposite of 'order and progress', so important for the consolidation of a totalitarian government grounded in commoditized relations among people and in the control of unprivileged workers' dreams of a better future.

Another aspect is the allusion to the nature of the human psyche, which undergoes deep mental torture concerning feelings of guilt and fear for being targeted, as we can realize from the mind games the agent and Ram play. One could even infer that Ram is thrilled by this cat and mice game and part of him longs for being caught. Ram seems unconsciously to believe that he is somehow a superman, someone above the moral rules that govern the rest of humanity. He resists to the idea that he is as mediocre as the rest of humanity by convincing himself that his attitude concerning the incident was justifiable and he did the right thing; after all, the Bedouin was an old man and the Sheikh was young and useful for Dubai, as he belonged to its commercial elite.

Drawing on a doctrine that has deeply informed postmodern thought, perspectivism, I argue that this short-story highlights different perspectives: Ram's; the agent's; the young Sheikh's; the Westerner's; the other guest workers'; the wealthy tradesmen; the religious

natives; the Bedouin's. Any perspective is possible, for nothing is sacred anymore, nothing is absolute and nothing is true or original, if we keep in mind that we live in a spectacle society, where everything is a copy, a *simulacrum* of the original sin, an arbitrary code evolved as randomly as the human species itself. The only certainty is that we will do whatever it takes to keep alive and, at least temporarily, overcome or fool death. Under a totalitarian regime, such as Dubai's, we are all suspects and one keeps an eye on the other, as the travel agencies that have to turn in the list of passengers who have acquired just a one-way ticket.

As to his name, Ram Pillai's first name evokes the symbolic meanings respecting three kinds of animals belonging to the same family branch: the goat; the lamb; the ram. The image of the goat unequivocally resembles the image of the devil, and his macabre satanic rituals. If we examine things through the European Judeo-Christian tradition, the goat, by extension, represents the "Other", the one who can cause us harm, and is therefore associated with evil. Ram Pillai, as a foreigner, is the "Other" in a sense. The goat, in our story, to be prevented by turning into the devil, is kept in a position in which it can be turned into a "scapegoat"— which is what happens to him at length.

Considered from a different perspective, Ram can be identified with the image of the lamb. In ancient times, as in the biblical allegory of Cain and Abel, lambs were offered to God in a ceremony called holocaust. And the lamb can also epitomize Christ, the Lamb of God — the figure of the martyr; the superior being who offers himself in sacrifice, "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (JOHN 1: 29). In the ceremony of the mass, when one eats the body of God (Host), Christ is referred to as "the lamb of God". Christ is, simultaneously, the shepherd and the lamb.

If we consider the rules established by Christianity in its connection with Western philosophy, in general terms, being a predator is considered undesirable; whereas being tame and docile is deemed a highly admired human quality. For the changing paradigms of the 18th century, however, we find in the thought of Baruch Spinoza (*Ethics*, 1677), that if there is a creator --- God, and he created the lamb to be mild and the lion to be aggressive, each one — likewise — is playing its role so as to fulfill the creator's plan. William Blake's poetry corroborates Spinoza's theory aesthetically. Blake's antithetical books deconstruct the typical dichotomies of Western civilization, as in the poems "The Lamb" (*Songs of Innocence*, 1789) and "The Tyger" (*Songs of Experience*, 1794).

My optimistic thesis finds an echo in the biblical image (ISAIAH: 11, 6), which envisages the achievement of a state where “the lion shall lay by the lamb”. (PEACE in the Valley: 1937) This utopia can only be achieved in a time and in a place when a person like Ram is not judged from the outside, being considered evil, and the “Other”; or forced to be offered in holocaust for having defied the system, or serving as a martyr or a scapegoat for the sake of this or that cause.

We have finally come to the animal that represents our protagonist’s very name, the Ram, which alludes to the adult male sheep and to the goat. In astrology, the archetype of the Ram corresponds both to the first and tenth signs of the Zodiac. Aries are highly motivated individuals, who strive to reach their goals. Endowed by an independent nature, they are usually creative and intuitive. The people born under the sign of Aries are curious, energetic and enthusiastic individuals, who are eager to make things happen. They also are fond of taking risks, since they are triggered by challenges, while Capricorns stand for hard work, are practical, ambitious, wise, disciplined, patient and cautious people. Their shortcomings; however, include being pessimistic, shy, stubborn, self-centered, detached, moody and a bit materialistic. Once they have set a goal, no matter how strenuous it may be, they will get there, no matter what it takes. In short, the key-words for the sign of Capricorn are WORK, and MANUAL LABOR. By its turn, Aries’ negative traits include being impulsive, stubborn, arrogant and impatient. We could say that Ram’s personality is a mixture of these two astrological signs, since he is hard-working and impulsive; shy and curious; practical and creative. ([http://www.ganeshaspeaks.com/capricorn/capricorn-traits.action.](http://www.ganeshaspeaks.com/capricorn/capricorn-traits.action/) / <http://www.ganeshaspeaks.com/aries/aries-traits.action.>)

As the story closes, Ram Pillai is taken to the Intelligence “Nerve Center” of Dubai to be interrogated, the sinister old building where veterans torture people for information, a metaphor of the world’s oppressive systems of constructing biased information based on torture and intimidation. To me, it feels as if Ram will be thrown out of this building and will somehow resurrect in our next story to be commented —“Repatriation”, aboard a ship where foreigners or non-whites are being repatriated to West Africa.

3.2.2- “Repatriation”

Originally published in the summer of 2007 in the journal *The Portland Review*, “Repatriation” can be read as a dystopian work that criticizes the state terrorist policies adopted by George W. Bush’s administration as part of his policy of “War on Terror”. The story is set on a ship that heads towards Africa, so as to “repatriate” a number of workers of

different ethnical origins, most of which do not have relation to Africa (Latinos and Indonesian people, for instance).

One of the characters who appear in this short story is called Ram, which creates a link with the protagonist of the short story “Dubai”. They are not the same person; as one lives in Dubai, and the other is being deported from the United States. Still, they share the same name, and similar dooms. In this sense, they can be symbolically associated as representing the same kind of person undergoing a similar sort of situation.

The fact that the ship is heading towards Africa evokes the memory of the old times of slave trade, when African workers were brought against their will to work in the overseas European colonies and thus help build the power of the empire. Only that this time the death-ship is headed the other way round, so as to discharge the United States of a number of unwanted workers, blamed for spreading off a disease which is killing a large number of white American citizens. As a means of solving the problem, the government started a process of ejecting between fifty to sixty million illegal immigrants and even American citizens of foreign ascendency from their country. The short- story discusses a fictitious presidential announcement, widely encouraged by the commercial biased media (CNN) that due to this unprecedented not defined contamination, the US administration determined to repatriate all its non-white population. Drawing on Mignolo’s (2009) discussion over the fabrication of the concepts or categories of “man” and “humane”, it is never too much to remind the readers that in Mignolo’s article “Who Speaks of the ‘Human’ in Human Rights”(2009), he questions what it means to be a ‘human being’ from the epistemic-philosophical point of view and concludes that ‘Man’ is used here as the measure for the classifying and hierarchical ranking of “human beings” as to the categories of blood; skin color (Nazism) and gender/sexuality (patriarchy).

It is precisely this fabricated concept of man which gave legitimacy to the Western policies of racial exclusion and segregation perpetrated by the “civilized” Euro-American actors, creating the conditions for the imagining of the fictitious reality depicted in “Repatriation”: “We’re overread. We overthink.”(SHIVANI, 2009:191). The reasoning behind repatriation is that the non-white populations are being deported for their own good; for their own protection from being contaminated. This seems to be the same argument used for the deportation of Jews during the Second World War: they would be taken to a better place where they would find work and shelter. It is from within the discourse of the deported

characters that we have sentences as: “our loyalty should come from our hearts, not minds” and “the president’s policy of repatriation [...] was welcomed by the national and world press as the most humane and reasonable one under the circumstances.” (SHIVANI, 2009:194).

This epidemics works as an abstract powerful metaphor for racial impurity or dirtiness; a cloud of toxic wind spreading death throughout the American coasts: “Both coasts littered with corpses. So many sentenced to death for the mere act of breathing [...] Let the foreigners be repatriated for now”. (SHIVANI, 2009:194) This image strongly evokes the idea of racial intolerance towards cultural diversity. The white American opportunist treatment of our protagonist/narrator/writer/reader of himself, as his daydreaming memories, can be inferred by his outburst:

‘You’re half-Indonesian? You were born in Jakarta?’ they’d asked me when I’d reported at the Nashua registration office. ‘Yes, but my mother only gave birth to me there. I was a week old when I was brought to Brooklyn—and never left.’ They smiled at the explanation, and the silver-haired Puritan woman in charge said, ‘Well, you gave us great cuisine — while it lasted.’ (SHIVANI, 2009: 192).

Now, who is the civilized one? Who exploits labor? This woman, who represents the ‘real’ American or an American citizen of Indonesian descent who is being humiliated, because of the color of his skin? What kind of human rights are these? Is justice a global concept or it is not meant for the non-Westerners? Nowadays, the immigrants, indentured workers and refugees are the ones cast “in different scales of sub-human.” And, therefore, potential candidates for deportation, without any further explanation, since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, set in 1948, after the end of World War II, reinforced the “colonial difference, epistemic and ontological.” According to Mignolo, there is a hidden agenda in this Declaration:

After the interregnum of nation-state building in Europe and nation-state imperial expansion (mainly England and France) the Declaration was forged with three horizons in mind, under the leadership of the United States: a) the rebuilding of Europe after the Holocaust and World War II; b) the “communist menace,” which was added to the old list of pagans, Saracens, Indians, Blacks, and now communists; and c) the uprising in the Third World, of which the independence of India was already a strong sign of alert. (MIGNOLO, 2009: digital source)

The notion of human rights to the First World, between 1950 and 1970, was equivalent to “development and modernization of underdeveloped countries”, when two main institutions — the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank led the game toward the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the hegemony of

“globalization and market democracy” under the aegis of neo-liberalism on the wake of human rights’ indictments.

However, something different happened to The First World that astounded humanists everywhere: for the first time, the US was, internationally and officially, depicted as a violator and perpetrator (*Guantánamo and Abu - Ghraib*). To me, this is a clear sign of the contamination of ideas and feelings, a powerful metaphor employed in “Repatriation” to allude to the state-terrorism perpetrated by the Bush administration. The highly-militarized American society got ill. The name of the illness: indifference, de-humanization, blatant disregard for humanness, lack of feelings in general, automatism, a widespread attitude of fear and suspicion triggered by a ubiquitous and permanent war on terrorism as a justification for an American invasion of the Arab world in search for oil.

Needless to say, the scenario after 9/11 placed Islam and human rights as an impossible equation, since Arabs and Muslims in general are viewed as potential terrorists, obsessed with the extermination of Western civilization. In “Repatriation”, we can identify this widespread culture of death and paranoia extended against all non-whites as if they embodied the death and end of Western civilization.

Segregation by color is at the core of “Repatriation”: “I’ve already noticed strict segregation by color — not race so much, but color. I tried to talk to some very dark-skinned blacks, from Baltimore, and they were offended” (SHIVANI: 2009: 192); giving rise to a horizon towards death, suffering and even internal segregation among the non-whites. We have come to the conclusion that in this short-story, the American society, a market society grounded in consumerism and competition, imagines itself as both savior and violator of human rights, in the unveiling of the hypocrisy hidden behind the American discourse of human rights.

In “Repatriation”, irony is used in order to subvert our expectations, answering to Mignolo’s question “what does it mean to be human”, by portraying a reality of oppression and cynic indifference towards immigrants and “foreigners”, an euphemism for people of color, unveiling the American “make-believe” discourse that the US is the land of equality, happiness and opportunity, the land of the “melting-pot” of cultures, of tolerance and freedom. The story presents us a sadistic Bush-like captain: “Folks, we’re turnin’ around,” is the cheerful announcement on the loudspeaker after the showers. But, after an excruciating

pause: sorry, just kiddin'. Was that the captain's voice? I've seen him."(SHIVANI: 2009: 192). Now, demystifying the image of justice associated to a captain's or a president's authority and moral professionalism, we learn that the captain is in the habit of throwing babies overboard, because "no abortions allowed, under any circumstances" (SHIVANI: 2009:193). Following the game of reversals, "He likes to make the rounds, mingle with the passengers". "How's the human rights situation in the lower deck today, my fellow citizens?" he asked once. "Well, how is it?" (SHIVANI, 2009: 193). The echoes of that "free- country" discourse of a world that does not exist anymore are still part of the narrator's daydreaming memories:

Memory is precious [...] Memory lingers on great musical events. Symphonies one attended in youth. Young love, and trading in poetry. Empty highways [...] Truth has gone up in a mushroom cloud. It's a mental lapse that I still dream so prolifically, mostly about Anna and I when we were young, so desperately in love (SHIVANI: 2009: 192-193).

Memories of pleasurable possibilities are closely intertwined with stereotyped generalizations, leading to contradictory feelings of self-realization. The narrator recalls his mother-in-law invitation for Anna and him to accompany her on a cruise to Europe, which his then wife refused on claims that it was a terribly bourgeois attitude. The irony is that five years later, Anna died of leukemia during her hospitalization at the best and most expensive hospital of the West and now he, a cultivated and hard-working American citizen, was being deported as if he were a criminal.

The title of the short-story is significant, if we consider the fact that the word repatriation means the return (by force) to one's homeland. But the fact is that the non-whites are being deported. Foreigners from different ethnic backgrounds are all being sent to West Africa, regardless of their place of birth. This fact emphasizes both the carelessness and the ignorance of the agents of that process, and stresses the dehumanizing, homogenization and depersonifying strategy adopted toward immigrants in general. They are treated as if they were a homogeneous crowd of giant piles of garbage: a category of sub-human masses of outsiders, criminals and soulless creatures to be thrown away, because they are no longer needed by the state; they have become redundant.

Nevertheless, some characters are given a name, as if to draw attention to their individuality, as a strategy of humanizing the repatriates; as a way to restore their humanity; by sharing their life stories with the reader. Even the fact that there is a reader is a break to the

norm, because writing is a forbidden activity on board. The narrative author is writing the story in his own mind, and the fact that we are able to read it is a kind of transgression of the norm. If we pass from the fictional author into the actual author of the short story, this mass exclusion can be read as a devastating analysis of the highly prejudiced immigration policies adopted by the Bush administration as a way to fight terrorism. In “Repatriation”, the people of color, a euphemism for immigrants, are ‘the human waste’. As such, Bauman contends that “the production of a ‘state of emergency’ is enabled by growing fears about safety and demands for the containments of ‘the human waste’ — immigrants, criminals, asylum-seekers, etc” (BAUMAN: 2003).

Mark B. Salter (2003) discusses the aftermath of 9/11 as to the creation of a ‘new economy of danger’ and the intensification of the ubiquitous ‘war against terror’. According to Salter, this ‘war’ embodies America’s identity in the eyes of the world and by the same token represents a new level or a new version of Europe’s ‘civilizing’ mission. In “Repatriation”, Salter’s logic makes sense, we just need to adapt it to domestic policies and the formula will work when we hear that Europe is already contaminated, in a clear allusion to large populations of Arabs or Muslims living in France, Germany and England: “I expect Europe to soon give up sovereignty. They’ll need American force to repatriate their own non-white populations, proportionally so high in countries like France, Germany and Britain. Some say the contamination has already happened in France, but no one knows for sure.” (SHIVANI: 2009:191).

One of the most consistent messages of the Bush administration, however, has been to delink the war on terror from Huntington’s clash of civilizations’ thesis. On a public address to the nation, President Bush vehemently disassociated the 9/11 terrorist events from Islam:

These acts of violence against innocents violate the fundamental tenets of the Islamic faith [...] the face of terror is not the true faith of Islam. That’s not what Islam is about. Islam is peace. These terrorists don’t represent peace. They represent evil and war. When we think of Islam we think of a faith that brings comfort to a billion people around the world (BUSH: White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2001).

As a consequence, what we have, on the surface, is not a global war on all the other cultures, but an American-led West, which invokes its allies such as England, France and Germany, implementing a war against individuals or groups. After all, we are well aware that

Bush's discourse was contradictory in light of both his domestic and foreign policy, which was a telling shameful evidence of America disrespect for non-Western values, religions and cultures, since people of color were the first ones to be targeted as potential terrorists. And conservative Americans felt that they were acting on the world's behalf to protect Western Civilization from the threat of the barbarians, the terrorists of the present, who, according to the Bush administration, are omnipresent all over the world. Salter stresses that

Internationally, the United States has attacked Afghanistan and Iraq. Domestically, one of the chief ways the Bush administration is reacting to the terrorist threat is through an increase in surveillance and policing measures. Central to this is the creation of the "Office of Homeland Security" and renewed anxiety about borders. (SALTER, 2003, digital source)

David Campbell depicts American foreign policy as an "economy of danger", due to the ideology underlying both its domestic and foreign "policies, institutions and discourses". Campbell draws our attention to the social production of danger,

Danger is not an objective condition. It is not a thing that exists independently of those to whom it may become a threat [...] danger is an effect of interpretation. Danger bears no essential, necessary, or unproblematic relation to the action or event from which it is said to derive [...] not all risks are equal, and not all risks are interpreted as dangers. (CAMPBELL: 1998: 1-2)

From this perspective, danger is a commodity, a political resource. In "Repatriation", danger stands for the ubiquitous contamination which is spreading throughout the West. The signifier "war on terror" represents an "economy of danger" — a discursive strategy by which the government makes use of the generalized unconscious awareness of danger so as to convey and convince Americans that the government's main interest is to protect the life of its citizens, whatever it takes, be it through the deportation of non-white immigrants or their confinement in death-ships. "Repatriation" demystifies the official discourse of citizenship when it comes to non-whites or non-westerners: "Let the foreigners be repatriated for now; later, we'll see. Keep your papers on you. Were you born in America? We'll treat you differently than if you were born elsewhere. Later, we'll see" (SHIVANI: 2009: 194).

According to Mark Salter, "there is no final battle that would end the war on terror, since the object of violence is not a specific state, but a state of mind — those who challenge the idea that the state is the only legitimate user of force in the international system" (SALTER: 2003: digital source). Individuals like illegal immigrants, especially the Muslim

ones, are pictured as a representation of terror; as if they were potential terrorists that represented anti-American ideals. The enemies in the short-story are the non-whites, foreigners or non-west immigrants, who spread the horror of cultural diversity and must therefore be contained in a ship and evacuated to West Africa. Slater concludes that “the pacification of individuals serves both to reiterate the ability of the (American) state to impose its military will on others, and to generate a never-ending category of enemies [...]” (SALTER: 2003: digital source). Finally, Salter concedes that “this politico-moral-strategic narrative is made possible by the trope of Civilization being under threat from barbarians”; for our purposes, the barbarians, which was a synonym for foreigners during The Roman Empire, is used here in “Repatriation” as a synonym for non-white immigrants who are supposed to be infesting the American coasts, bringing about death, in an allusion to the contamination prompted by cultural diversity.

In “Repatriation”, the theme of segregation by color calls for a discussion on the non-white contribution in the building of American identity, especially when it comes to the influence of Black people in terms of music, religion, food, visual arts and fashion. It is common knowledge that we are undergoing a revival of racism today in America; or better saying, another wave of a never-ending sort of epistemic Euro-American racism. Racism toward blacks and brown immigrants like Latinos or *Chicanos*, Puerto Ricans, Asians and Arabs sounds like a demonization of arts, hope, spirituality, happiness, creativity, hybridity, love, friendship, democracy, compassion, solidarity. In a nutshell, people of color are being targeted as if they were evil on earth and had to be deported, repatriated, a euphemism for extermination or death. After all, exclusion is a kind of death, for it affects our feelings of humanity and belonging, of meaning and value.

It seems to me that the American dream of being a land of opportunity, a land built by immigrants has a lot to do with the legacy of jazz, blues and hip-hop, all Black movements. So, how to account for such hatred towards them? I believe that we have to investigate the way the discourse of race was constructed in North American history. Accordingly, the ethno-racial foundation of modernity was the victory of Christianity over the Moors and Jews; the destruction of Amerindian cultures; the slavery of the blacks in the New World and the Jewish Holocaust in civilized Europe.

First of all, it is important to stress that the “discovery and conquest” of America in 1492 has changed world history, since the logic of “coloniality” — the enforcement of

control, domination and exploitation under the name of salvation, progress and modernization — was a successful enterprise from the perspective of the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) male, who were able to conquer a massive quantity of land (large areas of Mexico) and soon had at their disposal free labor: the slaves brought from Africa to produce the commodities of a global market such as gold, tobacco, sugar and cotton. “Repatriation” offers us a wide range of people of color — Mexicans, Arabs, Indonesians, Hindus, Blacks — a micro-cosmos of American immigrants, who are usually stigmatized as troublemakers, criminals, second-class citizens, not entitled to the same rights whites have. Injustice in contemporary American society is clearly connected to the categories of race, gender, and class. As mainstream organizations (governments, corporations, schools, universities, and churches) have been forced by social movements to acknowledge that race, gender, and class matter, many Americans think that we have moved beyond white supremacy and created a “post-racial” society; that “patriarchy” is an old-fashioned term no longer relevant; and that capitalism is the ultimate expression of freedom, not the engine of inequality. The very thinking of the “reality” of “Repatriation” evokes a dark scenario of segregation and totalitarianism established by the Bush era of mass deportations, cultural mediocrity and prevailing loss of civil liberties due to the ubiquitous feeling of distrust and terror. In “Repatriation”, one is caught in a realm of the absurd, unreal, immoral as if time had been suspended and the narrator were not narrating a tale, but sharing with us his deepest memories of a time when he was a human being, because at the present he is a survivor, a ghost, a shadow of the man he used to be. Since the story develops inside his mind, as entries in a diary, the reader is engulfed by a Dantesque dimension of the inevitable road towards hell/death—an almost material entity throughout the story. Death is personified by the genocidal state, the silence of the subjugated masses of non-whites, by the paralysis of the ship, by the trope of contamination and disease that infests the air, with the omnipresent bad smell of garlic and onions, by the whole atmosphere of unreality and horror that hovers.

Another daunting peculiarity is the prohibition to write or to read aboard. Strange as it may seem, we are informed by our unnamed narrator that he is writing these notes inside his own mind and memorizing the words, so that one day, he may be able to take note of his memories. We feel here the need the writer has to share his oppressive reality, so that we, the readers, witness the horror he is going through and denounce it to the rest of the world. This echoes the “never again” rhetoric of the Jewish holocaust, that, unfortunately, keeps repeating itself with monotonous regularity. Surveillance is in the air, so as not to undermine the image

of the perfect white Disneyland world of beauty and happiness; the bleeding of the ‘colonial wound’ must be covered at any cost. Repatriate, deport, send the unwanted ones to *Guantánamo* immediately, after all, the sun is shining and we’d love to go shopping.

In the United States, today, almost everyone except an overt racist acknowledges the US white-supremacist ‘past’ and condemns the inherent injustice of that system. That leads to routine contradiction of the extent of the genocidal campaigns against indigenous people, the degree to which economic development was the product of African slave labor, the depth of the exploitation of Asian workers, and the brutal consequences of the US aggression that took over large portions of Mexican territory, since America has an image to keep: they are the good ones.

Given the moral nature of white supremacy, in the dominant culture, the term “white supremacist” is applied only to overt racists, such as members of neo-Nazi groups or the *KuKlux Klan*, and is not used to describe US society in general. Given the achievements of a civil-rights movement that ended formal apartheid and the election of an African American president, asserting that the United States remains a white-supremacist society provokes resistance. But the present reality of brutal police oppression in 2014 is self-explanatory. Racist attitudes are deeply woven into American everyday life.

In the United States today, “patriarchy” also is assumed to be a term appropriate only to describe their past or other present-day societies. For most of US history, women were either property or second-class citizens, denied the rights of men in the political and economic arenas. The term “patriarchy”, with its connotations of an almost feudal status for women, may be rejected, but two forms of patriarchal ideology remain strong. One is a theological version, seen most clearly in conservative Christian circles. There’s also a secular version of this, flowing not from belief in a divinely mandated order but from what is claimed to be the immutable reality of our evolutionary history. Instead of recognizing patriarchy as a recent phenomenon, dating back only about ten thousand years, this secular version reads human history as being patriarchal from the start. According to this view, for example, male promiscuity and violence against women is seen as “natural” and not a product of a male-dominant culture as we can see in the disrespectful way women of color are portrayed in “Repatriation”: “There’s some awful pretty women down here,” the same voice continues “All them Chinese and Mexicans and Arabs. Real pretty skin tone. Like fresh *Russet* potatoes...”(SHIVANI: 2009:196), ready to be devoured, I would say.

Putting the inadequacy in terms of money, we could say that one third of the people on the planet have to live on less than \$2 per day, while half lives on less than \$2.50 a day. More than three billion people survive — struggling for food, shelter, clothing, education, medical care — on less than what an American in the developed world might spend on a fancy cup of coffee one morning. The majority of the people who live at that level of poverty are disproportionately non-white and female. They live mostly in a Third World (Global South) that has suffered, and continues to suffer, from military and/or economic domination by the First World, especially today by the United States. That is the reality of a white-supremacist and patriarchal world with an economy organized by transnational corporate capitalism.

Therefore, oppressive systems work hard to make it appear that the hierarchy — and the disparity in power and resources that flow from hierarchy — are natural and, therefore, beyond modification. If white people are naturally smarter and more virtuous than people of color, then white supremacy is inevitable and justifiable. If men are naturally smarter and stronger than women, then patriarchy is inevitable and justifiable. If rich people are naturally smarter and harder-working than poor people, then economic inequality is inevitable and justifiable.

Regarding the harsh laws on immigration, many millions of undocumented people in the U.S. are living under a state of siege, as if they were criminals and had not been responsible for the wealth of America; as if they had not spent years doing the dirty jobs, that the nationals or citizens refuse to do. Historical marches protesting for immigrants' rights took place all over the United States in 2006; now, in 2015, it remains to be seen how the future developments as to terrorism may increasingly impair the loss of individual mobility and freedom of expression both in America and the US, rendering immigration a potentially criminal activity, passible of being punished by instant death, without a due legal process, as we see in dystopian "Repatriation". Is it really so improbable?

As usually happens in Shivani, at a certain point in the narrative the discussion turns into Art, such as when the narrator digresses: "... that even the greatest minds, like Shakespeare's and Beethoven's, are no more than derivatives, mere glosses over their era's collective mind-set. No one is really original" (SHIVANI: 2009: 194). Such words evoke Baudrillard's and Walter Benjamin's analysis of the culture of masses, with the decline of the aura of the work of art, which prompts a sense of originality, uniqueness and authenticity,

forever lost under the pressures of mechanical reproduction, alluding to the illusory nature of reality.

Another strategy used by totalitarian regimes of repeating a lie until it becomes a fact, diabolically employed by the propaganda factory of death is acknowledged by the narrator and immediately repudiated in quite a poetic way: “If enough consensus holds, it becomes accepted fact. I find I have revulsion for anyone who narrates events realistically, sequentially, without interjecting massive doses of heart-feeling — the way history might have unfolded if the world had been run by naughty imps, dreadlocked fairies.”(SHIVANI: 2009: 191) *and not by those bland neo-liberals who love power but lack the freedom and imagination to love, I would add.*

3.2.3 “Anatolia”

“Anatolia” was first published in the journal “Confrontation”, in the spring of 2007. This short-story offers a rich picture of a past time of commercial and cultural exchange between the East and the West. The name of the place, in Greek (*Ἀνατολή*), means “the east”, or “the place where the Sun rises. Symbolically – as the Sun rises in the east and sets in the west – walking westwards means heading towards the end of life and death; conversely, moving eastwards might represent the recovery of one’s origins, or one’s very sense of identity.

The story takes place in *Alanya*, a coastal town in *Anatolia*, in the south of Turkey, in the Mediterranean. *Alanya*’s economy today is based on tourism, on the commercialization of fruit and on the real estate market. In the eighteenth century, when the action unfolds, the economy revolved around *kilims* (carpets) and exquisite fabrics, like *Anatolia*’s valuable mohair, silk and cotton. In this coastal Mediterranean town of *Alanya*, we meet a reputable Jewish, *Noah ibn Nehmia*, coming from Venice. He is to be brought before a *Kadi* (a magistrate) of *Alanya*, being wrongfully accused of tax evasion by the local jealous merchants.

Some of the themes we find here are the commercial and cultural exchange between The Ottoman Empire and Europe; religious fanaticism vs. intellectual discussion; biased prejudice vs. human personal relations. The philosophical discussion is set around the thought

of *Spinoza* and *Maimonides*; and the literary discussions center on the English newly translated books *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Ultimately, this story can be said to be about the irrationality of religious fanaticism vs. the rational humanism of philosophical and literary imagination.

“Anatolia” is a 29 – page-long short-story told in third-person voice through the focalization of an omniscient narrator, who showcases the inner worldviews of different characters, depicting contrasting arguments and escalating anxiety revolving around *Noah's* judgment. The techniques used in this narration provoke in the reader a sense of suspense and a sensation that something dark is unfolding. Part of that comes from the way the story is structured; the other part comes from the Western tradition of stories about Jewish characters related to Venice and what happens to them in the end. The fact that *Noah* seems so secure and fearless somehow make the readers even more worried about what is going to happen to him at the end of the story.

We can locate the action in the 18th Century because of a number of historical references. At the beginning of the story there is a reference to “the twenty-five years of *Padişah* Ahmed III's rule” (SHIVANI: 2009: 134), setting the Sultan's approach to financial issues: “If you could spend, why save?” (SHIVANI: 2009: 134) We know that *Padişah* Ahmed III ruled from 1703 up to 1730, so our story took place around 1728, to be precise. I will now go into a brief historical digression about the place, because – as readers – the more we know about the historical layers underneath the apparently simple story we read – the better informed we will get as to the reasons why different characters behave as they do.

If we go back in history, we will find out that different empires have ruled over Anatolia: the *Hittites*, from 1600 to 1200 B.C., who spoke an Indo-European language and were mostly peasants. In the 12th century B.C. their empire fell to the *Assyrians*, who settled in different cities in Anatolia. They were a Semite people advanced in science and mathematics. Then, the Greeks came and occupied the entire coast around the 8th century B.C. They were followed by *Persia* in the 6th century B.C. and, 200 years afterwards, Alexander the Great brought Greece back to the place. Finally, by the 2nd century B.C., the Romans started their long rule over Anatolia, around 190 B.C., when they set foot for the first time there. Western *Anatolia* was called “Asia” by the Greeks and the Romans; later, it became known as “Asia Minor” or “Little Asia” to set it apart from the land mass of the greater Asian continent. In 330 A.D., the Roman emperor Constantine the Great moved the capital of the

Roman Empire from Rome to *Byzantium* and renamed it Constantinople (modern Istanbul). The Byzantine Empire lasted over 1000 years, ending in 1453, when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople.

Great cities, colossal temples, public libraries and excellent roads were built in Anatolia during the Eastern Roman Empire, or the Byzantine Empire, where they spoke Greek and called themselves Romans. Christianity spread in Anatolia, which had known a diversity of pagan beliefs. Meanwhile, in 1366, 1396 and 1444 A.D. the Western Europeans mounted Crusades against the Ottomans, who intended to conquer new territories and bring about the downfall of Christendom. The Ottomans are one of the Turkish nomadic tribes who moved from the great Chinese steppes and Mongolian highlands towards the West to establish their own empires within the intersection of three continents: Asia, Europe and Africa. With the contact of Arabs, around the 9th century A.D., the Turks, who followed a primitive Shamanistic religion, became Muslims in large groups, especially around the 10th century A.D.

The Jews settled in Anatolia around the 6th century B.C., rendering the Jewish community in Turkey one of the oldest in the world. The Biblical reference in Isaiah (66; 19) and Joel (3; 4 - 6) attests to the Jewish presence in Anatolia, pointing out to a place called *Sepharad* in *Obadiah* (1; 20). In the 3rd century B.C., *Antiochus* brought 2.000 Jews to *Phrygia* and *Lydia*, giving rise to a thriving civilization in western *Anatolia*, and the first synagogues were built in Asia Minor during that time.

St. Paul was born in *Tarsus* (Saul of *Tarsus*) and lived as an influential rich Jew until he became a promoter of the Christian faith. During his many journeys to preach about Jesus Christ, he targeted locations with large Jewish communities. There were rich Jewish communities in *Hierapolis* (*Pamukkale*) and *Cappadocia* (*Kapadokya*) in central Anatolia. During the time of the Byzantine Empire, most Jewish communities were settled in western Anatolia and in Istanbul; which was then called Constantinople. Progressively, as Christianity enlarged, Jewish rights were significantly restricted by laws enacted by Christian rulers such as Constantine, Theodosius and Justinian. The most severe blow came during the Crusades, when Constantinople was temporarily occupied by the barbarian hordes of Latin Kings and the Jewish districts were set on fire. Thus, when *Mehmet II*, an Ottoman Sultan, conquered Constantinople in 1453, the *Romaniot* (Byzantine) Jewish community, hailed him as a liberator.

Over the next two centuries, the empire became a haven for Jews fleeing repression and expulsion from various parts of Europe, including Hungary, France, Spain, Sicily, Salonika, Italy and Bavaria. The Ottomans greatly encouraged Jewish immigration, especially when Jews and Moors were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492. Spanish and Portuguese Jews had been brutally persecuted by the Spanish Inquisition and the Jews who had not been burnt or forced to convert to Christianity, managed to flee to the Ottoman Empire. These Jews used their international connections and linguistic skills to develop the Ottoman Empire's foreign trade, where the liberal atmosphere of Ottoman rule gave them the opportunity to hold important positions, since Istanbul had great rabbis and Jewish scholars.

Modern Turkey emerged as a secular and democratic republic out of the country's debacle in World War I. In 1992, the Jewish community celebrated the 500th anniversary of their arrival, as being the first Sephardim. Today, approximately 25.000 Jews live in Turkey as Turkish citizens. And the Jewish community is officially recognized by the state through its Chief Rabbinate (ASIA Minor: Digital source).

The Ottoman Empire (in Arabic: دولة تيمورية عثمانية), was an imperial state from 1299 to 1922, which spread throughout Anatolia, the Middle East, part of Africa and Southern Europe. It was ruled by the *Osmanli* dynasty, founded by *Osman I* (in Arabic *Uthmān*, originating the word "Ottoman"). In the 17th Century, in its zenith, the empire comprised an area of 5.000.000 square meters and spread from the Strait of Gibraltar, to the west, until the Caspean Sea and the Persian Gulf, to the east, bordering the present-day Austria and Slovenia, to the north, until the present-day Sudan and Yemen, to the south. (TURKISH Jews: Digital source).

The reason why I delved into this historic succession of empires has to do with my intention to prove the argument that civilizations and cultures are hybrid, and history unfolds as one conquest over the other, and peoples are interconnected, since there is no such thing as a pure ancestry. We all have to live together and do our best to tolerate one another. I dare to say that the Jewish people were not extinct from the face of earth because of their capacity of interacting with other faiths as the pagans, Christians and Muslims. After this digression, which I felt necessary for the understanding of the role played by the Jew *Noah ibn Nehmias* – a chameleon caught on the crossroads of a multiplicity of civilizations – we come to discuss the first name of this interesting character.

As we know, *Noah*'s name takes after the name of the first patriarch. In the work "Jewish History in Anatolia", Molly McAnally Burke tells us that *Anatolia* is the territory where *Noah* and his family settled when they finally left the *Arch*. So, the area of Turkey was populated by *Noah*'s lineage. (BURKE: 2015: Digital source) The fact that *Noah ibn Nehmias* speaks different languages without any accent, and adapts so well to different lands that everyone considers him to be a native of each of the places, attests to his cosmopolitan character. In this sense Noah, the creature, evokes one of the qualities of his creator, Shivani, as both epitomize the citizen of the world, who embodies the hybrid, transnational, transcultural and transmodern paradigm.

Noah ibn Nehmias also reminds us of the myth of The Wandering Jew (HEYM, 1999). The legend goes that on his way to Crucifixion, Jesus was taunted by a Jew shoemaker or tradesman, and in response to that mockery, the man – named Ahasuerus – was doomed to walk the earth until the Second Coming of Christ. This myth became part of modern literature and philosophy, being even appropriated by Jewish folklore. I believe that Biblical myths like this have a perverse outcome, since they contribute to the emergence and widespread of anti-Semitism throughout the world, especially in Europe.

Noah's biannual commercial travels between Anatolia and Europe also remind me of what Walter Benjamin has to say about the two basic types of narrator we find in literature in his text "The Storyteller" (BENJAMIN, 1969). One is the local old man, who retraces, by memory and oral tradition, the history of the place – and, as a consequence, its sense of identity. The other – like Noah – is the merchant, who travels to different places and recurrently returns, bringing the news from outside and teaching the locals about the new discoveries, and fashions, from distant lands. Noah can be said to be cosmopolitan; a free-thinker, an intellectual; an anarchist; an irreligious or transreligious man; a critic of his own time; an eccentric; an unconventional man endowed with libertarian views of society; generous; optimistic; and a lover of literature and arts in general. In the story, he feels particularly hurt because of his extreme loyalty to the Ottoman Empire. He even weighs up the pros of convincing people and local merchants from Alanya and Istanbul to pay more taxes so as to improve the outlook of Anatolia by building more bridges and roads. He criticizes the corruption of the frivolous lifestyle of the *Janissaries* and other useless servants of the *Padişa*.

The references to Spinoza attest to Noah's nonconformist principles, endorsing his belief that the Messiah shall not come in an ever-postponed future; on the contrary, to Noah the Messiah already dwells inside each of us. This idea is in conformity with Buddhism, which declares that all human beings are Budhas; however, not every one has awakened to his or her real nature. Both Noah and Spinoza are dissenters, Errant Jews. Both believe that all religious institutions are political bodies and, as such, must be subserviant to the State. For them, the basic goal of religion and the State should be to foster security and freedom, awarding the people with an education that instills in them the values of justice and solidarity. It is no wonder that Noah's utopic demand that the taxes charged from the merchants increase so that society can be improved are not well accepted by his equals. When it becomes apparent that he is about to win the heart of the most coveted and richest woman in the place in marriage, jealousy is added to dislike, and he ends up being charged with tax evasion.

Beneath this broader perspective of privileging the Jewish people or life over the Jewish religion; there is a devastating critique of institutionalized religion. If, for Noah and Spinoza, God is everywhere, it is not necessary to attend synagogues to worship God. In this sense, the role played by religion has more to do with spreading fear – thus endorsing the cohesive aspect of the State – than with spreading love: “If nobody believed in God, the entire social order would collapse overnight. Blood would run in the streets, no woman's dignity would be safe, and property would be looted by desperate men”. (SHIVANI: 2009:142). In face of these words, it is possible to conclude that religions in general, and especially, the monotheistic ones, are grounded in the belief of a single, authoritarian, punitive God; whose image has been used for political reasons, to domesticate and control the infuriated and oppressed masses, by way of offering them eternal salvation, which led to the construction of a patriarchal civilization stained with racism, ethnical conflicts, religious wars, competition, modern slavery, capitalism, and intolerance.

As to intellectual life, it can be argued that art can work as a kind of medicine against prejudice and stigmatization, leading the protagonists to acknowledge that there are similarities, even among the most disparate cultures. The body of readings of the beautiful rich young woman -- Neslihan's readings – gathered with the help and influence of Noah – establishes connections between the works of Defoe, Swift, Spinoza, Maimonides and the ones of Sabbatai Sevi. All these authors have points in common: they represent a new era, an era of change, they pave the way for a new world order: the era of capitalism, at the wake of the Industrial Revolution, which transforms the whole system of commerce, giving rise to the

globalized world we live in, attesting to the end of a period of long travels to foreign lands in search of spices, gold, cotton, sugar, wool, and silk. It was, of course, a time marked by slavery, wars and Inquisition.

Let us now focus on the two western literary works mentioned in “Anatolia” and try to establish their relation with the context of the world in the 18th Century. Both books were great European novelties at the moment: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), which had recently been translated into the languages of Asia Minor; and *Gulliver’s Travels*, (1735) which was being translated at the time the story unfolds. Both are adventure narratives about European castaways who end up in exotic distant lands. They convey images of strange people, animals, things and cultures through the use of allegory and symbolism, so as to satirize social and political problems of European society and human nature in general. I believe that Noah is the link between all these different intellectuals. He embodies Spinoza’s, Maimonides’s, Defoe’s, Swift’s and Sabbatai Sevi’s ethics and revolutionary ideas. Like them, Noah is also an outcast, an outsider, a dissenter ahead of his time, and lacking solidarity and understanding from his fellow men. Noah can be seen as a link between the traditional views on religion, the State and humankind reflected in the prejudice assimilated against the Jews; and the modern assimilated Jew, a symbol of the self-made “cultural ambassador”; who makes use of his interpersonal skills, his charm, charisma, generosity and intelligence, knowledge of philosophy, languages, and literature, to establish commercial as well as cultural and personal relations with both the Christians and the Islamic peoples. Noah refuses to play the game of the victimized Jew; being a successful tradesman, he chooses to focus on the brighter side of life. Even as he feels distraught because of the prosecutor’s hatred towards him, on second thought, after having something to eat, he realizes that his life is exciting and interesting after all, and heads to his ship.

As to Noah’s relationship with rich Mustafa’s daughter, the daring and independent Neslihan, they seem to like each other a lot. As Neslihan’s father does not put pressure her into getting married, she feels free to wait until she finds a suitable match. Noah comes to Alanya about twice a year, and this time, specifically, Neslihan has the impression that he will propose to her, and considers the possibility of accepting. At the end of the story, we find out that Noah had in fact brought a beautiful ring. But – because of all the stress involving the case raised against him – he decides not to give her the ring, after all. At least, not this time. The three characters, Noah, Neslihan, and her father, Mustafa, at some time consider the pros and cons of a marriage alliance. The three of them seem to have a certain sympathy for the

prospect, but not to the point of fighting hard for the accomplishment of the project. Noah thinks about a nice agreeable life with Neslihan; but he also considers marrying his cousin Rebekah – not so interesting to him as Neslihan, but yet a member of his own family and culture. He might as well not marry at all, or not now. Noah's practical attitude may also suggest that he is a nomad who does not actually wish to establish marital bonds with anyone. We could call him a free soul, eager to be in the world, visiting exotic and strange lands, like Gulliver in the beginning of his narrative.

Noah is not the only character to portray these mixed feelings. Other characters in the story, like Kadi Effendi (the magistrate), Neslihan (the possible bride); Mustafa (her father), are also presented through two different approaches: the political (how should they treat and relate to the Jew?) and the personal aspects (they like Noah very much). The borders between these two perspectives sometimes seem to get blurred. Most of the times, what they would like to do, as people, collides with what they need to do, as professionals and political creatures.

The game of interests and tensions as well as the ensuing pressure that takes place during Noah's judgement is so strong that the reader fears that something will go wrong and Noah will end up dead. The ending of the story, however, is milder than we expect, probably due to Noah's charisma, intelligence and wit. He is no ordinary man. Noah may have a Quixotic side, a romantic anarchist character, daydreaming with bewitching encounters; discussing and solving mental puzzles, but he is also sensible enough not to get carried away. His practical side tells him that this is not the right time for him to fight for the love of the beautiful, rich, cultivated and independent Neslihan. Neither does he seem inclined to surrender to the more traditional Jewish cousin Rebekah. The fact that Noah treats the affairs of his heart almost as if he were dealing with a trade matter makes us think of the approach to the theme of romance in western and eastern traditions. Western stories are more strongly committed to the fulfilling of love relationships, while eastern literature seems grounded in more down-to-earth ingredients, respecting marriage and traditional male and female roles.

"Anatolia" stands halfway between the western and the eastern literary traditions. Its plot can remind us of the exotic and rather romantic *Arabian Nights'* stories (BURTON: 2004), fraught with seduction and mystery. As western readers, on the one hand, we are frustrated because of the lack of a final alliance between Noah and Neslihan; on the other hand, we are relieved that he may leave Alanya in safety. One way or the other, we are also

aware that none of these things would have happened to Noah had he not been seen and treated as an outsider. This indicates that what is at stake is the struggle for acceptance and survival in a world about to disappear, paving the way for a shift of perspective, for the globalized world we live in.

Interestingly enough, Venice is the bridge Noah establishes with the West. A Jew and Venice in the same story establishes an inevitable relation with *The Merchant of Venice*. It is telling how excluded, humiliated and stereotyped *Shylock* was, when compared to Noah's respected and valued position on personal and professional terms in "Anatolia". As previously mentioned, this is due to the fact that, at the time of the Crusades and later the Inquisition, some Jews had no option but the exile to Arab and Islamic lands, where they were better received, and allowed to grow as individuals on economic and cultural terms, and were even free to follow their religious practices. The Jewish merchant became a mediator between the Muslims (initially banned from the European markets) and the Christians (heavily charged when crossing the Mediterranean and Indic seas). Noah helps this difficult exchange to take place through his special talent for languages and interpersonal relationship, which help on commercial as well as on artistic and cultural issues.

It is important to say a word about the difference between 'contemporary Muslim extremists' and the rich intercultural tradition of some Islamic Sultans of the past. When the Jewish scholar, rabbi, doctor and philosopher Maimonides fled from Cordoba, in the 12th Century, due to the emergence of a ruthless Muslim regime, he found refuge in Cairo, Egypt, in the kingdom of Sultan Saladin, a tolerant and cultivated Muslim. Saladin is best known to us for the movies featuring Richard *Coeur de Lion's* fierce fight against Saladin for the control of Jerusalem. Saladin ruled over Jerusalem when the Crusaders fought to "liberate" Jerusalem from the Muslim domain.

"Anatolia" was written and published in a time when the ubiquitous nature of the conflicts between Jews and Muslims was again a frequent topic in the media. We can only understand the extent of this conflict if we go back in time to the Medieval world, during the Islamic rule over Andaluzia. In the 7th Century, Cordoba became the capital of the Omiade Caliphate, the Moorish reign of *El-Andalus*. Under Islamic domain, Cordoba became the sophisticated centre of the Jewish and Islamic civilizations, one of the greatest cultural and economic urban havens of religious tolerance of the time. Around the 10th Century, Cordoba was at its heyday in terms of culture, education, philosophy, science, arts and medicine,

during the coordinated administration of the Caliphe Abd al-Rahman III and his Jewish Vizir Hasdai ibn Shaprut. That time was known as “The Golden Age” of Spanish Judaism (TURKISH Jews: Digital source).

In my readings, I was struck by the fact that under most Muslim rules, the Jews were protected and respected; while things were different under Christian sovereignty. As another example of this paradigm, while in India, in 1590, the great Mughal Emperor Akbar was organizing interfaith dialogues among Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews, and even Atheists; meanwhile, the Holy Inquisition was active in Europe. In 1600, Giordano Bruno was burnt alive on charges of heresy for having said that the universe is infinite and decentered. Meanwhile, in Agra, Akbar was lecturing on the need for religious and political tolerance, which he believed could only happen through a genuine dialogue across religious and ethnical borders. In “Anatolia”, there is an allusion to the persecution imposed to the Jews in Venice by the fundamentalist Christian Church. Mustafa remembers Noah’s father as a religious man, attending the local synagogue, and Mustafa cannot understand why that man who was greatly admired by Alanya’s notables, had decided to exile to Venice, where he ended up dying later on in a ghetto, the Venice Ghetto, which lasted from the 16th to the 18th century. The Venetian Jews underwent an escalation of persecution from 1394 onwards. They could only work in the city for intervals of two weeks; the moneylenders could obviously remain in town, but they had to wear a yellow badge, then a yellow hat, and, in 1500, a red hat, while anti-Jewish laws kept being issued (TURKISH Jews: Digital source).

In 1516, the councilors in Venice’s council decided to confine the existing Jews and the newly arrived immigrants from the Iberian Peninsula, who had been expelled in the fatidic year of 1492, in a Ghetto, located in a small and dirty island. The Levantine Jews enjoyed a better economic situation, building an extravagant synagogue in 1575. The Spanish Jews built their own synagogue in 1584. Around the 17th century, by the time Noah’s father would have moved to Venice, the ghetto saw its golden age: banks, schools, doctors, spice shops, jewelry, and fabrics could be seen everywhere. Jews also controlled foreign trade by the mid-1600s.

Around 1630-31, the plague that intermittently spread throughout Europe hit the Venice ghetto, interrupting the commercial activities and bringing about the death of many Jews. Due to the deterioration of the economic situation, by 1766 the Jewish population diminished from 4,800 to 1,700. In 1797, Napoleon would open the gates of the ghetto. In our

short-story, around 1728, Noah is being judged and some restrictions are being imposed on him, but nothing compares to the way the Jews were treated in some European countries.

Among the many quotations found in “Anatolia”, one, in particular, drew my attention. It reads: “The necessary corollary to loving anything or anyone was the capacity to hate; if hate lagged, so did love.” (SHIVANI: 2009: 160) .I believe that these deep words have to do with the breaking down of totalizing paradigms or paralyzing religious and political intolerance, since it challenges taken for granted assumptions: either you hate or love; if you are not with me, you are against me (a synthesis of Bush’s policy). The secret for this puzzle has to do with the realization of the fact that the opposites are complementary; one feeling cannot exist without the other; since deep inside happiness, sadness inhabits; a philosophical tradition, to which Spinoza alluded, known as the complementary duality.

Now, I must say a final word about “Anatolia”. In the story, we can feel the contradicting impulses of different characters: Kadi Effendi; Mustafa; Neslihan; Noah. Nevertheless, to control the turns of the plot there is the omniscient third-person voice, tying the characters’ thoughts, feelings and viewpoints together, so as to compose a magic symphony of Sultans, storytellers with turbans, conversations from behind a screen, echoes of travels to distant places, intellectual disputes, all this floating on the tepid and aromatic waters of the Mediterranean, witnessing a time that lingers forever in our dreams of romance and daintiness.

CONCLUSION

To my taste, there is not better companion than the characters of a book. During the last two years I had the pleasure to relate to them, through the reading of this short-story collection, *Anatolia and Other Stories*. Now, after this research, I feel satisfied with my apprenticeship and the innumerable discoveries made. This has been an unusual experience, which I shall cherish and carry with me for the rest of my life. The daily-based companionship with Anis Shivani's characters added a special flavor to my once theoretical concerns, and I hope it turned me into a more tolerant, imaginative, determined and wiser person. These characters are so different, and yet so complementary, each one of them epitomizing universes of humanity in the face of adversity and hope; suffering and joy, jumping into the sacred path of freedom, towards a libertarian journey of decolonization; decolonizing knowledge and the taken for granted cultural assumptions. Reading that kind of book, we become travelers of the world.

What does it really mean to be a traveler? I suppose it means to reach an understanding about the multiplicity of ways of being in the world, of dealing with our fellow beings, through a kaleidoscopic array of time periods and civilizations, the irresistible characters that now populate our imagining of enchanted lands and powerful empires lost along parallel paradigms of space and time. Yin and Yang, Mayans, Aztecs, Europeans, North Americans, the Chinese, Indians, Native Americans, Africans, Indonesians, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, the Japanese, Malaysians, Iranians, Baha'is, Jews, Christians, Arabs, Muslims, Brazilians, Moroccans, Blacks, Whites, Yellows, Browns, Reds, (Greens, Purples, Oranges). These peoples' colors shine in the darkness and in the sun, like sun-flowers of different shades and nuances. Life is so precious! And yet so short to be enslaved into primitive stereotypes of color, sex, race, class. We should all "learn how to unlearn", as Mignolo in a simple way proposes, embracing a pluriversality of wisdoms and attitudes about being in the world – also known as epistemes, since epistemology may refer to the principles that lie beneath knowledge production, comprising the horizons of interpretation and explanation.

Thus, the importance of “learning to unlearn”. For a long time we have been arrested in a prejudiced way of looking at or reading the world, or the worlds, that revolve around us. Shivani’s characters are helpful in the sense that they have been practicing civil disobedience, border thinking, intercultural dialogue, interfaith dialogue, critical cosmopolitanism, decolonial cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitan localism, decoloniality, decolonization of being, of mind or of knowledge, denouncing the trap of coloniality, indicating how to live in a communal way, how to get away from labels. Although these words seem complicated, they envisage the emergence of a planetarian paradigm, or shift, located in-between, on the margins or borders of the rhetoric of modernity/coloniality and post-modernity. There are so many brave outstanding brilliant minds investigating these issues nowadays, that I considered it relevant to condense their thought in the first two chapters of this thesis. Now, in the Conclusion, I pay tribute to their contribution by mentioning two very special names, Walter Mignolo and Glória Anzaldúa.

Mignolo, the brilliant Argentinian cultural investigator, mixes all these concepts, epistemologies or genealogies all over his texts, books and interviews, and ends up by decodifying this emerging paradigm of transmodernity, which is a concept originally coined by the philosopher of liberation Enrique Dussel to convey a paradigm of “*bien-vivir*”, of fulfilment, of delight, of living in harmony with the others, including the animals and the surrounding nature. This is enacted by border thinking, by unlearning deeply rooted colonial patterns. How can we practice border thinking? By believing that in a way or another, all of us practice border thinking, since we live on the borders of different cultures, civilizations or epistemologies.

One of the great practitioners of border thinking is the revolutionary Shamanic healer, the Chicana feminist writer Glória Anzaldúa, who contributed with the opening epigraph to this thesis. As you can see there, she used to play with the languages, mixing English with Spanish, and obtaining Spanglish. Anzaldúa uses her writing as a way to vent her disapproving of all forms of oppression exerted towards people who are culturally and sexually different, and sometimes she can be quite blunt: “Attacks on one’s form of expression with the intent to censor are a violation of the First Amendment. *El Anglo com cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua*. Wild tongues can’t be tamed, they can only be cut out.”(ANZALDÚA: 1987, p.54)

As to the philosophy of liberation, it is grounded in the first phase of modernity and has to do with the worth of the subaltern perspective. Decolonizing the mind is also important for the European people, who need to come to terms with their own colonized mentality. The victims of colonization, on the other hand, are trying to heal the colonial wound that was stamped on them through oppression. The colonized areas were targeted by the civilizing and saving missions. Under the guise of helping the primitive to develop, Western civilization built its own empire at the expense of slave work from South America, Central America, the Caribbean, North America and vast areas of other European colonies. This way, decoloniality is part of a pluriversal project that envisages liberation from patriarchy, capitalism, coloniality, eurocentered modernity, neoliberal imperialism and from the coloniality of power.

When I think of Shivani's characters from the perspective of a decolonial project, I see them interconnected through a multiplicity of desires and hopes for a translucent thread of solidarity that could protect them from the external injustice, so that they were empowered, so as to heal the colonial wound and be free to engage in a rewarding and fulfilling existence. These lovely travellers are just starting to fly over the ugliness of a segregating world.

Characters like Noah ibn Nehmias, or Ram Pillai, represent pluriversality, as Mignolo has it, the many worlds existing in our world. Shivani places them at different time periods and different civilizations. Noah ibn Nehmias; Billy Salvador; Diana; Wu; Ram Pillai; Amy Aberdeen; Simone Carpentier; the petite Lauren; the brave Hosokawa-San; the dazzling Ottoman Neslihah, with whom I would have loved to indulge in philosophical discussions in her gorgeous backyard on the margins of the Mediterranean; the charming and easygoing Mustafa; the ethical Kadi Effendi; I mean – as ethical as possible, under the stressful circumstances. The magical blue of the Mediterranean with its caravels... I feel as if I were there, surrounded by those people, sharing their disquiet during Noah's trial. I was also there discussing Spinoza and Maimonides with Noah and Neslihan, my heart is forever Turkish. What to say about those ten people in Tehran, whose lives were so interesting, their plans forever lost...

I felt bound within Shivani's touch: I was engulfed by those people's life stories, I felt accepted by them; somehow I was part of their world, and they were part of mine. I did not feel like judging the Baha'i novelist, Keyvan Yazdani; after all, Keyvan had written a fantastic book and he was being persecuted by a totalitarian regime as his family had been, too. He did not really mean to kill all those nice people like the white-turbaned young cleric

Kazim; the couple who was going to meet him later at Shadman Café, the Moavenis; the young woman who was meeting Kazim, Farkhondeh; it is impossible not to feel sorry for Keyvan, the non-stereotyped terrorist, who was alone in the world in a land he did not belong to; confined in his blindness to the others' feelings, empty of affection after he finished his novel, a harmless soul, but someone contacted him and he was doomed. Now, that state of doomness haunts most characters. In Dubai, Ram Pillai, the Indian guest worker, was in the right place at the right time, in the unbounded desert; so, it was a matter of luck his having helped the young Sheikh to cover the old Bedu's accidental death. An event that changed his whole life, for the better and for the worst. We live in a world of masks, appearances and stereotypes, where people are valued for the amount of money they have in their pockets or in the bank; for the make of cigarettes they smoke; for the amount of languages they speak; for the color of their skins; for the exuberance of food and clothes they take; for the number of countries they have visited before they died.

I write this thesis in Brazil, where we live in a market society, too, much influenced by the United States, which were once a colony and now represents the empire. We, in many ways, are a derivative of our Northern brother. Our minds are colonized by Hollywood's make-believe fictional world. There would be nothing wrong with that, if this make-believe world didn't interfere in the broader existing world and with the decolonizing project. The problem is that Hollywood and the commercial media spread the U.S. ideology of perpetual happiness and freedom based on preconceived stereotypes such as: "you are only happy, if you consume"; "America is a melting-pot, a land of opportunities and endless growth"; "The west is the place where you can find the most cultivated people and the best jobs"; "the land of perfect democracy and freedom"; "the land of tolerance and racial equity". The problem is that Hollywood sells images that distort the reality we witness everyday on the streets and institutions of America. The United States of America neo-liberal policy privileges the capital and profit, stimulating the competitiveness among people of different background.

According to Mignolo, the trick is to put the oxen before the cart; that is, put the people in the first place, inverting the perverse logic of the market, which reaches its insatiable appetite for profit at the expense of people's misery, as we witness the growing of environmental tragedies, diseases, the deterioration of our education, health and living conditions. What if we decide to prioritize life, well-balance, harmony, happiness, friendship, healthy food, culture, literature, theatre, music, instead of swallowing all the garbage that the media and the television produces incessantly? What if the banks, hospitals, institutions serve

people's needs the way it should be? Wouldn't the world be a better place? We need an urgent change of paradigm if we are to survive as a species. I believe that some of us are still waiting for a miracle, for a savior, for a solution that comes from above like the authorities and this global crisis could be an excellent opportunity for us to develop an independent thought, one that allows us to live with creativity, dignity, and develop compassion, a deep compassion for our fellow beings, the animals, trees, mountains, rivers, oceans, skies, so that we learn how to be more tolerant with different opinions, cultures, and share the unique biodiversity of our planet with our neighbors?

The aim of this thesis may sound too radical, but it comes as my contribution, as one more voice summoning intellectuals to gather courage, determination, and imagination, and allow our mind frame to be tuned past stereotypes. We can admire different perspectives, such as the ethos of the indigenous peoples here in South America; Central America; North America; Canada; Australia and New Zealand in their respect for nature. Right here we have the Amazon rainforest, the green lung of the world, with lands which have been preserved by treaties signed by supposedly serious people. But these treaties are not being respected; the "preserved lands" are being devastated in the name of progress and growth. It is time we fight for *Pachamama*, the way the indigenous people of the Andes call the Earth. They have been living in harmony with nature ever since they exist and nothing could ever change the love and respect they have for *Pachamama*, not even the disrespectful and hideous way they have been treated by the Euro-American neo-liberal policies regarding the exploitation of natural resources. Fortunately, many brave men and women have already woken up to this reality of inequality, and ecological devastation and have been doing something to stop the hatred among religions, civilizations and peoples.

There are innumerable NGOs and Forums where people from all colors and ethnical origins and beliefs sit together and try to negotiate. Dialogue is not easy, especially when there are so many opposing points of view. There is much I would like to say on that subject, but this is not the place, so I pushed that collateral digression into Appendix A. Basically, the text is about the disservice to the cause of the planetary decolonial project paid by the radical Islamic terrorists, who call themselves the "Islamic State". This sort of attitude has triggered a widespread wave of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and racism in Europe and in the US. In a way, they reproduce the Western discourse of religious and cultural intolerance. That is precisely the rationale behind Shivani's story "Repatriation", where 50 to 60 million people of non-white origin, were forced to leave the United States, because the presidential

administration believed them to be infecting the whites with an undefined disease. To me, the name of the disease is cultural diversity. In fact, the difference between the Western Christian fundamentalists and the Islamic fundamentalists is that Christians endorse a Christian form of patriarchy with the Western monogamist family at the centre in the name of God, civilization and progress; while the Islamic fundamentalists defend a non-western form of patriarchy with polygamy for men, which is authorized as central to the family structure.

“Repatriation” offers an impressive account of state-terrorism, expressed by draconian anti-immigration policies’, like torture and surveillance; a society engendered through fear and terror, based on a prisional industry-system, which targets Black youngsters, Latinos, and all sorts of non-Whites. That short-story haunted me for a year. This intense and scary dystopian tale of intolerance made me dream of people being disembarked from death-trains in concentration camps. In “Repatriation”, before embarking aboard the death-ship, people were expected to present their files or documents. That is surreal, people were presenting documents so as to be allowed to enter a ship that would lead them to death. If all the White Supremacists in the world gathered together and joined forces to exterminate diversity, “Repatriation” would not be a piece of fiction. Fortunately, that would be extremely costly and luckily, today, there are important people who have a space in the media, in politics, even millionaires, who work as activists for minority rights to help dismantle paradigms that no longer make sense.

“Repatriation” was written in 2007, during George W. Bush’s administration. Things have not changed much since the omnipresent war on terror was declared. Everyone now can be a suspect, especially if you happen to be brown, or of Arab, or of Muslim descent. You can be targeted and your life can turn into a living hell. As we read in “Repatriation”, Europe should accept America’s help and get rid of all its non-White population, too. That is a huge statement, mainly now after the terrorist attack at *Charlie Ebdó* magazine in Paris. In the United States, there were some civil liberties before 9/11. What exactly is going on now? Is this a real clash between cultures and civilizations; or is it a clash of definitions as Said suggests? At this point, Said’s (1998) argumentative discourse mirrors Ali’s (2002) views on the clash of fundamentalisms. Today, the Eurocentric perspective of assuming its cosmology and epistemology as being superior to all the others, as well as being the source of “truth” and the cause for the inferiority of the non-western epistemologies and cosmologies, has generated other forms of fundamentalism in the non-western world. We have the Third Worldist

fundamentalisms (Afrocentric; Islamist; Indigenist, etc.) It is disturbing to realize that even fundamentalism has been globalized.

As a way of presenting an alternative to this clash of fundamentalisms, I have brought Tagore's idea of a cosmopolitan education, and Amartya Sen's views on emperor Akbar's cultural empathy, in an attempt to show that the clash is in fact between the ones that foster the conflict between cultures through their fundamentalist behavior and narrow views on humanism and those who believe in the importance of dialogue between civilizations as a strategy to promote intercultural and interfaith dialogue toward the development of a more solidary civilization.

Considering the object of my thesis, *Anatolia and Other Stories*, I conclude that its author, Anis Shivani, creates there a fictional world that offers a space to prompt the discussion about the realities he believes in, adding a special flavor to the world, which marks his text with authenticity, delinking his work from the ubiquitous commercial formula of postmodern *simulacros* and repetitive Western consumerist best-sellers revolving around ethnical sagas. For Shivani, it is crucial to go after other forms of being in the world, other rationale based on multiple ways of reading and writing the world. His characters live on the borders of many civilizations, like the Jew Noah ibn Nehmias, who travels between the East and the West, as he dwells in Venice and Alanya, in Ottoman Anatolia. Accordingly, Noah inhabits the border of three civilizations — the Islamic; the Christian and the Jewish. This short-story is emblematic of Shivani's views on world literature, being a powerful statement pro the understanding between different religions and cultures. Shivani takes us, his readers, to inhabit this inter-space, this in-betweeness, where we are allowed to confront mainstream mediocrity and hypocrisy through Shivani's transgressive and libertarian eyes. As many dissenters, Shivani has the courage to unmask Western prejudiced policies regarding immigrants, while unveiling North America's commodification of literature. Being a free thinker, he transcends labels and political orientations, showing his belief in freedom of speech. I would say that Shivani is an unusual person and a wonderful writer, powerfully innovative and amazingly cultivated. He is a truly global writer, for he transports us, his readers, into cultures that are familiar and yet alien, without losing sight of the individuals who are affected and set in motion this transmodern paradigm. What is more important, Shivani's way of being in the world, of thinking and writing, attests to his epistemological disobedience, through the subversion of Western rationality. And since he delivers to his readers the reality of the borders experienced by the migrants, refugees, boat people,

outsiders, we are able to share their dreams, expectations and frustrations. His writing, then, ends up by confronting imperial global designs such as capitalism, the rigidity of religious faiths, patriarchy, class imperatives; calling for a spiritualization of all religions, and a questioning of taken for granted assumptions of “Truth” and “Power”. When Shivani contends that, “the readers are the system”, he is making quite a revolutionary statement, while practicing border thinking and decoloniality, paving the road for the empowerment of a global political society; in other words, his writing ends up by drawing his readers’ attention to the importance of social change. For all this, it has been an immense pleasure and honor for me to have had the opportunity to read him, to do this research, and to write this thesis.

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ANNEXES AND APPENDICES

ANNEX I:

REVIEWS ON *ANATOLIA AND OTHER STORIES*

REVIEW # 01

SOURCE: Available at: <http://decompmagazine.com/blog/?p=254>. **Access on: 16/11/2014**

[...] issues of insider and outsider...minorities on a death-ship, awaiting forced repatriation or extermination. Tackling international locales and the issues and internal worlds of immigrant workers and assorted nomads [...] Claims about “the American way of life”. Shivani’s collection ties various examples of such communities, such experiences, together, but this book reads, too like a string of voices testifying to their own trapped conditions, whether on a death ship, in a prison camp, a writer’s retreat, an academic career, or, as one library-bound exile writes, “Indianapolis [...] the reviled, bland Midwestern city that outré writers like Kurt Vonnegut have targeted for satire over these recurrently sad late twentieth-century decades. This is the voice of Anatolia, a voice expressing desperation in a variety of its quieter tones.

REVIEW # 02

AUTHOR: Marian Haddad

SOURCE: Available at: <http://contemporaryworldpoetry.com/?p=829> **Access on: 16/11/2014**

The sheer weight of history is found in Anis Shivani’s *Anatolia and Other Stories*:

Reading Shivani’s stories calls up my immigrant parents’ ways and their desire to acclimate to this new land while staying rooted in their culture traditions. Shivani’s stories juxtapose the deep and spiritual connections to ancestral traditions -- with the very American reality of the daily life immigrants experience here. It has allowed me to revisit [...] the reach geography of existing in-between countries and cultural traditions, reminding me — it is possible to belong to more than one cultural tradition. It’s either a gift or an obligation to be able to ask, “What is a country?” and “How many countries can I belong to?” “What comes from speaking or knowing more than one language?” These stories offer is the human component, the reality of personal suffering under the guise of a country’s safety — the reality of persecution.

REVIEW # 03

AUTHOR: Sybil Baker

SOURCE: Available at: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/prairie_schooner/summary/vO85.3.

baker.html < Project Muse- review by Sybil Baker Access on: 16/11/2014

{From: Prairie Schooner. Volume 85, Number 3, Fall 2011. pp. 167-170 | 10.1353/psg.2011.0096}

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

Literature written by first-generation immigrants seems once again to have become fashionable. One need only to look at the countries of origin of many of the writers selected for the New Yorker's list of twenty writers under forty: Nigeria, Russia, Peru, Latvia, China, Ethiopia, and Yugoslavia. This emphasis on a more global American fiction may represent a purposeful nose-thumbing to Nobel Secretary Horace Engdahl's comment that Americans don't participate in the world's ongoing literary dialogue. Or perhaps this shift is a more organic result of the changing milieu and demographics of American society. Either way, Shivani's first short story collection stands out as an important contribution to the global literary conversation.

Anatolia and Other Stories is remarkable for both its global breadth and literary depth. Like the stories in Nam Le's *The Boat*, Shivani's tales span several continents and are set in global hotspots including India, Dubai, and Iran. However, Shivani raises the stakes further with the characters in these eleven stories, who are from different social and economic classes and who are living in key historical moments, which range from the waning Ottoman Empire to a dystopian America. Shivani's stories not only reflect the recent reach of globalization and colonial power struggles, but they also look both backward and forward to posit the implications for America and beyond. The stories are more often novelistic in scope (but not necessarily length) because they situate the quotidian within the broader sweep of history and politics. This is where the collection departs from the MFA fiction model, which often privileges individual experience at the expense of the historical, cultural, and class circumstances of the character's ignored world. In *Anatolia*, history, place, and culture largely influence individual decisions and in many senses are the main characters of the story. Some readers might argue that such a diversity of stories does not allow for a consistent "voice" or "theme" to emerge from the collection, but such a claim would miss the collection's overall power to examine and portray the range of experience and possibilities in a global society. While the stories are satisfying individually, when they are considered as a whole a larger conversation emerges. This collection, then, offers a dynamic literary dialogue among diverse characters, cultures, classes, genders, and eras, a dialogue that makes visible the stories of the winners and (mostly) losers on the global stage. The collection opens with "Dubai," which concerns an undocumented Indian worker whose life depends upon the whim of a rich sheikh he has protected. Then, it follows "Manzanar," which takes the form of the diary of a Japanese man in a California internment camp. The next three stories—"Conservation," "Profession," and "Go Sell It on the Mountain"—take place in the art and literary world of present-day America. For anyone who has read Shivani's essays (he writes regularly for the Huffington Post and other media outlets and literary journals), it is not surprising that several stories critique academia and its follies. Both "Profession" and "Go Sell It on the Mountain" spend much of their narrative energy mocking academia. However, these stories, while well-plotted and funny, feel the least fresh of the collection, perhaps because satires of MFA programs, writers' retreats, and academia in general are well-trodden fields and as such are probably too easy a target for Shivani's talents. The title story, "Anatolia," set during the Ottoman Empire's decline, draws obvious parallels to America's current position in the world. Similarly, "Independence" in turn reveals the clear dissatisfaction already simmering in the midst of false optimism in a post-independent India. And "Repatriation" takes place in a perilously near future in which all "non-white" Americans are repatriated because of mass food contamination. Originally published in 2007, "Repatriation" is a striking early example of a recent uptick in dystopian literature. (Some other recent examples include Gary Shteyngart's *Super Sad True Love Story*, Rick Moody's *The*

Four Fingers of Death, and Sigred Nunez's Salvation City, which were all released in the summer of 2010.)

REVIEW # 04

AUTHOR: Seveal: Laila Halaby; Sven Birkerts; Jay Parini; Richard Burgin; Julie Shigekuni; Eric Miles

SOURCE: *The Brooklyn Rail*.

“Imaginative, informed, at times brash, Anis Shivani will go far.”—The Brooklyn Rail

In these eleven stories of novelistic breadth and ambition, global tensions and harmonies come alive as rarely seen in contemporary fiction. Shivani takes the measure of the fallout from globalization as well as its advantages, exploring diverse cultures to gauge their ultimate resiliencies. An undocumented Indian worker in Dubai, an Issei man in a California internment camp, a persecuted Baha'i novelist in contemporary Tehran, a Chinese-American conservator at a Boston museum, a Hungarian gypsy girl in 1950s rural Indiana, a dissatisfied Muslim industrialist in post-independence India, and a loyal-to-the-core Jewish trader in the Ottoman empire—these are the kinds of strong, sympathetic, fully realized characters who bridge place and individuality in this powerful collection. The genre of multicultural/postcolonial short fiction will never be the same again. These stories push us to confront the hardest intellectual challenges of the emerging world, while never letting go of narrative urgency, concision, and lyrical power.

Anis Shivani demonstrates his versatility as a writer as he takes us around the globe in stories that juxtapose old and new, east and west, with characters that do their best to navigate the generational/religious/cultural/socio-economic tensions inherent in our global economy. Shivani's observations are dead-on, especially when dealing with themes of loss, family dynamics, and the subtleties of power. This is a solid collection that offers the best of all worlds: skilled writing flavored with detailed cultural nuances in stories that are timeless and universal.—Laila Halaby, PEN/Beyond Margins Award-winning author of *Once in a Promised Land*

Anis Shivani has an enviable narrative reach. He populates worlds that are psychologically compelling, socially acute, and morally challenging. Reading *Anatolia and Other Stories*, we feel that life has been lived deeply and then—the hard part—served up fresh to the senses.”—Sven Birkerts, author of *The Gutenberg Elegies and My Sky Blue Trades*

I've read these stories with intense interest. Anis Shivani is an original, and his work interrogates the historical moment with insight and passion. He looks at this mysterious thing called 'multiculturalism' with a fresh eye, never accepting the status quo, always probing and thinking. The forces that keep a lid on emerging thought, on sharp political thinking, had better take cover. This is unusual and interesting work.—Jay Parini, author of *Benjamin's Crossing* and *The Apprentice Lover*

Anis Shivani's debut collection of stories reveals him to be one of the most exciting young writers in the States. What I especially admire in his work is the seamless union of his extraordinary intelligence with his intensely empathetic feelings for his characters and for the endlessly mysterious experience of existence itself.—Richard Burgin, author of *The Identity Club* and *The Conference on Beautiful Moments*

In *Anatolia and Other Stories*, Anis Shivani does no less than deliver a world. Read together, these smart, sure stories form wild, magnetic patterns on the brain; I'm left believing that seemingly random occurrences might add up to something more than what I'd imagined.—Julie Shigekuni, PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Award-winning author of *Invisible Gardens*

Contemporary American fiction tends to favor style over substance, inactivity over action, ambivalence over judgment, irony over assertion, solipsism over a wide and encompassing worldview. As Nobel Secretary Horace Engdahl recently noted, the U.S. doesn't participate in the world's ongoing literary dialogue. But now comes Anis Shivani and his first book of fiction, *Anatolia and Other Stories*. Already known for his penetrating, erudite, and brutally honest literary essays, Shivani has now joined the ranks of America's best fictioneers. The echoes we hear in these short stories harken back to the masters, Chekhov, Anderson, Kleist, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Flaubert, James, Kipling and Sartre. No postmodern games here, no winking coyness—just solid, international storytelling. No new voice in recent memory is as weighted with intelligence and understanding of the human animal as that of Anis Shivani. To be sure, Engdahl spoke too soon.”—Eric Miles Williamson, PEN/Hemingway Award-finalist author of *East Bay Grease*

REVIEW # 05

AUTHOR: Skip Renker

SOURCE: Black Lawrence Press, 2009. **Access on:** 16/11/2014

These fine stories, all published within the past three years in literary magazines, display an impressively rendered range of locales, from Dubai to Tehran to India's Pondicherry, from Houston to Boston, from Anatolia in the 16th Century Ottoman Empire to Manzanar, the Japanese internment camp of WW2. The collection, however, is far richer than a mere travelogue; these places, often exotic on the surface, are inhabited by believable, complex characters, sensitive men and women whose personal lives intersect with the vicissitudes of history—they must compromise with the secret police, adjust to the shifting fiats of Ayatollahs, suppress gypsy heritage in order to fit in with Indiana's mores, even spy for the authorities. Principalities, powers, and the characters' troubled psyches create tensions between thought and genuine feeling; reality and the imagination; memory and the present moment; and perhaps especially, and explicitly in "Tehran," tensions between the "hidden" and the "apparent self." A better world might help us find something like wholeness, a balance between these opposites, but Shivani's real world shows how history and human proclivities lead to imbalance and distortion in both the public and the personal spheres. Shivani's characters, though, are neither mere props to support an ideological agenda, nor are they the kind of self-involved, ahistorical people who populate much of contemporary fiction.

Take Amy Beederman, for instance, the 19-year-old live-in babysitter of "Texas," which is set in Houston (Shivani has resided there for many years). Amy's journeyed for the first time out of her life in the northeast to work for a wealthy

immigrant Malaysian couple living in an upscale section of Houston. Enron employs Dato Sri Razak (slyly, the story takes place a year or two before Enron's collapse), who treats Amy with indifference if not contempt, and is married to Adila, world-class shopper. Amy tends to Nurhaliza, the baby who "either ate too much or threw up. No in-between [...]" Amy, very savvy but not unlike most 19-year-olds in her conflicted goals and desires, knows that girls her age "were supposed to go gaga over babies like this, want one of their own instantly, with a Hispanic guy, a black guy, a white guy if he were masochistic enough, with anyone!"

Amy has considerable self-knowledge, as when she realizes "she must give off the pliant guidance counselor vibes, a helpless energy in need of being vacuumed up," but she also sees more clearly, as the story unfolds, her societal role as servant, Enron's overreaching, even the likely future of the baby as "lodestar" and "investment banker." Amy, at least temporarily, is "jealous of an eight-month old baby," but she's not a racist (a lesser writer would have made her one).

"Texas," like so many stories in the collection, re-imagines multiculturalism. Shivani shuns trendy views of the joys of diversity as well as stereotypes of the so-called developing world, which after all consists partially of cultures like those of India, China, and Iraq, all far predating western "development." Yes, there's a terrorist in "Tehran," but he works alone (unlike organization-supported, semi-brainwashed suicide bombers) and has written, maybe, the great Iranian novel. Shivani, in fact, avoids oversimplifying and cheap fictional tricks at every turn—in "Texas," the baby isn't kidnapped; in "Anatolia," the Jew does not marry the Muslim and live happily ever after; and in "Tehran" the violence is all the more effective for Shivani's description, not of the bombed coffeeshop, but of the bookstore next door, where "the power of the blast made the thin, dusty volumes of French novelists in Persian translation totter and fall off the shelves, although the thicker British and Russians stayed put."

Every story in this collection is worth reading, including the lesser ones like "Conservation," and "Go Sell It on the Mountain," vivid entrees into and satires on the world of art museums and writers' conferences. These are less nuanced than "Anatolia," which evokes a historical period not unlike ours in its ethnic conflicts and accommodations, and "Independence," for my money the best in the collection for the way it shows flawed human behavior against the backdrop of 1950's India.

As I read these stories, I was struck again and again by Shivani's ability to locate his characters within a very specific place. His Dubai; Tehran; Madison; Wisconsin; rural Indiana; his historical Manzanar; Anatolia; Pondicherry—all very convincing in such details as local slang, street names, and geographical features. Intrigued by this skill, I contacted Shivani with some questions and received an ample, gracious reply, in which he said, "I have not directly experienced most of the places described in Anatolia." To a question about the relationship between a writer's experience and his/her imagination, he replied, "More and more, in my projected writings, I'm interested in making leaps of imagination into places and times I don't have direct experience of [...]" He went on to say that he's writing a novel about contemporary Pakistan, "but my direct experience of that place is decades removed [...] such an effort [of imagination] can probably better capture reality than strict realism and conformity to observation."

In other words, Shivani almost certainly builds his fictional worlds mainly from reading, research (including conversation), and imagination. What counts for the fiction writer is the quality of imagination, the ability to make the leaps Shivani refers to. Anatolia is replete with fine stories which transport the reader into cities, countries, and minds that are both strange and completely familiar. Shivani's complex but clearly rendered vision encompasses war, corruption, economic growth, social movements, globalization, but locates full-fledged individual characters within these larger forces. In an era when the very air seems suffused with propaganda, lies, abstractions, statistics, I believe we need stories like these, which convey the deeper truth that rises from the informed imagination. They help us intuit a larger world of people utterly different from ourselves, yet also very much like us.

REVIEW # 06**AUTHOR: Brian Palmu****Access on: 16/11/2014**

For two reasons, I always have a soft spot in my iron heart for reviewers who also write short stories/poems/novels. First, I agree with Martin Amis and Gore Vidal that a lively literary society means that creators also critically comment upon (not just advertise and ass-kiss) what's happening in the wide community; they called it a duty to do so. Second, a curiosity to find out how a creative piece by a critic matches his own standards and predilections is natural.

This is the second in a series of reviews regarding reviewer-critics/artists. I've admired Anis Shivani's criticism of (usually) American authors, and picked up his 2009 *Anatolia and Other Stories*, a collection of eleven short stories which criss-cross the United States, but which also makes for India, Tehran, Turkey (Ottoman Empire), and Dubai. The on-the-ground complexities and outcomes of multiculturalism is the obvious theme stitching the disparate narratives together. An undocumented worker in Dubai who gets a lucky break only to meet up with the inevitable bureaucratic hammer of lead; an aging Japanese man in a California internment camp; an Indian businessman fighting the new marketing schemes of his brothers and their families; an aspiring playwright from the Deep South his first time at an elite (and expensive) annual writers' conference: these and other stories graph the intersection between benign expectation and silent coercion. Shivani writes with great insight and depth, remarkable for the convincing and numerous angles he allows between characters. The final story, in particular, "Tehran", is a gem, more dramatically insistent than the somewhat understated, casual pace of the other stories. And he's not afraid of making bold statements (no surprise, there) as linked social criticism, within an appropriate narrative thematic. Here's an example of the latter, from "Conservation", set in Boston:

"Nothing in any of the classics seemed alterable, not a brush stroke, not a pigment shade. He would almost stop breathing, so immersed did he become in the sublime grandeur of the works that seemed to have been created out of time, out of place.

Then morning came, and the busy bee workers returned, their lab coats and business uniforms spruce and spry. The women had become more like men, and the men more like women. They spoke of similar concerns, in similar tones, in similar vocabulary. All the races pulled together now, all were agreed on the moral values worth holding"

What those "values" are is made plain even in this short snippet, and it needs emphasizing that the paltry race-squawking from all sides during our politically correct humourless negotiations is quite beside the point when values and distinctions themselves often crumble into an art-hating conformist swamp. (I don't like the redundant "sublime grandeur", and other verbal indiscretions appear in various places, but Shivani's narrative powers of character endurance, social compromise, sexual politics, political vicissitudes, and universal scope makes these occasional constructions fairly easy to forgive.)

REVIEW # 07**AUTHOR: Bilal Ibne Rasheed**

SOURCE: *The News Available at:* <http://impressionsnthoughts.blogspot.com.br/2011/02/on-anis-shivanis-anatolia-and-other.html>. Access on: 16/11/2014

I became interested in Anis Shivani's writings when a friend suggested me one of his critical pieces, *The 15 Most Overrated Contemporary American Writers*. His inclusion of Pulitzer Prize winners Jhumpa Lahiri, Junot Diaz and The New York Times critic Michiko Kakutani in the list is enough to spark anyone's interest in his own writings.

Anatolia and other Stories is his first collection of short stories. The book engages the reader even before he/she has started reading it. The book cover is a collage of several images: Burj al Arab with a camel in the foreground; a lute with some embroidered shawls (or may be rugs) in the background; a woman's face who is probably gazing into a crystal ball; a Vietnamese (may be a woman) riding a bicycle; an image of a painting of a Mughal or probably an Ottoman prince riding a horse; an intricate architectural design; and a world map. The stories in the book are as diverse as the images on the book cover. We are transported: from contemporary Dubai; to eighteenth century Turkey; to 'revolutionized' Iran; to post-independence India; to Texas; to an unnamed ship meant to repatriate fifty to sixty million people; to a creative writing workshop in America.

Shivani's knowledge is encyclopedic and his understanding and description of human emotions and the subsequent thought-processes these emotions trigger is remarkable. Most of his characters are thinking individuals and though ambivalent they do not get swayed by the current of their emotions. Although Shivani's characters come from a variety of cultures and time periods there is a commonness among them. Most of the characters are uncomfortable with the societies they live in, the cultural norms they have to adhere to, and the kind of people they have to deal with and yet they are not frustrated to the extent to take a radical decision of any kind. Some of the stories deal with immigrants who appear to be more comfortable in their adopted societies and cultures than the natives.

Shivani's stories do not 'hook' the reader right from the start. Instead we have to work our way up to a couple of pages before we are enwrapped in a melancholic ambience which is both intoxicating and intriguing. There are no twists in the plot and no surprise endings and yet the stories are absorbing and engaging and the reader feels sympathy for the characters and their sufferings.

Shivani's command of the language is admirable and it appears that he does not bother about one of the so-called cardinal rules of contemporary fiction writing: shun every adjective possible. 'His Lauren, petite, indecomposable, untouched by the debilities of age, a tight bundle of warmth and energy and empathy, with a prodigious memory for every nuance of debate and scholarship, and the ability to finesse seemingly opposing points of view into a fluid conglomeration of reconcilable ideas.'

Although all of the eleven short stories in the volume are remarkable in their own way, however, according to this reader 'Repatriation' is the most powerful and engaging story. Unlike most of the stories which are around 25 to 30 pages in length, 'Repatriation' is only 8 pages long. The story is told by an unnamed male narrator who is on-board a ship which is meant to repatriate several million people from America to Africa. The story is told like entries in a personal diary starting from September 2 and ending on September 21. The unnamed narrator tells us, 'All that you're reading is in my head. I'm not actually writing. I memorize a certain number of words a day. Everyday I repeat all that I've memorized so far. Books – let alone writing materials – are strictly forbidden, discovery punishable by instant death.' The story is narrated with a calculated aloofness which leaves the reader shocked and feeling totally helpless. 'The baby will be thrown overboard with much

hooting and jeering by the captain's mates. The captain himself gets to do the honors [...] Then it'll be Diana's turn. But first she must regain consciousness. No one can be processed for death unless they're conscious. That's the rule of law.'

Having read Shivani's debut collection of stories one certainly looks forward to reading his forthcoming collection and also his first novel *The Slums of Karachi*.

REVIEW # 08

AUTHOR: Spencer Dew

Access on: 16/11/2014

The stories here share an attention to issues of insider and outsider, whether, in its horrific extremes, this dynamic leads to minorities on a death ship, awaiting forced repatriation or extermination, or whether, in a too-familiar milieu for a certain type of short story, this dynamic plays out in a writer's conference, the ubiquitous chatter laced with references to therapy and the praise of low-residency MFA programs. In one story, prisoners of an internment camp produce an overly earnest "newspaper" thick with editorials absurdly insisting that "we must be ready to resume normal life when conditions permit it." In another — the one about the writer's conference, patterned off of Bread Loaf in Vermont, we hear that "Sadie wrote exclusively about Central American refugees. Dylan kept volubly hitting on Sadie, still praising Max the gender-smashing silent poet."

The problem with this collection is how much a product of such strange locations it seems — the writer's conference, not the internment camp. While tackling international locales and the issues and internal worlds of immigrant workers and assorted nomads, all the while poking questions at monolithic claims about "the American way of life," *Anatolia and Other Stories* skirts just above the level of the didactic, speaking too often in a voice of a wilted intellectual, someone taking refuge in libraries as true horror explodes beyond the walls, captured beautifully in the use of the Indian euphemism for ethnic riots, lynching, and mass rape, "these communal prejudices, these needless hassles."

The characters here, while not at home in the writer's conference, nonetheless seem to speak as part of a diaspora long-wandering from some promised land of workshops and, in one case, protests. Indeed, the U.W. Madison professor who has just adopted a Vietnamese boy embodies an essential inertia of this book, a kind of surrender, draped in nostalgia. "Protest," he claims, "had none of the life-and-death value it used to have during Vietnam. It was now entirely a vicarious operation. None of these nice kids was going to suffer or die because of our policies. It meant nothing." While the trajectory of this story, "Profession," crests toward some true education for this professor, the tone of meaninglessness still predominates, and more attention is given to the margins of the English department than to the realities lurking behind, for instance, the adopted boy's declaration that he wanted to forget his past, his homeland, his whole previous life, and start with a fresh slate. It had been an astounding statement. Where had he learned such a complex and mature thought? Had his master at the Hanoi orphanage, where Nam Loc had managed to thrive for two years after his parents died, trained him to say this to his new guardians? Lauren would know what to make of this near-Gothic eruption. Although nominally a professor in the English department, where in the affluent sixties she had held forth on the silences of the female-authored Victorian novel, Lauren was all over the place now: pulp fiction, Hollywood, sitcoms, billboards, and internet chat rooms. In the age of cultural studies and theory, it was what one did to maintain currency.

And so we travel to a lecture, witness discourse getting discoursed about, and the old professor falls asleep in the pillowy moment. Shivani doubtless has a razorblade of critique wedged inside that pillow, but it takes some sitting to find it. The following story, “Go Sell It On the Mountain,” about the writer’s conference, voices a critique clearly, but this critique itself is distanced, padded, delivered by a New York wunderkind, a Cameroonian novelist identified by the narrator as wearing, every day “a miraculously ballsy outfit, never with a bra.” This narrator, as obvious from that description, might not be much of a writer, but he simultaneously believes that “real artists [...] were naturally forged from the flux and flow of normal stressful life” and has paid “three thousand dollars, all told, for the right to be at the Conference.” So he can be there as participants faint from the strain of so many readings and workshops, as participants line up for autographs, and as that New Yorker from Cameroon stands to declare that each year’s event is the same as the last, an instantiation of absurd insulation, a gathering where everyone will think the short story is the art form par excellence. Experimentalism will be in vogue. There will be declamations of the unfortunate current tendency to introduce politics into art[...]. Agents will try to convince us that publication is not the important thing, perfecting our craft is. The merits of low-residency writing programs will be articulated by recent graduates. There’ll be humorous Homeland Security and Sexual Transgression readings [...] Veteran faculty will hang out only with their kind, as will younger faculty. Fellows will try to exclude waiters from their parties, waiters will try to exclude scholars, and scholars will try to exclude paying contributors. Someone will be caught fucking in the laundry room after a week. Two minority girls will faint in the Frost Theater during the first days, only to be rescued by white male doctors in the audience. A middle-aged housewife will break down at a reading by a poet of color. The bookstore will run out of books to be signed by novelists. Most people will get drunk, but almost no one will really make a fool of themselves.

Like the protest in Madison that the professor bumps into, this voicing of truths leads to no change. The status quo — while diverse, shifting from Tehran to America, Dubai to that boat full of refugees — resists assaults and replicates itself. Each year the conference is the same, a continuation of tradition, a zealous commitment to the rituals of a specific minority group awash in the wider world. Shivani’s collection ties various examples of such communities, such experiences, together, but this book reads, too, like a string of voices testifying to their own trapped conditions, whether on a death ship, in a prison camp, a writer’s retreat, an academic career, or, as one library-bound exile writes, “Indianapolis [...] the reviled, bland Midwestern city that outré writers like Kurt Vonnegut have targeted for satire over these recurrently sad late twentieth-century decades.” This, ultimately, is the voice of Anatolia, a voice erudite just to the point of uselessness, not so much naïve in opinion as blinded by one opinionated state; a voice expressing desperation in a variety of its quieter tones.

REVIEW # 09

SOURCE: Official Anis Shivani Website.

Access on: 16/11/2014

ANATOLIA AND OTHER STORIES is a “searing social commentary” Posted on October 12, 2011 by black lawrence Anis Shivani’s short story collection *Anatolia and Other Stories* gets a rave review in the recent issue of the Canadian journal *Prairie Fire*: “The stories are consistently thought-provoking and often challenge the reader’s assumptions. Each one is like a rich tapestry, layered with insights into the predominant cultural mores and social pecking order of the society in which it is set. One comes away with a sense of the universality of the human struggle for freedom, dignity and self-expression.

REVIEW # 10**Access on: 16/11/2014**

Anis Shivani's "Anatolia and Other Stories." Brooklyn: Black Lawrence Press, 2009.

What a pleasure to read such forceful engaging stories in a first collection! Shivani casts a wide net with locales from East to West, from Dubai to California, from Iran to Indiana. His stories cover as well a wide span of time, as disparate as modern Iran to the Ottoman Empire of centuries past. Throughout the global adventures, Shivani maintains a tight narrative focus, keeping on track the varied cultural, social and political atmospheres of the time. His stories provide background for recurrent themes of class distinction, minority status, adherence to or defiance of the status quo, and the ubiquitous influence of authoritarian rule, and they reflect a stream of conflict between past and present, ancient and modern.

"Dubai" depicts the story of Ram, a guest worker in Dubai, who is the lone witness to a car accident. His response reverberates into a long-lasting effect on his life. In "Manzanar," an Issei Japanese, put into an internment camp at the start of World War II, must choose between cooperation or resistance with his American jailors. "Conservation" is about a young Chinese American woman, a conservator who makes a dramatic decision to defy her superiors, risking her career and her future in order to save a treasured painting from damage. In "Gypsy" a Hungarian Gypsy family, recently escaped from Communist Hungary, are living in cultural isolation in Indiana. The young daughter struggles against the constraints of her tradition-bound, authoritarian father. In "Profession", an academic couple hopes to revitalize their marriage, and proclaim their liberal attitudes, by adopting an eleven-year-old Vietnamese boy. "Go Sell It on the Mountain" showcases the commercialization and artificiality of some less than dedicated Western writers. The theme of "Repatriation" reveals enormous anger at current American immigration policies which perversely lead to mass exile through the deportation of non-whites back to lands no longer their own. "Texas" depicts a young Malaysian nanny who must deal with her employers' prevailing attitudes of distrust and suspicion of minority groups. In "Independence" a disaffected young Muslim businessman faces changes as an entrepreneur in a majority Hindu country. He must also cope with perceived contempt from his brothers and father, the patriarch of the family. The title story, "Anatolia," traces life in the Ottoman Empire as an honest Jewish merchant faces persecution from less successful Muslim colleagues. The last story in the volume, "Tehran," depicts characters in contemporary Iran, who, having made important life-changing decisions, make one last -and tragic -- choice. It is a choice that plunges them into the wrong place at the wrong time, and in the hands of a rejected Baha'i novelist, who is seeking revenge against the fundamentalist regime that dominates all their spheres of action.

Shivani plays with psychological nuances evident in the characters' consciousness and acts. He probes into their moral uncertainties in the face of transition. At times they are resistant, but at other times they fight against injustice, sometimes winning a battle, sometimes losing a more significant one. At other times they compromise, surrendering to authority and the power of others. His treatment of the protagonists whatever their weaknesses and strengths is intelligent and compassionate. Having read his published articles and his blog, I expected greater political fervor. The passion is there in some stories, but it is tempered into a thoughtful rendering distinct from an outraged one.

Shivani is an insightful writer. He confronts global issues with intellectual probity. Sometimes his stories border on stereotype but more often they provide insight into complexities of the mind and soul of individuals that cannot be separated easily for analysis. And his style has elegance and pace that is rewarding to the reader.

REVIEW # 11**AUTHOR: PYLDUCK****SOURCE:** [asianamlitfans] Available at:<http://community.livejournal.com/asianamlitfans/83999.html>. **Access on: 16/11/2014**

Asian American Literature Fans - Anis Shivani's *Anatolia and Other Stories*
 A Veritable Literary Feast
 Anis Shivani's *Anatolia and Other Stories*

Some of you may recall the post in this community earlier about the article naming the fifteen most overrated contemporary writers. I was curious about the author of that piece, Anis Shivani -- a fiction writer himself as well as a critic (of the attack variety, it seems) -- so I picked up his collection of stories, *Anatolia and Other Stories* (Black Lawrence Press, 2009). If you check out his web site, you can see the other criticism he's written, and it does seem that he's made a career of pointing out the faults of the existing literary system (MFA programs, literati, etc.).

Nevertheless, the project he undertakes in this collection of stories is actually quite fascinating for Asian American literary studies as a critical project. Over the course of eleven stories, Shivani sketches out a broad canvas of humanity, culture, and subjectivity. I think there are two aspects of this collection that deserve some special attention by Asian American literary critics: first, Shivani's deliberate exploration of a pan - ethnic cast of Asian American and Asian diasporic characters across the stories (and sometimes within individual stories); and second, his emphasis on worldly/international settings that move beyond even the usual transnational claims (where some influence of the United States is central to the story). Some of the stories are also explicitly interested in considering the status of art and literature.

The opening story "Dubai" focuses on an Indian guest worker in Dubai, exploring from his perspective the frantic energy of that city and its constant construction of bigger and more extravagant buildings under the leadership of oil-rich Emirati. The second story then switches to a first-person narrative of an older Japanese American issei in Manzanar's internment camp as he shirks leadership roles for his community. The third story, "Conservation," focuses on a Chinese American woman who works as an art conservator at the Boston Museum of Art. The story concerns her theft of Antoine Watteau's painting *La Perspective* to protect it from a restoration that would, in her estimation, ruin its beauty. Over the course of the story, we flip between her perspective, that of her boss, of an investor, and of a predecessor conservator such that the whole picture we get is multi-layered in its estimation of the value of art.

In the fourth and fifth stories, Shivani takes jabs at literary and cultural critics as well as at the writing retreats that characterize a certain kind of literary elite. These stories -- "Profession" and "Go Sell It on the Mountain" -- reminded me the most of his critical essay on the fifteen most overrated writers. In the former, interestingly, the Asian character is a Vietnamese adoptee of a white couple who are university professors. This trope of transnational-transracial adoption functions as a way to explore the relationship between the aging couple whose academic careers have taken opposing trajectories (the wife becomes a superstar with the turn towards theory and criticism in literary studies while the husband languishes in old school sociology).

The title story, "Anatolia," is set in Turkey and focuses on a Muslim woman who is interested in a Jewish merchant. The story following, "Independence," is the most

typical postcolonial India story in that it focuses on the era of India's independence and how it created more substantial rifts between Hindus and Muslims than had existed before. The characters head to Pondicherry, a place supposedly with a lot of French influence which mediates the British legacy, and it would be interesting to see how much Shivani's story relies on historical context.

My favorite story in the collection is "Repatriation," an ambiguous postapocalyptic narrative told in epistolary form from a first-person survivor's perspective. The story takes place on a ship where non-white people are being sent out of the United States to Africa and other places after some undefined illness has killed off white Americans on the coasts. There are echoes of narratives of the Atlantic slave trade and of course of other histories of racial segregation and genocide.

The next story, "Texas," has an alternate reality feel to it as well. It focuses on Amy Beederman, a young white woman/teenager who works as a nanny for a wealthy Malaysian couple in Texas. The reversal of races in this setup challenges the usual narrative of the (illegal) immigrant family working for wealthy white couples who can afford to farm out the task of raising their children. After that, "Gypsy" considers a young girl of a Rom family in Indiana shortly following WWII. The persistence of the romane faith and cultural ways in deliberate refusal to assimilate to mainstream ways is the substance of this story, even as the girl struggles with what it might mean to have more agency as a woman. And then the final story, "Tehran," recovers the stories of the victims of a bombing at a cafe in Iran, tracing the disparate worlds from which these people come and how they have negotiated the post-Revolution country.

As you can see from my summaries, the stories range widely in topic, characters, and historical context. I wonder how much research Shivani did for his stories as he clearly is not drawing simply on personal experience to sketch out the emotions and thoughts of his characters. With the international settings of many of his stories, I can see resonances with some recent collections and critical work that imagines American literature in the context of world literature. Shivani's collection calls for a literary studies framework that is global in scope rather than national or even transnational.

REVIEW # 12

Access on: 16/11/2014

I also was similarly piqued by Shivani based upon this critical piece about overrated writers. I wondered whether or not Shivani could back up these claims simply based upon his own writing style, and whether or not, his stylistics and the content of his work might speak to the kinds of narrative and politics he espouses. In my mind, Shivani's work is most closely comparable in tone and execution to another Asian American writer: Nam Le. In Le's *The Boat*, stories took readers to: Colombia, Japan, New York City, Australia, Iran, and Vietnam. In a similarly ambitious global trajectory, *Anatolia and Other Stories* unfolds in Dubai, a Manzanar internment camp, on a boat in some indefinite reality, Turkey, among other such locations. It is a collection that therefore travels far and wide. pylduck does a far better job than I of parsing out the individual details of every story, so I'd like to focus perhaps on other elements, specifically the issue of tone and the issue of "what makes this collection a collection," rather than just a random mish-mash of stories that take place in different time periods and geographical locations. What is rather fascinating to me about Shivani's work is the use of third person narration, where there seems to be a narrator that leads me to believe that certain characters might drawn in a certain

way such that I'm lead, as a reader, to consider them in a way that might not be the actual manner in which the character might perceive of him or herself. A good example of this occurs in "Profession," where the narrative is focalized through a professor, who with his wife (also a professor and importantly, much more successful), has adopted a Vietnamese boy. Throughout the story, the way that the professor treats the adoptee seems to be in rather infantilized ways, so the big surprise to me was when I found out the boy was actually 11, rather than four or five. After going back and re-reading the story, I couldn't find any clear indications of what the boy's age was prior to the last two pages, but what was clear was the upending of our expectations throughout. The boy actually seems far more mature than the professor and adoptive parent in his many responses to the professor's queries, so I felt as though something was "off," but didn't understand what it was until the conclusion. These sort of narrative reversals are pretty common throughout the collection and there is often an uneasy tension between the narrative perspective, the unseen narrator, and the protagonist, especially when Shivani uses third person narration.

The other challenging question to ask with respect to *Anatolia and Other Stories* is what makes this work a full collection. There seems to be running themes throughout every story, related to outsidership and alienation, community and belonging. It almost seems to be a sort of creative exercise, if you might call it that, to see Shivani place a character from a particular cultural, ethnic, or national background in a location that could be or would be inhospitable or austere in some way. In this respect, the collection seems very naturalistic, as characters must tarry with environmental factors that constrain and can ultimately undo them. I found "Conservation" particularly fascinating in this manner, as the Chinese American protagonist, struggles with her biggest idealization as a budding curator and conservator of art forms. When she ends up having to go back on those ideals, the story seems to code into its narrative the general trajectory of the post-dissertation professional, seeking to reconcile the "real world" against the oft-times dangerous insularity of written academic research. "Gypsy" is another great tale of a figure who struggles with fitting in; in this case, a family of the Rom move to a Midwestern location. The daughter of the family seeks to break traditions by perhaps marrying outside of the Rom, but she is later called back into the fold. Shivani's work is definitely one I will consider adding to my course on transnational Asia/Pacific simply for the fact that it will challenge students in the way that it moves narratively, geographically, and temporally.

REVIEW # 13

AUTHOR: Gary Craig Powell

SOURCE: American Book Review. Volume 31, Number 3, March/April 2010.

Access on: 16/11/2014

Textured World

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

It is a truth universally acknowledged—well, very nearly—that the American short story has become homogenous, predictable, boring; and literary curmudgeons point their fingers at MFA programs, those fictioneer factories whose workshops turn out tales which, if they were cars, would be Toyotas and Hondas, reliable but bland. And the grumblers have a point. Contemporary American writing is often insular, self-indulgent, and solipsistic: think, on the one hand, of the myriad stories and novels about marriages unraveling in the Midwest; or, on the other, of the arid intellectual games and wordplay of Paul Auster, David Foster Wallace, and Jonathan Lethem, the emperors who wear no clothes (though we dare not admit it).

So it is a relief to plunge into the richly textured world of Anis Shivani, a world that is complex and multicultural, where rich Malaysians in Houston may navigate local society more successfully than their native Texan childminder, where a Chinese American conservator steals a Jean-Antoine Watteau painting from her own museum to protect it from overzealous restorers, and the past finally catches up with an illegal Indian worker in Dubai. Shivani displays an astonishingly broad and deep knowledge of cultures as multifarious as Hungarian gypsies in the Midwest, Baha'is in Iran, and Jews in the Ottoman Empire of the eighteenth century. And not only does he write about globalization with authority, verve, and intelligence, but with originality, too.

In "Go Sell It On the Mountain," the weakest story, a young writer affirms his belief that "real writers, real artists, didn't join academic programs: they were naturally forged from the flux and flow of normal stressful life." One cannot help suspecting that this is thinly disguised autobiography, and this is the author's own credo. At any rate, I hazard a guess that Shivani is not a graduate of any MFA program. This has advantages and drawbacks. On the plus side, he doesn't sound like anyone else writing nowadays. He frequently ignores the workshop commandment to show, not tell; this makes for less drama, but greater depth. He also ignores F. Scott Fitzgerald's dictum, that character is action, instead giving us detailed, and penetrating portraits, in the style of Henry James or Edith Wharton—and yes, his sentences can be as ponderous and plodding as theirs. And like a nineteenth-century novelist, too, some of his stories have an omniscient point of view, which is hard to pull off in short fiction, and yet he manages it. Indeed, for all his probably willful ignorance of the canons of contemporary taste—no traces here of Raymond Carver or Robert Coover, of John Cheever or Flannery O'Connor—this is clearly the work of a "real writer."

Indeed, the collection has garnered lavish pre-publication praise from eminent editors Sven Birkerts, Jay Parini, and Richard Burgin—the latter admiring Shivani's "extraordinary intelligence...his intensely empathetic feelings for his characters and for the endlessly mysterious experience of existence itself," which sums up the author's gifts well. I also concur with Eric Miles Williamson, who points out that the echoes in these stories "harken back to the masters." This is particularly true in the best stories in the collection, "Dubai," "Conservation," "Anatolia" (an astonishing evocation of a vanished empire), "Independence" (set in Pondicherry, India, just as it gains independence from the French in the early 1950s), and "Tehran," a story about a suicide bomber that reveals an insider's knowledge of contemporary Iran. Anis Shivani:

"Next door in a bookstore, the power of the blast made the thin, dusty volumes of French novelists translated into Persian totter and fall off the shelves, although the thicker British and Russians stayed put." from "Tehran" by Anis Shivani.

REVIEW # 14

Access on: 16/11/2014

Every rare once in awhile I discover a new writer that I would sing about if I could sing, so write I will. I first discovered the brash young Anis in his reviews at the Huffington Post, where he takes on the Canon and introduces many writers I never heard of, which for me are the best kind. Soon after my introduction I obtained a copy of his collection of short stories, *Anatolia and Other Stories*, and began reading alongside a number of other books. *Anatolia* soon won out. The stories all grapple with multiculturalism, or shifting culturalism, as well as issues of race and class, yet they are in no way the politically correct liberal takes that fill the best literary journals, no sire, Anis likes to raise hackles, similar to his character Simone Carpentier in "Go Sell It on the Mountain," a vicious little take on a Breadloaf-style writing workshop. The stories are set in the U.S., Dubai, India, Iran, Turkey and

other locales. Everywhere the winds of change are shifting the landscapes, and characters are caught up in these changes. And these are Stories! No po-mo shape-shifting for Anis. Each story is filled with scrupulous detail, indigenous language, and fascinating characters. They are touching, funny, angry, unjust, irritating and gentle to name a few.

The initial story, a very Kafkaesque piece, Dubai, tells of a construction worker who came to Dubai from India many years ago and on the eve of his returning to India is visiting friends and reminiscing. A disturbing incident from the past however interferes. And the other stories are well worth the visit to a library or book store. And Anis Shivani is someone very much worth reading or writing about.

REVIEW # 15

AUTHOR: Donna Seaman

Access on: 16/11/2014

Anatolia and Other Stories by Anis Shivani has been reviewed in Booklist:

Each arresting story in this substantial collection illuminates a completely different world. In "Dubai," a longtime guest worker suddenly loses his secret ally. In "Manzanar," a man endures confinement in an American internment camp for Japanese nationals. A Boston curator turns rogue. Two university professors in Madison, Wisconsin, she a blazing star, he fading fast, adopt a Vietnamese boy. In the title story, set in seventeenth-century Turkey, a Muslim judge is caught between powerful interests, while his beautiful, brainy daughter enjoys debating from behind a screen with a smart, ebullient Jewish trader. We meet another judge in present-day Tehran, a determined young Gypsy woman in mid-twentieth-century Indiana, and a conflictual family in newly independent India. Shivani possesses a genuinely global imagination and the miraculous ability to infuse a short story with a novel's worth of psychological and social complexity. Caustically funny, broadly knowledgeable, and sharply attuned to the tectonic shifting between tradition and change and the friction between immigrants and natives, generations, and genders, Shivani touches on injustices intimate and planetary in extraordinary stories of weight and luminosity.

REVIEW # 16

Access on: 16/11/2014

Dear Black Lawrence Press Fans,

We are excited to introduce a writer possessing exceptional mastery of the short story form, of whom we expect great things in the future. Anis Shivani's debut collection, *Anatolia and Other Stories* reveals tremendous maturity and confidence, as he grapples with the most troubling issues of the new global order.

In "Dubai," we meet an undocumented Indian worker about to lose the fortunate backing of a privileged Emirati; in "Tehran," all the strife of modern Iran is congealed in a persecuted Baha'i novelist utterly at odds with the censoring fundamentalist regime; in "Manzanar," the ghosts of America's own persecution of a once-reviled minority come alive, as the diaries of an interned Nisei man evoke similarities with the recent past; in "Profession," waves of ambiguous guilt complicate the adoption of a Vietnamese boy by an aging but still avant-garde Midwestern academic couple; in "Gypsy," the customs of a Hungarian family

collide with New World expectations in rural 1950s Indiana; in “Independence,” the scion of a leading Muslim business family fights the deluded certainties of the patriarch, informed by truths already disappearing in the immediate aftermath of partition; in “Conservation,” a young Chinese-American conservator resorts to extreme measures to prevent what she perceives as the desecration of a beloved Watteau painting by overzealous restorers at a Boston museum; and in the title story, a Jewish trader in a coastal trading town in the Ottoman empire wonders how he could have been made a target of persecution despite his undying loyalty. In all these stories, the past engages with the present (and even the future) not in the clichéd sense of hanging over as oppressive burden, but as a fluid dynamic to be contested with and reorganized, according to the capacities of individual will.

These tightly connected stories, whose novelistic depth is often reinforced by multiple points of view, present a picture of a world in enormous transition. Sometimes, individuals fail to do what’s necessary to salvage their dignity, but if so, they see their faults. Sometimes, they heroically rise beyond expectations, and while doing so hint at a more humane future. Always the characters are deeply appealing, fully realized, sympathetic to the core, and — in a word — unforgettable. You will savor the strength of the narrative vision, and by implication the sense of the world as one, despite false divisions and demagogic attempts to exclude and marginalize.

Anatolia and Other Stories is available from Black Lawrence Press and Amazon.

ANNEX II:
SHIVANI BY SHIVANI

1

“Fiction has always been my first love... only in fiction does my soul fully engage.”

Available at: (<http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>)
Access on: 01/12/2014.

2

“Reality today is global despite the American reactionaries in the last decade to stop its progress, so criticism and writing must also be global.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

3

“And I’d like to see the critic of the future crossing different cultural fields and reaching out to mass audiences [...]”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

4

“The trends of the day – fascism, globalization, corporatization, surveillance, dehumanization – they tend to come from older writers or from writers rooted in East Europe, South Asia, East Asia or Latin American cultures.”

Available at: <http://www.iwwbookreview.com/anis-shivani-interview.htm>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

5

“I want my fiction to achieve the quality of poetry, my poetry to be intellectual, and my criticism to be imaginative.”

Available at: <http://www.iwwbookreview.com/anis-shivani-interview.htm>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

6

“You got to grasp reality, intuitively, as a whole, and not in discrete, non-connecting parts. Generally intuition carries you through the rough patches where your linear mind lacks the full spectrum of knowledge.”

Available at: <http://www.iwwbookreview.com/anis-shivani-interview.htm>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

7

“Writing is above all about writing itself. It engages with the literature of the world to make advances in language and style. To revive language is the writer’s paramount function, not to convince the reader that such and such a political issue deserves

consideration, or that the rich are exploiting the poor, or that women are oppressed, or whatever.”

Available at: (<http://www.iwwbookreview.com/anis-shivani-interview.htm>)
Access on: 01/12/2014.

8

“Writing that strives for democracy and ends up as high art is the best.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

9

“[...] I try to integrate whatever stylistic innovations are useful for me [...] in fiction I never read for plot but for innovations in technique and exuberant interplay with language.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

10

“...the writer of the future should conceive of himself first and foremost as a critic.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

11

“The responsibility of the critic is to relentlessly ask the question, what is art for? Is there a moral dimension to it? If so, what is it, and does it change, depending on the needs of the society, the state of the world at large, and the particular challenges humanity faces at a given time in overcoming its perennial problems of misery and suffering? The critic is a moralist—yes, it can only be that way.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

12

“Connected with postmodern indulgence was the favoritism shown to multicultural literature, which seemed to me shallow and irresponsible, in the form corporate publishing promoted it and academic culture adopted it. I saw a frightening emptiness to prose-narrative, defined by narcissism and lack of global understanding, a willful denial of reality.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

13

“[...] whatever good things happen to me in the future will probably be as a result of intuitive association with publishers and editors in sync with my nonconformist tendencies.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

14

“Everything I’m doing now is in collaboration with people who are at odds with the system in some way or another and want to see a better situation for books.”

Available at: <http://himalgal.com/blogs/blog/2011/02/14/interview-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

15

“The best minds of my generation fucked themselves up on Wall Street — or deconstructing literature for the always already privileged.”

Available at: <http://html.giant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

16

“If you have extra time, why not go back to Chekhov — again and again and again?”

Available at: <http://impressionsnthoughts.blogspot.com.br/2011/02/on-anis-shivanis-anatolia-and-other.html>
Access on: 01/12/2015

17

“The Western countries are choosing security over freedom. In the East, benevolent authoritarianism, rather than the open democracy. Where is a free-thinking person to go?”

Available at: <http://htmlgiant.com/feature/a-conversation-with-anis-shivani/>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“I don’t see any American writer being able to pull off a book so at odds with the optimistic, cheerful, sociable, delusional American writer’s world of make-believe, a devastating critique of empire in its last stages. [...] You ‘compete’ with your contemporaries

in very different ways than you do with the classics; you need both these relationships in order to be a complete writer...”

Available at: <http://www.inbookreviewcom/anis-shivani-interview.htm>
Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“I’m really turned on by developments in world literature. I believe that within the next couple of decades we’re going to move to a global market in literature, so that trends in one place will affect those in every other place; just as the economy is one connected whole, the same will be true of literature. That will be very exciting. For example, I see publishers in India already taking the lead in promoting exciting writing; this is only the beginning, and you’ll see the initiative coming not necessarily from the present metropolitan centers of the world but from the supposed periphery. The new cosmopolitan outlook is going to change everything; I’m terribly excited about that. ”

Available at: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/feb2011-weekly/nos-06-02-2011/lit.htm#1>.
Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“The natives, in fact, are getting pretty stupid [...] They’re seeking escape in any number of emotional tyrannies, while immigrants at every socioeconomic level are seeking freedom, more desperately than ever. And today middle-class immigrants don’t just give up everything and move to the host country, but maintain links back home. The paradigm has changed, but writers have generally refused to keep up with it.”

Available at: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/feb2011-weekly/nos-06-02-2011/lit.htm#1>.
Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“I find it offensive that American readers are expected to make the effort to learn common usages in certain languages, but not in others. There’s almost a hierarchy of languages in place, and that needs to be brought down. Hindi/Urdu is spoken by about a fifth of the world’s population; Chinese by another fifth; Spanish by a very large proportion, and Arabic by yet another large chunk.”

Available at: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/feb2011-weekly/nos-06-02-2011/lit.htm#1>.
Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“All my characters are autobiographical, but in another respect none of my characters are autobiographical. They reflect my sense of alienation or outsidership, the discomfort with established ways of doing things and the inanities and hypocrisies of society, but beyond that the specifics are entirely made up.”

Available at: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/feb2011-weekly/nos-06-02-2011/lit.htm#1>. Access on: 01/12/2014.

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“The point I’m making by bringing together apparently different scales of time and space is that similar concerns inform the progress of civilization everywhere. I’m contesting the sense of parochialism, which elevates quotidian reality as absolutely unique truth, a fetishization of the trivial if you will, in American realist fiction. Ram, the undocumented worker in contemporary Dubai, has the same desire for integration as does Noah, the Jewish trader in Ottoman Turkey. The sense of state repression felt by Jim Hosokawa at the Japanese internment camp in ‘Manzanar’ is no different than that experienced by the censored Bahai novelist in ‘Tehran’—their means of response may be different, dignified quiescence in the case of Jim, terrorism in the case of the Bahai, but the motivating impulse is the same. It’s all too easy to ascribe various degrees of exceptionalism to one’s own society; upon reflection, the human condition has a universality that bridges all temporal and spatial divides, and by putting together such a vast spread in one book I wanted to make that point rather vigorously.”

Available at: <http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/feb2011-weekly/nos-06-02-2011/lit.htm#1>.
Access on: 01/12/2014.

APPENDIX A:

CONSIDERATIONS UPON THE *RHODES WORLD FORUM*

By Silvia Eizerik

When I got in touch with the accomplishments achieved by the *Rhodes World Public Forum Dialogue of Civilizations* I felt motivated by their example, since it takes a great deal of intellectual and spiritual awareness to realize that intercultural and interfaith dialogue is the way to understanding, and the gate to develop solidarity among different peoples. The twenty-first century inherited all the unfulfilled promises of the twentieth century: the quest for harmony; justice; equality; freedom and democracy. The twentieth century was one of the most violent centuries in our history, where hideous barbarisms took place: slavery, the holocaust, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two World Wars, colonization of minds and souls, savage capitalism, the revival of ethnical nationalism, wars in the name of religious faith; in a word, intolerance.

Therefore, in the light of those barbaric events, we should reconsider the way we refer to the indigenous peoples as being ignorant and primitive. We could learn from the way they interact with nature, with the harmonious and communal way they live. Somehow in the process of becoming civilized, we forgot that we are interconnected through an invisible thread one to the other, no matter the color of our skins or the amount of money we have in our bank accounts. Re-establishing that connection seems to be vital for the maintenance of our mental health and for our survival too. If we fail to reach that degree of civilizatory sophistication, we will head for unprecedented catastrophes foreseen in a number of post-apocalyptic fictions. It is time we realize that all religions have similar traits, that none is better than the others. The problems of humankind are intolerance, racism, and patriarchy. According to Ali Tariq (2002), what we have is not a clash of civilizations, as Huntington claimed, but a clash of fundamentalisms and a clash of patriarchies. The Bush administration has privileged Christian fundamentalist arguments that depict the “Islamic enemy” as a

revival of the old Crusade wars; while Islamic fundamentalists make use of the same language and similar paradigms in return. Now as a consequence we have the radical groups triggering the last Islamic Crusade that pays a huge disservice to the emergence of a constructive dialogue between the West and the Islamic World. These barbaric murderers seem to have no ideology, or better saying, their aim is to spread fear; the end of freedom of speech; the dissemination of hatred against Western cultural values such as freedom, the arts, tolerance and diversity. These attacks have provoked a revival of racial intolerance and a wish to exterminate the unwanted ones: the Jews; the Gypsies; the homosexuals; the communists; the Blacks; the Slavs. I hope that this alliance between the Arab countries and the western countries against the “Islamic State” can trigger intercultural and interfaith dialogue among these countries. I believe there is no more room in the world for this kind of terrorism, this parade of brutal murders, which represent the utmost human stupidity. I cannot accept that those people plead to be considered religious people; they merely serve their own imperialist interests of land conquest, of women and children enslavement.

Fundamentalism has been the perspective assumed by European colonial non-human expansion, and during the process of colonizing minds and hearts, as a colateral effect, they exported capitalism, militarism and also patriarchy to the rest of the world. The colonized “others” saw their local traditions threatened of extinction by the hegemonic knowledge of the Western colonizer, who still disseminates through the commercial media and educational institutions such as universities and schools, scientific knowledge and the tenets of Western civilization as if they represented a universal tradition or the truth. In fact, Western knowlege is not unbiased, but a local globalizing knowledge that aspires at universality.

Considering the present state of power in the world, we can plainly see that it is not the nation-state or the countries which rule themselves anymore, it is the corporations which run the world these days. Therefore, the discourse about sovereignty, all that discussion about “think locally, act globally” does not seem to make sense any more. The good news is that civil resistance is in, and making all the difference, it is even shutting down profitable mining facilities through native indigenous acts of civil resistance, which is a step beyond civil disobedience. Nowadays, things are changing fast, due to the emergence of the civil society as a powerful political force, as the gathering together of the dispossessed, or the “Wretched of the Earth”, or the dissenters in NGOs and several forums, like the *Via Campesina*, which deal on subjects such as food sovereignty, attests.

Speaking of social activism, in White hegemonic North America, the so-called land of opportunity, Civil- rights' intellectuals, artists and activists are protesting in the streets against the death of black teenagers by white policemen and their slogan "Black Lives Matter" reveals the strength of this social movement.

I have always wondered why people are so intolerant. Is it people's upbringing? Or the values they learned when they were children? Or does intolerance have to do with the ideology that lies beneath our taken for granted assumptions about the nature of the world, of things, of the way things should be? Ideologies are ingrained in our minds and hearts. Nobody would be a stupid racist unless they had not been brainwashed into hating an antagonist who represents the things they fear or blame. Interestingly enough, a long time ago, as I have already mentioned on page 106, the degree of religious tolerance was higher under the Great Mughal Emperor Akbar's rule around the 1590s than in 'civilized' Europe and now in the US. While Giordano Bruno was being burnt by the Holy Inquisition, the emperor Akbar was in Agra, in India, lecturing on the need for political and religious tolerance, trying to establish links, that is, some dialogue between believers of different religious practices. How civilized Old Europe really is? As Walter Benjamin would say, "Every act of civilization, is also an act of barbarism". Is there such a thing as civilization after two World Wars, the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, Slavery, the Colonization of Africa, Asia and the Americas, the expulsion of the Moors and the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula, Ethnic Cleansing in Bosnia; the civil wars in Nigeria, Ghana, Argelia; the shameful partition of India into Pakistan and Bangladesh; the massacres of Rwanda; the eternal fight between Palestine and Israel; the endless fights for the Independence of Angola and Mozambique, 9/11, Mass Deportations in the US, the death of thousands of migrants and refugees in the waters of the Mediterranean, the list of atrocities is endless...

By privileging Western epistemology as the superior form of knowledge and the only source to define human rights, democracy and citizenship, the non-west ends up by being disqualified as a category that is unable to produce democracy, justice, human rights and scientific knowledge. Such thinking is reductionist, because it is grounded in the essentialist idea that reason and philosophy lie in the West, while non-rational thinking lies in the rest.

The cultural empathy showed by emperor Akbar is part of the essence of the epistemological paradigm known as "transmodernity". Following Dussel's (2004) philosophy of liberation, which is both a liberation of philosophy and an instrument of decolonization;

transmodernity can be decoded as we draw on Ateljevic's brilliant article entitled "Visions of Transmodernity: A New Renaissance of Our Human History?"

1. Transmodernity: the Main Tenets

Transmodernity can generally be characterized by optimism to provide hope for a better kind of human communication. Ghisi (2006) describes transmodernity as a planetary vision in which people start to realize that we are all (including plants and animals) connected into one system, which makes us interdependent, vulnerable and responsible for the Earth as an indivisible living community. In that sense this paradigm is actively tolerant and genuinely democratic by definition, as the awareness of mutual interdependency grows and the hierarchies between different cultures dismantle. Transmodernity is also essentially postpatriarchal in a sense that women's visions and intuitions are to be recognized as indispensable in order to prompt innovative urgent solutions. This is radically different from the (preceding and necessary) (post)modern feminist movements that fought for women's rights only. Rather, it is about a joint effort of men and women to fight for the better world of tomorrow by rejecting values of control and domination. It is also essentially postsecular in a sense that it defines a new relation between religions and politics in a way that re-enchants the world towards a new openness to spiritual awareness and presence as a basis for private behaviour and public policy, while rejecting any religious divisions and dogmas. It is open to the transcendental, while resisting any authoritarian imposition of religious certainty. In doing so it tries to rediscover the *sacred* as a dimension of life and of our societies. Transmodernity opposes the endless economic progress and obsession with material wealth and instead promotes the concept of quality of life as the measure of progress. This is expressed in a new knowledge in economy, which moves the emphasis from material capital to intangible assets and the nourishment of human potential. It challenges the rationalized notions of work in its artificial divorce from life. It combines rationalism with intuitive brainwork. (GHISI, 2006)

In this new light, there is a downsizing of concepts like the clergy, technocrats and experts, in order to raise the self-awareness, self-knowledge and individual accountability of all, yet it simultaneously uses the modernist achievements of science, technology and social innovation. Transmodernity promotes Earth citizenship and draws from the highest potentials of humanity. It redraws the relation between science, ethics and society to reach for real and radical transdisciplinarity. Yet it is not a uniforming view, as global reconciliation around a sustainable future and a broad range of cultural diversity is maintained at the same time.

Within the global vision of connected humanity it claims that each community or region needs to be free to develop in ways that are uniquely suited to its culture, ecology, climate and other characteristics. It wants us to see that the danger of today is less between cultures and religions, than the conflict between different paradigms (GHISI, 1999). As such it offers a powerful path to peace and a new platform of dialogue between world cultures.

In developing the concept of transmodernity, we can devise two lines coming out. On the one hand, Ghisi (1999) speaks from the capacity of a Belgian theologian, philosopher and researcher on global cultural transformation who worked in the Forward Studies Unit of the European Commission for 10 years, advising presidents Delors and Santer on EU visions, ethics and culture shifts. On the other hand, we have Dussel (1995), speaking from the Latin American, postcolonial neo-Marxist perspective, and associating transmodernity with his philosophy of liberation. Dussel's perspective on transmodernity is somewhat different from Ghisi's (an admittedly Eurocentric perspective). While Ghisi departs from a point of mostly Western socio-cultural and historical analysis, Dussel and his followers take epistemological, philosophical and political aspects of transmodernity as a starting point to unsettle Eurocentric coloniality. Dussel sees the potentiality in transmodernity to move us beyond traditional dichotomies; to articulate a critical cosmopolitanism beyond nationalism and colonialism; to produce knowledge beyond Third world and Eurocentric fundamentalisms; to produce radical post-capitalist politics beyond identity politics; to overcome the traditional dichotomy between the political economy and cultural studies; and to move beyond economic reductionism and culturalism (GROSFOGUEL et al, 2007).

Dussel is concerned about the destructive forces of modernity: "The three malaises of modernity (individualism, the primacy of instrumental reason or technological capitalism, and the despotism of the system), produce a 'loss of meaning', an 'eclipse of ends', and a 'loss of freedom' in bureaucratized societies" (DUSSEL, 1996, p. 142), and the capitalistic emphasis on "profit, private appropriations and personal benefits" (DUSSEL, 2006, p. 491) needs to be replaced with transmodern planetary interconnectedness and mutuality. While Ghisi (1999) concerns himself with describing the characteristics of the paradigm shift, Dussel's (2009) central argument revolves around the role of intercultural dialogue in bringing about and defining the shift towards transmodernity.

Ghisi notes certain underlying forces that he considers are driving transmodern changes, among them the inability of reductionist capitalism to respond effectively to increasingly

challenging global problems, and the transition from an industrial to a spiritual, wisdom economy. However, for Dussel, genuine dialogue across all cultures is needed to empower transmodernity, thus enabling it to transcend Eurocentrism. In this, Dussel sees hope for the future, as the irrupting diversity of perspectives carries a rich pluriversity that can create authentic intercultural dialogue (2004). In other words, far from limiting itself to a weak relativism by default, or to micro-narratives, the pluriversal or what is also known as decolonial approach would be to search for universal knowledge as pluriversal knowledge, but through horizontal dialogues among different traditions of thought. The construction of transmodern pluriverses means taking seriously the knowledge production of non - Western critical traditions and genealogies of thought and such dialogue, could “propose novel and necessary answers for the anguishing challenges that the planet throws upon us at the beginning of the twenty-first century” (DUSSEL, 2004, p. 18).

Importantly, Dussel warns us that (subconscious) Eurocentrism currently pervades all cultural arenas, European and non-European (2002), which makes genuine multiculturalism and dialogue — as opposed to sterile participation that follows Western procedural principles — a difficult endeavour (2004). Therefore, the dialogue needs to take place amongst cultures of the ‘South’ as well as between the South and the North (2004). Furthermore, genuine transversal dialogue needs to occur between cultures’ critical innovators, who argue from the border between their culture and modernity, and who, rather than simply defend their culture, recreate it by critically evaluating both their own and modernity’s cultural tradition. As a starting point, Dussel recommends certain core philosophical questions, which, while they can be expressed in different ways by different cultures, may still serve as bridges for a dialogue around universal human problems (DUSSEL, 2004).

In a similar vein, another scholar, Ziauddin Sardar (2004) sees the positive potentiality of the transmodern world to bridge what appears currently to be an impassable gap between Islam and the West due to the concept of tradition as an irreducible idea of Western society. He shows how transmodern tenets of truly universal concerns (i.e., the survival of our planet) that inherently then lead to the consensual politics and modalities for adjusting to change, are at the very heart of Islam. Yet he warns us that in developing a transmodern framework to open discussions it is important to think of the Muslim world beyond the strait jackets of either ultra-modernist or ultra - traditionalist governments (neither of whom have any understanding of transmodernism) and involve ordinary people instead — activists, scholars, writers, journalists, etc. In doing so, Sardar (2004) argues we will discover that most people

have critical but positive attitudes towards the West; and women will be as willing, if not more so, to participate in such discussions and the transformations they may initiate, along with men. He is of the opinion that if the West shifts towards transmodernism, the involvement of the public will open up massive new possibilities for positive change and fruitful synthesis which would replace homogenizing globalization with a more harmonious and enriching experience of living together.

2. The Circularity Paradigm and Love Ethics

I would like to draw on the field of feminist writings focused on love ethics. bell hooks (2000) and Gloria Steinem (1993) describe the circularity paradigm. On Steinem:

If we think of ourselves as circles, our goal is completion — not defeating others. Progress is appreciation [...] If we think of work structures as circles, excellence and cooperation are the goal—not competition. Progress becomes mutual support and connectedness. If we think of nature as a circle, then we are part of its reciprocity. Progress means interdependence. If we respect nature and each living thing as a microcosm of nature — then we respect the unique miracle of ourselves. And so we have come full circle. (STEINEM, 1993, p. 189)

The realization that human powers come from within has been translated into the political arena, producing a socio-political movement of so-called ‘sacred activism’, which reaffirms individual growth, spirituality and actions that counters contemporary global discourses of fear, alienation and disempowerment. bell hooks, (2000) has particularly engaged with those ideas in her work of conceptualizing love that goes beyond the exceptional-individual phenomenon. To promote the overall cultural embrace of a global vision wherein we see our lives and our fate as intimately connected to those of everyone else on the planet, she urges both men and women to challenge the patriarchal culture of lovelessness, sexist stereotypes and dehumanization, and to engage in the art of loving others for themselves and their universal humanity. She has translated those ideas particularly into the most obvious academic area of influence for the potential social change — our teaching, and in doing so has produced the concept of so-called democratic educators and a pedagogy of hope (2003). In presenting her ideas and looking at what works, she urges us teachers to resist oppressive structures by exposing their dehumanization and to embrace the values that

motivate progressive social change — spirit, struggle, service, love, the ideals of shared knowledge and shared learning.

One such international institution designed to oppose Huntington's Clash of Civilizations thesis is the project *Dialogue of Civilizations Public World Forum*, an initiative launched by Mohammad Khatami, former President of Iran. The main goal of this global forum, which joined forces with UNESCO in 2005 to form an international committee, *Alliance of Civilizations*, is the achievement of peace and understanding through inter-cultural dialogue. Another institution of international scope, following Khatami's initiative, in the Middle East, is Prince Hassam's *Dialogue of Civilizations*, whose main purpose is the dialogue between Muslims, Jews and Christians. Interestingly enough, these two decolonial projects work on a twofold level: one at the level of institutions and civil society; the other in the sphere of the political society.

Finally, I believe that the key to create a revolution of human relationships lies in empathy; for only the art of looking at the world from another's perspective, the curiosity about strangers, the respect for their culture, religious, political and sexual choice can be personally transforming, bringing about a radical social change.