

# 'Non-landish': Reading Kahlil Gibran's *Prophet* as a Protest against Sovereign Control<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract:

This article explores the protest against sovereign control that is imminent in Kahlil Gibran's magnum opus, *The Prophet* (1923). It shows how the text opens up new 'spaces' within 'historical places' in which sovereignty and its politics of exclusion are contested. In doing so, Gibran's *Prophet*, like its author, belongs neither here nor there, but on a 'non-landish' terrain. This sense of not belonging to any homogenous nation-state offers a counter-discourse to the anthropocentric and anthropogenic machineries of sovereignty and, hence can be defined as 'non-landish'. In order to critique this non-landishness I take the cue from Giorgio Agamben's theories that has the potential to weaken the monopoly, in global literary studies, of hegemonic discourses and theories that undermine, even fail to understand, the historical, cultural and ideological contexts of Third World literatures, and break the failure/refusal of those writers, critics and intellectuals who neither write back nor wake up from the traumatic experiences of being utilized by dominant discourses. Such a framework analyzes Gibran's *Prophet* as an attempt to counter the monolithic structures of sovereign control.

**Key Words:** Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*, Giorgio Agamben, Sovereignty, Third World Literatures, Exile.

In *A Forgetful Nation: On Immigration and Cultural Identity in the United States*, Ali Behdad argues that the border, as an exigent site, is "expedient and indispensable to constructions of otherness and illegality, and therefore important in defining the boundaries of citizenship and nationality." According to him, it also "provides a privileged locus where the state's disciplinary practices can be articulated and exercised, practices that are minor, modest, and detailed but whose overall effects are significant in normalizing an exclusive and exclusionary form of identity." (145)<sup>2</sup> In other words, it is in/through the creation of the border that the state constructs a contested terrain where heterogeneous voices are silenced/erased lest they disrupt, or threaten, its homogeneity. The function of the border, in its attempt at homogenizing and systematizing the state, is to destroy any possibility of building confluences and, hence, to challenge pluralism.

As a contested site — an outcome of sovereign control —, the border enforces itself, among other things, on literary productions, by forging those "omnipotent definitions" (Shi 18) that reduce every work of art into "representational machineries" (Prasad 72) serving in the consolidation of the nation-state.<sup>3</sup> This reductive practice not only obfuscates the basic attribute of literature — its aesthetic and political autonomy — by undermining its efforts to engender and promote convergence of any kind, but also legalizes disintegration. It reveals, to quote Gloria Anzaldua, that the border is an "open wound." (3)<sup>4</sup>

Given this observation, I would argue that, now, literatures, which reflect the crossing of borders and the ensuing state of exile, are important in the context of critical analysis. For, it is this condition that can best replace the politics of identity (inherent in the creation and existence of the border) with "a touch of solitude and spirituality." (Said 181) This article tries to show how certain authors, writing under the state of exile, articulate the confluences embedded in various cultures and traditions of the world and, so, they counter the divisive paradigms constructed by those "omnipotent definitions" that study literature merely as the "enunciations of the national." (Adak 20)<sup>5</sup> Necessary as it is to challenge such monolithic universalisms, developed under the influence of Euro-centric/trans-Atlantic discourses, it is even more essential to reinstate the relevance of those literatures that attempt to dissolve the 'border' and the identity politics intertwined with it, by providing a 'counter- discourse' to its binary-creating stereotypes. By drawing inter-communal and inter-cultural similitude, then, these literatures highlight global harmony and the necessity of recognizing and respecting difference and pluralism.

To prove this point, I explore *The Prophet* written by a Lebanese-American writer Kahlil Gibran. I will analyze how *The Prophet* reveals the aporias embedded in the western monolithic tradition (that forges a sense of homogeneity) that go into the construction of 'borders'. As an immigrant writer and by writing under a condition of exile, Gibran stimulates a different kind of discourse, which, in its refusal to lend a voice to identity politics, tries to dissolve any sort of violence perpetrated by the border. It articulates those cultural and traditional resemblances that are perceived in all societies at all times, those that are competent enough to oppose sovereign politics.

Here I critique Kahlil Gibran's *Prophet* by highlighting the confluences that are reflected in the text. I will argue that this book establishes the need to encourage, to use Bakhtin's word, a "dialog"<sup>6</sup> between

cultures and peoples. Relevant at this point, I should mention, here, that my goal, as a researcher, is not just to cast light on the ways in which confluences — literary and cultural — are produced, but to connect them to human praxis. Given the choice of theoretical frameworks, for my argument, I would never hesitate to pick up Edward Said's *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* and Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer*. The frameworks for my analysis, by connecting theory to praxis, will also counter the western/mainstream discourses that, as functionaries of sovereign control, generated/generate the "open wound" (Anzaldua 3) called the border and its identity politics.

I evaluate Kahlil Gibran's *Prophet* (1923) through critical apparatuses that are different from those used to critique western/mainstream, and even non-western, writers who gratify the West's politics of exclusion. *The Prophet* occupies a unique position vis-à-vis immigrant and diasporic literatures, primarily because it refuses to emerge as the voice of the nation or even an "imagined political community — imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (Anderson 6). It does not bridge/close the gap between home and host cultures, nor is it caught in an "interstitial intimacy" created by "hybridity". (Bhabha 1140) In fact, it tries to open up a new 'space' in places or rather in a non-place, even in-between the East-West binaries and the hyphenation of the author's Lebanese-American identity. To put it simply, *The Prophet* advocates global harmony and justifies pluralism by portraying the connections between different cultures of the world. It frees itself from the prejudices of one-dimensional, monolithic culture and identity. In an age when Darwinism reached the center-stage, Gibran's *Prophet* offered a positive counterpoise to the limits of the Darwinian metaphor.<sup>7</sup>

Being an immigrant in the US and, thus, being categorized as the Arab 'Other' in the adopted country, migrating from the Middle East where his Maronite Christian identity imposed upon him a non-Arab minority status, and also excommunicated from Lebanon for his open disagreement with the Maronite clergy, Gibran belonged neither here nor there. Like the protagonist, Almustafa, of his *Prophet* he lived in a state of exile that inevitably inculcated in him a sense of non-belonging. *The Prophet* is a 'non-landish' work because it delineates this sense of non-belonging. Hence, it defies the Euro-centric notion(s) of national and cultural homogeneity.<sup>8</sup> Writing from within such a condition can be best analyzed through Edward Said's observation that exile is a state of homelessness, of displacement: an experience that, being

"irremediably secular and unbearably historical" (174), speaks of a condition that is "always out of place."

(180) In writing from within this condition, alone, one is capable of crossing the bridge — spiritual, cultural, economic, geographical, psychological — at the same time and at different times.

Perhaps this sense of non-belonging, embedded in his exiled condition and reflected in *The Prophet*, compelled Gibran to remain isolated from the political exigencies and cultural developments of his adopted land. He was also aware that "homecoming (was) [...] out of question." (Said 179) Most of the critics and scholars, therefore, read *The Prophet* as an ambivalent text, either trying to bridge two discordant cultures, that of the East and the West, through an "Eastern mysticism" (Bushrui 20), or wrestling with a sense of unsettlement arising out of the "struggle to live within two cultures, the Lebanese-Arab and the American" (Nassar 21). Amidst current urgencies, however, Gibran's *Prophet* has much more to offer. A close reading of the text allows us to build on existing criticism by situating the piece in more imaginative contexts, to see it as the author's attempt to oppose, in Giorgio Agamben's words, "bare life" and the creation of the "homo sacer" out of humanity.<sup>9</sup> It can also be seen as "an important step" to "get into the practice of crossing the bridge; the bridge between two non-identical parts, two different souls, two different parties of peoples and nations, for the sake of international peace and unity." (Albert Rihani 90)

The key issue, in the study of Gibran's *Prophet* lies in the resistance it provides to sovereign power, and to, using Foucault's term, a "biopolitics" that undermines and destroys any sort of confluence by creating the border. His refusal to assimilate from/into the culture of his adopted nation and to return to that of his homeland elucidates the point. As Eugene Paul Nassar states: "Gibran is at home neither in the old culture nor the new, and an unresolved dualism vitiates much of his work when, as so often occurs, it pretends to resolution." (24) Like his creator, then, Almustafa, in *The Prophet*, remains on "a perilous territory of not-belonging" (Said 177) from which to depart means "not a garment I cast off [...] but a skin I tear with my own hands" (*Prophet* 2). It is here that he realizes: "Shall the day of my parting be the day of my gathering? / And shall it be said that my eve in truth was my dawn?" (4)

It is the non-landish state, perceived by the protagonist Almustafa, that works to dissolve the border and, hence, its "biopolitics". To be non-landish means not to belong to any land and, hence, not to associate oneself with an identity born out of the national and the cultural. It evolves a space, outside location and



identity. The birth of this 'space' also highlights the dynamicity of human life, its vibrancy, one that resists any sort of standardization promoted by sovereignty's enforcement of homogeneity (a feature inherent in the Euro-centric concept of nation-state) through the formation of the border. As delineated in *The Prophet*, it is a state that shows that "the coming being is the whatever being" (Agamben, *CC* 1), a being who is not only "reclaimed" or "freed" (1) from the quandary of either the collective or the specific, but the "question of its belonging or not to a class or set becomes irrelevant, as do the paradoxes of belonging (*CC*, 9)." (Edkins 73) According to Giorgio Agamben, sovereignty desists the idea that "humans co-belong without any representable condition of belonging" and "that singularities form a community without affirming an identity" (*CC* 86). Hence, to move outside/oppose sovereign authority is to highlight the necessity of confluence through global fraternity. Gibran's delineation of the sense of non-belonging, in *The Prophet*, affirms in another way, belonging itself: a 'belonging' that does not belong to any culture, land, or nation — the tools that empower sovereignty — but to a consciousness of universal brotherhood. This defines, in Agamben's words, a "form-of-life" — the "happy life", "a life over which sovereignty has no hold" (*MWE* 143) and empowers Almustafa to state: "how can a tyrant rule the free and the proud, but for a tyranny in their own freedom and a shame in their own pride?" (Gibran, *Prophet* 48-9)

Living within the confines of sovereignty means that one is controlled and dominated by the politics of identity and exclusion. Being liberated from it, as Agamben's "happy life" is, means that one is initiated to live within a state of exile, within the liminality of the no-where-no-when-ness, that is, outside and beyond the existence of the border. Such a state enhances the progress of humanity by purging it from the politics of exclusion. Within such a 'space', alone, is it possible to do away with the power structures that aid to the establishment of sovereignty. It opens up the possibilities of realizing that, despite superficial differences, the basic human values are rooted in beliefs that are identical and, thus, have the same essence. That is why heterogeneity and pluralism should not be done away with; rather they should be recognized and respected. Through the creation of such a 'space', Almustafa correlates with "mysticism, utopia, and worldwide human good". (Rihani 121) By evolving this fluid 'space' *The Prophet* (a) weakens the monopoly of those hegemonic discourses which undermine the historical, cultural and ideological contexts of literatures

existing outside the politics of identity and the canons of sovereignty, and (b) breaks the power structures that tend to dilute/dissolve the confluences existing in cultural and literary discourses.

Gibran's attempt to articulate the confluences existing in human society, and its discourses, has often been misunderstood and even misconstrued. It has frequently been analyzed as the author's failure to reveal "self and national identity" (Rihani 118) and, on the other hand, outline a "personality" that is "rather delicate, clandestine, and self-concealed." (119) According to Ameen Albert Rihani "national identity" is replaced by "general human identity" in *The Prophet*. (119) Suheil Hanna states: "for the twentieth century, his (Gibran's) writings navigated the wrong course. At least this was the estimate of those critics who looked for a proper direction in the works of his contemporaries, the Pounds, the Eliots, the Joyces, the Hemingways." (16) Going by Hanna's statement, then, was Gibran portraying a sense of non-belonging because he, as a non-western immigrant, was able to perceive, even a century earlier, an unavoidable 'clash of civilizations', arising not only from the concept of the Euro-centric homogenous nation-state but also from the construction of the border? (iii) Is the state of exile, as educed in Gibran's *Prophet*, a way of challenging the aggression inherent in sovereign power, one which tries to undermine, and even destroy, convergence of any kind? It is worth remembering, here, that "the principle of intersection of cultures and backgrounds, peoples and nations, languages and social structures, traditions and beliefs" (Rihani 89) have always been the basis of society's progress despite sovereignty's attempt to destroy its undeniable potency.

In order to find suitable answers to these questions we need to study, briefly, the milieu amidst which Gibran lived and wrote. During his life-long stay in America, as an immigrant, this New Land was facing disorder and disruption both within and without. This led to the creation of borders everywhere: within the American society and culture, amongst ethnic and immigrant communities which were (and still are) always conscious of their distinctive national and cultural identities, and outside, in a world tormented by the World Wars. America was weighed down by various social movements, political crises, degeneration arising out of exclusionist racial prejudices, dilemmas of identity, unmaking of the myth of the 'Promised Land' and the 'American Dream', let alone the external threats of the First World War, to be followed soon by the Second. All these disturbing issues, at home and in the world, had a deep impact on the western writers and intellectuals of the time. They recognized, in these disintegrative forces, the onset of a modern

malaise that manifested itself in inconstancy and constant flux. They tried to articulate this phenomenon through literatures that aimed at breaking down the limits of definitive reality and, hence, oscillated between a world constructed by Darwinian metaphors, on the one hand, and by Nietzschean Godlessness, on the other. Their writings, then, became a search for an apparently stable substitute to multiple, unstable realities.

Gibran was a non-western immigrant. He was an outsider, a stranger to the alien culture. He was a man who preferred to remain outside the empirical, capitalistic, hegemonic tradition that always craved for definitive reality and the enforcement of homogeneity. Thus, his reactions, toward the disquieting forces of the modern malaise, were exhibited in a manner and through a matter different from that of his western contemporaries. While his western contemporaries, challenged by the notion of multiple realities, were trying to define their culture (an example of which is T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land*, published in 1922, a year before the publication of *The Prophet*) by delineating the wholeness of a fragmented world and by concluding that "bits of culture, as in much mythopoesis, are thrown together in an air of artlessness" revealing "metonymized fragments, ruined towers predicated upon a theory of collapse" (Manganaro 55) Gibran, through the attempt to create an alternative, was trying to deconstruct the whole west-oriented modernist exercise, of defining and, hence, constructing a homogeneous culture. Relying on the assumption that modernity is a mess, his protagonist, Almustafa, tries to liberate humanity and culture from the static western notion(s) of homogeneity. Instead, he reconfigures them as dynamic processes, as elucidated in his assertion, "You would adjust your conduct or even direct the course of you spirit/ According to hours and seasons, [...] Yet the timeless in you is aware of life's/ Timelessness" (83), and also in the proclamation:

People of Orphalese, beauty is life when life unveils her holy face.

But you are life and you are the veil.

Beauty is eternity gazing at itself in a mirror.

But you are eternity and you are the mirror. (90)

When the western intellectuals were striving to participate in the process of creating new/imperialistic definitions of land, nation, culture, Gibran remained apathetic to and even presumptuous of such definitions. Thus, Almustafa asserts:

What man's law shall bind you if you break your yoke but upon no man's prison door?

What laws shall you fear if you dance but stumble against no man's iron chains?

And who is he that shall bring you to judgment if you tear off your garment yet leave it in no man's path?

People of Orphalese, you can muffle the drum, and you can loosen the strings of the lyre, but who shall command the skylark not to sing? (94)

Hence, there arises the non-landishness of *The Prophet*. Hence, the relevance of Gibran's attempt to liquefy the illusion that the border is an instrument needed to enhance the progress of humanity through national consolidation. Thus, Suheil Bushrui observes that Gibran was "truly a citizen of the world; a man from the East who brought a much-needed element of spirituality to the West; and eventually a man of the West as well, benefiting from an environment in which freedom, democracy and equality of opportunity opened doors for him." ("Kahlil Gibran of America" 4) In this respect, Gibran's protagonist, Almustafa, is similar to Nietzsche's Zarathustra. Both, tired of their fractured identities, challenge sovereign dictates and the biopolitics of the homogeneous nation-state.

Gibran realized, like Nietzsche, that land/nation is a temporal-historical locus which, by generating an encounter between one's sense of belonging and non-belonging, tries to erase any effort to engender confluence. Both intellectuals were able to perceive how the two conflicting extremities — the Platonic and the Christian — of the western tradition were involved in the formation of the nation-state protected by the border. Almustafa and Zarathustra, thus, want to remain in a state of exile, a state which reveals that there might still be an in-between 'space' where one can reject the limiting dualism of the material world and recognize that truth never was, but always is in the process of becoming, spontaneous and multidimensional. The protagonists, in *The Prophet* and in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ascertain that a humane, not hegemonic, discourse is necessary for saving the world from the conflicting and damaging notions of an empirical, soulless materialism which manifests itself in an unethical, sovereign politics that



erects borders everywhere, every time. Both the texts locate the redemptive principles of the modern world outside Euro-centric Humanism. We should remember that Zarathustra resided in a pagan, ancient world that was not only prior, external, and antithetical to European Christian culture but was also remote from and adversative to its classical antiquity. Almustafa's roots are also located outside the Euro-centric Christian Humanistic world. Therefore, *The Prophet*, like *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, employs a dialogic narrative that subverts Platonic and empirical dialectics.

In a letter to Mikhail Naimy, Gibran himself wrote: "Then by degrees I found more and more in Nietzsche. Gradually, I came to realize that when we accept a man's form, we also accept his thought". (207-08) This statement clarifies that Gibran understood Nietzsche's view-point and his assertion that, as liturgy was/is the site where one encounters the Christian God of suffering, the "homo sacer" (HS 1), to quote Agamben, this God of the liturgy must die, or 'is dead', in order to pave the way for a human God. At a time swiveling with the violence innate in the Darwinian thesis, Gibran, like Nietzsche, argued that one must visualize life as a spiritual struggle, deliberative and provisional at every step, in order to understand the God that is in man and to set perfection as the ultimate goal of life. With the death of a Christian God — thereby bringing to a closure the divine end of sublimity — comes the end of the operative force of the *analogia entis* which, by the beginning of the twentieth century, had proved to be the product of an impasse.

It is, therefore, necessary to study how Gibran's *Prophet* dialogues with Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* and emphasizes the need to oppose Euro-centric Christian theology and its narrow moralistic concerns. Both western and non-western intellectuals internalized a process, prophesied by Nietzsche and later found its messiah in Levi-Strauss, as early as the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, these intellectuals searched for an alternative that would suitably substitute the myth of the God who, they realized, was "already dead." In 1922, T.S. Eliot's search for an alternative myth/discourse culminated in resorting to the *slokas* of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*. In 1923, Gibran, in *The Prophet*, confirmed the necessity of spiritual healing through the concept of reincarnation as delineated in the *Gita*. Offering a remedial to the offensively dualistic interpretations of Christian righteousness, separating one man from another,

Almustafa, "like Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* reincarnates not only out of the need for continued self-realization, but also to provide an example for the spiritually uninitiated." (Bushrui 69)

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna tells Arjuna that "I have been born many times, Arjuna, and many times hast thou been born" (22) and also that "Bashyangshi jirnyani naroho parhayni/ Tathapi sharirani bihayo/ Na hanyate hanyomane sharire." ("Just as human beings discard the old attire/And clothe in a new one/The soul leaves the old body/And enters the new" [Translation mine]). In *The Prophet*, Almustafa, like Krishna engaged with the spiritual struggle of the human soul, reincarnates not only out of the need for a continued self-realization but for setting a paradigm for the spiritually uninitiated.

Gibran's preoccupation with Hindu doctrines, of reincarnation and of the transmigration of souls in particular, shows his ability to recognize, pluralism. It is marked by heterogeneity of practices, styles, modes, or fashions, that selectively and affectively produce (but does not arrogate) a habitable space. Understood thus, cultures are inflected as collective and anonymous ways of intertwining social and natural environments in the process of living. Cultures are always pliable, changing in shape in order to avoid containment by structures imposed from without. (Conley 151) The way in which *The Prophet* endeavours to dialogue with different literatures and diverse cultures explains the manner in which Gibran advocated confluence and respected pluralism. The narrative of Almustafa, "the chosen and the beloved" (1), a solitary man in exile, taking sanctuary, temporarily, in a city called Orphalese, then, attempts to forge a dialogue between the East and the West, between diverse nations and cultures from all over the world. As Almustafa "beheld his ship coming in the mist" (1) to take him back, he walks down to the temple at the heart of the city, where Almitra, his benefactress, urges him to "speak to us and give us your truth" (4). He proceeds to bestow upon the people of Orphalese his version of "truth(s)". In the short pieces that follow, tied together as if through an unseen string, he speaks about various issues that human life is engaged with: human sorrows and happiness, human perceptions and actions, human emotions, human sensibilities, social institutions and their impact on human lives, and also the human preoccupation with the divine. Almustafa's introspections make visible not only his prophecies, but also that, to quote Agamben, the human being is "the potential being". (RA 134)

Describing modern life as a "fracture between the living being and the speaking being, the human and the inhuman [...]" (Agamben, RA 134), Almustafa reveals that human beings must counter sovereign life where "survival is separated from every possibility of testimony, a kind of absolute biopolitical substance that, in its isolation, allows for the attribution of demographic, ethnic, national and political identity." (RA 156) By challenging identity politics of any kind, he locates the future of humanity outside the "anthropogenic" and "anthropological" (Edkins 82) machine called sovereignty, which attempts to destroy confluences. Almustafa advocates blissful life. To include all life into, to use Agamben's words, "happy life" and, hence, to perceive an inseparability of being(s), is to challenge the Christian Humanistic Great Chain of Being and substitute its exclusionary vertical structure with an all-inclusive horizontal one. This is what Almustafa does when he asserts: "Love has no desire but to fulfil itself." (12)

Gibran deliberately undermined the Euro-centric Christian idea of the centrality of man in the Great Chain of Being. He reconfigured humans as creature existing parallel, and not superior to, all other animate and inanimate beings. This is Almustafa's "truth": one that demonstrates that the future of humanity lies not in the doctrines of the West/mainstream tradition but in its antithetical alternative, one that will never enmesh itself in the politics of exclusion and, instead, will enrich humanity through an overall inclusivity. *The Prophet*, then, not only breaks down the power structures of dominance but also shows how literature is/can act as an instrument of confluence. In other words, when Gibran erased the dividing line called the 'border' by showing that the basic tenet of human civilization is harmony, he countered sovereign control and its identity politics by exiling the 'I' from the city of Orphalese. His *Prophet*, therefore, gains relevance, vis-à-vis contemporary political urgencies and world-wide violence and intolerance. *The Prophet* reiterates the perennial wisdom echoed, throughout ages, by the wisest savants and poets: that, despite superficial differences and heterogeneity, human beings all over the world are fundamentally the same.

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### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> A chapter about Kahlil Gibran's diasporic self-fashioning with respect to his *Prophet* has been included in my book "*And I Too Am My Own Forerunner*": *My Reading of Kahlil Gibran*, Chennai, Malaysia, Singapore: Notion Press, 2020. This chapter deals with a different topic than that in this article.

<sup>2</sup> In *Forgetful Nations* (Duke University Press, 2005), Ali Behdad offers a critique of immigration and nationalism, taking the idea central to American mythology: the US as a 'nation of immigrants'. He exposes how the immigrants, standing within the exigencies of the border, are flung into hostility rather than hospitality. This deep-rooted ambivalence influences the construction of national identity. He, therefore, develops a theory of historical "disavowal" and states that the US deliberately forgets certain events of the past in order to engage with the politics of exclusion vis-à-vis the immigrants.

<sup>3</sup> Prasad not only examines the politics of suppression of the "national/political" in the analysis of literatures from the First World but also tries to study how Third World Literatures are popularized only for their "national/political" articulations.

<sup>4</sup> In *Forgetful Nations*, Ali Behdad writes that "Gloria Anzaldua's poetic description of the border as an open wound" powerfully captures the violence of this contradictory and volatile space" (167). Anzaldua says: "The U.S.-Mexico border es una herida abierta where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country — a border culture." (3) This culture, inevitably, is not born out of harmony neither does it proliferate peaceful co-existence it is immanently violent.

<sup>5</sup> In the article, "Introduction: Exiles at Home — Questions for Turkish and Global Literary Studies" published in *PMLA*, Volume 123 Number 1 (January 2008), while speaking about Turkish literature and the dearth of proper criticism to evaluate this literature, Hülya Adak believes that "global literary analysis must interrogate its imposition of Western genres and developments on other literatures" because such imposition "casts Third World Literatures as 'Late Bloomers' in a developmental paradigm that assumes some literatures lag others in the adoption of genres and artistic movements " (24) and, therefore, stresses the need to "listen to Third World Literary Criticism not just to grasp the historical and cultural context of the national literature in question (inviting Third World literary critics in as native informants) but also to understand this criticism's comparative modus operandi, its dialogue with theories of the Euro-American Academy [...]." (25)

<sup>6</sup> According to Bakhtin, dialogue alone can nurture in human existence the "the unique and unified event of being". Being for him is not just an event, but also an event that is shared. It is simultaneity and, thus, it is always co-being. In contrast to dialectic, dialogue does not know any sublation. There is only the way of communication/expression that is able to bridge differences, dissolve clashes, and engender peaceful co-being. For a better understanding of Bakhtin's idea of "dialog" read Michael Holquist's *Dialogism* (Routledge, 1990)

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