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INTRODUCTION TO THE ISSUE: WELCOMING NEW EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

The journal *Critical Multilingualism Studies* first appeared in 2012. Riding on momentum from the event *Multilingual, 2.0?* hosted at the University of Arizona in April 2012, much of the first and second volumes of the journal featured contributions from scholars who penned initial points of orientation in this emergent field we described as critical multilingualism studies. By centering our attention on *critical* multilingualism studies, our intention was to build on the foundational work appearing across a range of disciplines—e.g. literary studies, cultural studies, linguistics, history, public policy, anthropology, second language studies, translation studies—and offer a space for “the patient but vigorous exploration of this array of emergent, mutually constitutive features of experience along the multilingual-monolingual spectrum” (CMS 1:1, 2012: 4).

The *critical* in critical multilingualism studies was at its outset anchored in transdisciplinarity, understood, in Halliday’s sense, as scholarship that supersedes disciplines and creates “new forms of activity which are thematic...in their orientation” (Halliday 2001 [1990]: 176). These new forms of activity are embedded in a multilingual nexus of their own. Part of the work of critical multilingualism studies can thus be understood as deliberately dialogic, in that it brings to the fore the ways in which our terms and jargons live “as it were, on the boundary between [their] own context and another, alien, context” (Bakhtin 1982: 284), rendering any attempts at disciplinary monism suspect (Holquist, CMS 2:1, 2012: 8). Indeed, one of the red threads running through every volume of *Critical Multilingualism Studies* is a patient and probing attentiveness to the terms that circulate in the field, beginning with the most central: multilingualism itself. While what might cautiously be described as a multilingual turn in a number of fields at the end of the 20th century was motivated in large part by a desire to turn monolingual language ideologies on their head,

what these and other articles appearing in CMS over the past seven years make clear is that multilingualism has served as a heuristic by which scholars, policy makers, educators, and others could “explain away the messy in communication, make it ownable, controllable, and tidy” (Hollington & Storch, CMS 4:2, 2014: 3). Multilingualism, no less than monolingualism, is thus subject to verbal hygiene, as also argued by Deborah Cameron in her discussion of the *tidying up* around multilingualism in post-9/11 Britain. And even scholars of multilingualism can be managed by their often-monolingual publishing practices (see “Introduction to the Special Issue on Practicing Multilingual Research” by Emily Linares, CMS 7:1, 2019).

The project of critical multilingualism studies has thus most significantly been a matter of “unmooring” multilingualism as a heuristic that seems to readily stand in for what is in actuality a complex and diverse range of phenomena. Many of the articles take on the deceptively monolithic feel that *multilingualism* is often afforded by virtue of standing in an anaphoric dyad with *monolingualism* and tentatively propose more nuanced vocabularies. For example, based on the poetic works of the Egyptian author Ahmad Shawqi (1868–1932) and the Iraqi Abd al-Wahhab al-Bayati (1926–1999), Yaseen Noorani proposes a distinction between “soft” and “hard” multilingualism, which parallels what Claire Kramsch describes as “lower-scale multilingualism” and “higher-scale multilingualism” (CMS 1:1, 2012: 121). Whereas the former terms, in each set, remains within the confines of relatively familiar linguistic norms and propositions, the latter terms index “radical linguistic difference” (Noorani, CMS 1:2, 2013) and operates on the level of symbolic meanings, rather than mere diversity of signs. Anjali Pandey’s analysis of David Maraniss’s 2012 presidential biography, *Barack Obama: The Story*, provides a compelling example of why these distinctions matter for any kind of public-facing advocacy work related to multilingualism, demonstrating how biographical talk about an individual’s linguistic life can be appropriated to peripheralize multiple language use and render it ‘immaterial.’ At the same time, the contribution from Theresa Catalano, Hanihani C. Traore-Moundiba, and Hai Pir in the current issue shows how making the multilingualism of the participants material, i.e., bringing it into play in the micro-teaching activities enacted in a language teacher education course, can have a positive effect on teachers’ sense of agency and their understanding of language learning as a complex multilingual, rather than unidirectional bilingual, process.

A large number of contributions deconstruct *multilingualism* through genealogical investigations of this and kindred terms. This includes Thomas Paul Bonfiglio’s historical analysis in “Inventing the Native Speaker,” in which he demonstrates how metaphors of nativeness were in fact utterly absent from ancient and pre-medieval language ideology (CMS 1:2, 2013). Through a careful discussion of Luxemburg’s complex history of linguistic development, Isabell Baumann demonstrates that a diachronic view of the same geographical space can provide multiple models for conceptualizing societal multilingualism. A special issue on “Transnational Multilingualisms”

(appearing August 2015) similarly took up the project of decentering the study of multilingualism by offering a series of case studies from different geographical and historical contexts, which help to question the presentism and limited locatedness of these discussions. The issue “Multilingual Approaches to Literary Classics” (published December 2017) centers a similar critique, in the act of reading and re-reading canonical works in such a way that what appear to be minor forms of multilingualism are imbued with subversive power. The scholarly implications of these lines of inquiry range from the taxonomical, i.e. questions around the presumed stability of monolingualism and boundaries between languages themselves (see John Cayley and Till Dembeck, both in CMS 3:1, 2015), to the methodological, as exemplified by Laura Callahan’s study of service encounters (CMS 1:1, 2012) and the questions she poses for qualitative and quantitative social research paradigms.

Translation, as a concrete and ubiquitous example of multilingualism in action, is a focus in many of the contributions featured in the Journal. For instance, Anthony Pym’s examination of the conceptual models that have undergirded the use of translators and interpreters in the service of democratic policies and the ways in which new technologies are pushing new multilingual politics. The special volume on “Translatability and Its Discontents” (CMS 4:1, 2016) was devoted to a series of case studies which collectively explore the humanitarian, literary, and political consequences of being translated or not. Other articles have addressed the “politics of untranslatability” (Apter 2013) through case studies in World Literature. Echoing the volume on “Multilingual Approaches to Literary Classics,” some of these are primarily focused on how multilingualism is bent into the service of nation-building efforts. For example, Nicholas Glastonbury’s article in Issue 3:1 tracks the Republic of Turkey’s government’s interest in translating Kurdish literary classics and the resulting practice of “counterinsurgent translation.” Başak Çandar’s essay in the current volume also contributes to these discussions through a transnational interpretation of Murat Uyrkulak’s novel *Tol*, which allows Çandar to read the work as purposefully challenging both the Turkish nationalist myths of homogeneity and the tokenizing dynamics of world-literary circulation. Çandar’s article participates in another dimension of these conversations by posing questions about the extent to which particular local literatures are included or excluded, the positions they are afforded, and the practices of translation that mediate their participation in the canon of World Literature.

An intersecting body of articles explores the particular affordances of aesthetic and creative practices for new understandings and experiences of multilingualism. For example, Kristin Dickinson’s essay on Turkish novelist Bilge Karasu (1930–1995) and Katrin Becker’s literary reading of French historian and psychoanalyst Pierre Legendre can both be read as explorations of the ways in which literature denaturalizes linguistic purity and its potential constraints on civic and poetic imaginations. Other contributions emphasize the emancipatory potential of multilingual

performances, for example Doris Sommer and Elijah Wald's discussion of what they describe as bi-musicality in the work of Luis Humberto Crosthwaite and Little Joe Hernández, Andrea Hollington's study of reggae music in a community of repatriated descendants of enslaved Africans in Ethiopia, Natasha Lvovich's reflection on Marc Chagall's art and how it served as a touchstone for her own "translingual imagination" (Kellman 2000), and the entire special volume Lvovich co-edited together with Steven Kellman on multilingualism, creativity, and the arts. Alison Phipps's poetic hybrid essay from the second issue of the journal explores the potential of the literary "as a moving performance or event" (CMS 1:1, 2012: 113) for laying bare the lived experience of being unmoored in languages. This attentiveness to multilingual lives as they are lived is also enacted through several artistic contributions to the special volume "Languaging as Refuge: Practice Meets Theory" (February 2018), guest-edited by Amanda Marie Shufflebarger Snell and Marianna Pegno.

Performative multilingualism is also at the center of articles from Mary Louise Pratt and Claire Kramsch, which are concerned with the symbolic power garnered by markedly cross-linguistic acts. Both of these examples also disrupt the celebratory tendencies of such discussions by considering the political clout and emotional labor required of individuals who step outside of linguistic norms and sanctioned ways of being multilingual. These two early publications in many ways anticipate the set of questions taken up in the special volume, "Legitimate Speakers in Contested Spaces", guest-edited by Livi Yoshioka-Maxwell and Jonathon Repinecz. The collection of essays in that issue orient around a set of questions related to the ways in which multilingual subjects lay claim to their power as legitimate speakers, and in so doing shape the linguistic field and the social spaces they inhabit in new ways. While the articles in that issue focus primarily on literary objects and fields of cultural production, they intersect in compelling ways with articles from other volumes that explore, for example, youth language practices in Nigeria (Mensah & Inyabri), Yucatec Maya (Cru), and northern Uganda (Rüsch & Nassenstein). In this current volume, Joshua Brown's analysis of the linguistic landscapes of Somali refugee settlement sites in the Upper Midwest of the United States provides a view of the complex sociolinguistics of non-urban community-building and how spaces shift over time as they come to be occupied by new languages and their speakers.

From the perspective of language policy studies, Tom Ricento's article on English as a 'global' language offers a more skeptical analysis of the individual acts of subversion performed by multilingual language users, arguing that they often remain muted by state-sanctioned myths of ethnic and linguistic neutrality. Jenna Altherr Flores's contribution to the special issue on languaging as refuge (CMS 6:1, 2018) offers a critical analysis of the official study materials for the naturalization test administered by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services to show how monolingual ideologies also shape the multimodal design of the test in ways that flatten and

obscure the different semiotic expectations and experiences that test takers might bring to citizenship exams. Matt Garley’s study of discourses in German hip hop scenes from the current issue offers a perspective from a different angle, revealing that even in the case of a phenomenon characterized by global linguistic flows, protectionist notions about language purity persist.

Writing from the context of instructed second language learning and study abroad, Glenn Levine (CMS 2:1, 2014) argues that the performance of multilingualism can also be tied to ideologies about language use and learning, which may be shaped in part by dominant pedagogical frameworks. Performance in Levine’s article is understood as the exhibition of linguistic knowledge and is contrasted with multilingual being, which is more dynamic, emergent, and complex. Parallel critiques pre-dominate a special issue on “The End(s) of Competence.” In particular the essays by Barbara Schmenk, Grazia Imperiale, Aline Gohard-Radenkovic, and Julia Ruck question the efficacy of competence as a pedagogical desideratum by which we assess the learning of additional languages. In different but confluent ways, these articles question the universalizing and normative tendencies of competence discourses and suggest alternative vocabularies for valuing and evaluating multilingualism in educational contexts.

From debilitating crisis to quaking delight, from translation to code-mixing, from pre-modernity to post-modernity, from language teaching to language policy, from migrations to regionalisms, from utterance to publication, from public practice to memoir—the more than 75 articles, essays, and creative works that comprise the first seven years of *Critical Multilingualism Studies* have helped to convene a set of crucial, ongoing conversations.

In April 2019, after a lengthy search, we were thrilled to announce that Emma Trentman (University of New Mexico) and Janice McGregor (University of Arizona) had accepted our request to step up as the new Editors-in-Chief of the journal. We had heard, from our elders in editorial work of this kind, that seven years is about the ideal length to steward a project like this, lest we become too attached. Over these years, CMS has most certainly taken on a life of its own in the contributions, guest editorships, and discussions that have surrounded the life and critical horizon of the journal. Editors-in-Chief Trentman and McGregor will take on full editorial responsibility with issue 8:2 in Fall 2020, and we will cheer them on from the sidelines, eager to see where CMS will journey next. We are deeply grateful for the support, enthusiasm, critique, and engagement the journal has enjoyed since 2012, and we take this opportunity to thank all of our more than 100 contributors who have made CMS the vivid space of dialogue and intervention it has become.

Works Cited

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