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INTRODUCTION:

MAKING MULTILINGUALISM MATERIAL

This third volume of *Critical Multilingualism Studies* presents a constellation of articles inviting inquiry into how multilingualism has been and can be made material or immaterial—through a spectrum of social, literary, pedagogical, and political conventions or practices. While psycholinguistic and sociological approaches have tended to locate multilingualism as a special phenomenon of individual cognition, or as the condition of a group defined by milieu (e.g. Spanish-English bilinguals in southern Arizona, or Czech Jews in fin-de-siècle Prague), the scholarship in this issue tends rather to *majoritize* multilingualism, foregrounding material practices and epistemological predicaments that range beyond the individual speaker or circumscribed community.

The eminent Slavic comparatist Michael Holquist opens this issue with a contribution emerging from the public lecture he delivered at the University of Arizona's symposium *Multilingual, 2.0?* in April 2012. Posing the question "What would Bakhtin do?," Holquist delves back into centuries-old ruminations about the status of multilingual practice, against the backdrop of Enlightenment and high modern presumptions about the systematicity of individual languages. Ultimately, Holquist's essay does no less than undermine the most beloved and heritable assumptions of post-Saussurian linguistic science, revising 'the Saussure we know' in light of newly unearthed documents from his estate, which indicate in Saussure's later years a growing conceptual commitment to the domain of parole, and to the Humboldtian / Aristotelian notion of *energeia*: the living, undulating, and mutable moment of utterance in the real world of situated speakers. Calling attention to a seemingly minor footnote in Mikhail

Bakhtin's essay on the chronotope, Holquist is able in his own essay to pursue, through the most subtle strokes, how Bakhtin had understood the ontology of multilingualism—beyond the well-loved conception of literary-social heteroglossia. In rerouting us back to the irrevocably dialogical, momentary being and becoming of language(s), Holquist sets the stage for many further critical case studies in the materiality (and immateriality)—or perhaps the momentality and immomentality—of multilingual practice and its attendant discourses.

In a related spirit, the applied linguist Anjali Pandey's article "Mining Multilingualism's Materiality" interrogates one particular generic realm—the best-selling literary genre of Presidential biography—in which the multilingualism of US President Barack Obama is opportunistically invoked, appropriated, and then discursively expunged over the course of one market-savvy exemplar of this Presidential genre. Pandey's granular analysis of David Maraniss's 2012 Presidential biography, *Barack Obama: The Story*, shows how this biographical narrative cultivates for its own author a symbolic status as charismatic mediator between multiple languages. Meanwhile, however, this biography is constructed to offer a progressive fable charting Mr. Obama's movement from periphery to center, from outside to inside, from transnational to national, and from multilingualism to monolingualism. Obama's rise to the top is thus portrayed as a story of multilingualism made ancillary, historical, and ornamental—in a best-selling text that uses its author's access to multilingual knowledge as a reservoir of symbolic distinction through which to edge out the competition in a crowded field of Obama studies. Pandey also calls attention to the editorial conventions by which texts like Maraniss's *The Story* tend to cite and isolate other languages—whether those choices of convention originate from the author or rather from a given publisher's in-house style. Performative distinctions abetting the (re)production of multi/monolingualism—including, for instance, the traditional technology of allolingual italicization—do not escape Pandey's critical lens.

The Latin Americanist and cultural theorist Abraham Acosta's essay on "The Wager of Critical Multilingualism Studies" extends, through a series of case studies, Pandey's and Holquist's concerns about how multilingualism often tends to be functionalized and aestheticized precisely in those moments when its existence and impact are of utmost critical urgency. Anchored in a rhetorical case study of the Zapatista uprisings of 1994, as well as in an analysis of the 2013 sign-language interpreting scandal surrounding the memorial for South African President Nelson Mandela, Acosta argues that what was ultimately made immaterial in these world-historical moments was the political existence of subjects who make their meaning multilingually. Acosta suggests that a "critical multilingualism studies" must focus primarily on how political subjects are conventionally produced at the expense of their own de facto multilingual practices—an argument, notably, that Pandey advances in the case of Barack Obama.

From his position in the field of second language teaching and learning, Glenn Levine's article "From Performance to Multilingual Being in the Foreign-Language Pedagogy: Lessons from L2 Students Abroad" points out the tensions between what might be called an abstract model of multilingual ideals and the actual practices of US study-abroad students. While the rapidly expanding field of multilingualism studies tends to valorize a certain vision for multilingual, cosmopolitan, and intercultural subjecthood, often in concert with the Modern Language Association report of 2007, Levine's data show the extent to which the experience and industry of study-abroad cultivate in students a very different set of material practices—one that Levine considers to be a "performance" of educational-assessment virtue in an age of skills-based effectiveness. His study thus encourages us to think differently about the implicit hierarchy of multilingualisms in our current curricular environments. Drawing on case studies from US university students during a study-abroad stay in Germany, Levine argues that certain pedagogical and assessment tools encourage students to view academic, classroom-based linguistic performance as the sole means and

measurable reality of communicative competence. Echoing Acosta's insistence on the political speaking subject as the neglected scholarly core for research on multilingualism, Levine suggests that the "performative orientation" in foreign language pedagogy often renders learners uninterested in negotiating the multilingual realities in which they find themselves abroad, which can lead—among other things—to disappointment when their new environments reveal themselves as more than a stage for target-language practice.

In her analysis of Bilge Karasu's *The Garden of Departed Cats*, the comparatist Lristin Dickinson shows how the Turkish language-reform politics of the early 20th century manifests itself in Karasu's post-modern textual experimentation. Through what she describes as Karasu's self-translative style, Dickinson shows that what at first appears in the wake of Turkish Republican linguistic engineering to be a stridently monolingualist literary stylistics in Karasu's work is in fact a vigorous, figurally generative critique of monolingual hubris in an age of linguistic nationalism. Signification is itself made material in Karasu through a hermeneutic of linguistic familiarization and defamiliarization, one that continually dismantles and reconstitutes the multi/monolingual spectrum for the Turkish and European context.

The film and media studies scholar Deniz Göktürk's piece, originally published in Turkish in 2013, complements Dickinson's essay, moving beyond the material artifact of Karasu's text and theorizing Göktürk's own position as the text's (German) translator, while offering a historical account of Karasu's own critical interventions into how Europe stylized and materialized itself in an age of European Union, circa 1990. Göktürk traces Karasu's acts of traveling (non)translation—both in the metaphorical movements of literary and filmic circulation, and through the history of the (non)translation of Turkish modernist works into German.

A poet, translator, and professor of literary arts, Cole Swensen's essay "Friendling Translation" closes the main body of this issue with a poetic

meditation on the linguistic 'materiality' of friendship, as a way to rethink translation practice. Rather than as a procedure of substitution, adequation, negotiation, or mediation, Swensen considers translating a moment of friendship—of the being-together of two or more languages, with all of the awkward, tactile, social troubles and delights that ensue during any incipient, growing, or long-term friendship. Swensen augments this exploration with an extended etymological gloss on the word 'friend' in more than 20 languages, in the hopes of unfurling the various sensibilities that (translational) friendship may offer in Arabic, Hindi, Sanskrit, Old English, French, and others. Swensen's essay arises out of her own work translating Gilles Tiberghien's French-language monograph *Amitier*, itself a meditation on a neologism for the possibility of 'befriending' as a present-continuous endeavor, as opposed to an action accomplished in one discrete moment in a relationship. Swensen's beautiful patience with translanguality and variation echoes Holquist's historical elegance in the face of the predicament of multilingual / monolingual ontology. In their endeavor to approach the topic of Critical Multilingualism Studies in a speculative, tactile, historical, and poetic sense, these two opening and closing pieces try palpably, wondrously to befriend the other contributions in between, contributions which indeed appear to accept this friendship happily.

Our reviews section, edited by Elaine Yee, offers a robust, lyrical, and critically capacious set of dialogues with recent publications that touch on the project of Critical Multilingualism Studies in some way. Forthcoming issues of *CMS* will engage the questions of "Comparative Multilingualisms," "Neoliberalism and Multilingualism," "Technology and Multilingualism," and "The Right to Untranslatability." Your suggestions and feedback, on these or other topics, are warmly welcome at:

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