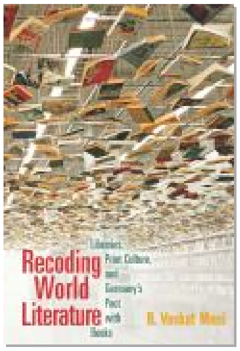
Chapter 5 Libraries without Walls? World Literature in the Digital Century



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CHAPTER 5

Libraries without Walls? World Literature in the Digital Century

Hear the legend from over there:
There was a thousandfold librarian,
who preserved the literary legacies
of those whose books had gone in flames back then.

—GÜNTER GRASS, *Transatlantic Elegy*, (1990)[1]

They only want to keep one book. A single book from the entire century should remain, which is to represent all the others from modernism, early modernism, late modernism, postmodernism, and post-postmodernism.

—KEMAL KURT, *Ja, sagt Molly* (1998)[2]

In the last lines of the poem "Transatlantische Elegie," the Nobel Laureate Günter Grass relies on the figure of a very special kind of librarian to convey a historical and cultural redress of Germany's Nazi past. The poem recounts a meeting with German emigrants whom Grass met during a social gathering in New York City in 1965. In the poem's earlier stanzas, his new acquaintances—Jewish and non-Jewish Germans who fled to the United States during the Third Reich—ask him questions about the land that they left behind: "How does it look over there?" they ask, "And your young people? Do they know? Do they want to?" . . . "Should one go back?"[3]

The poem made its way into an election campaign speech that Grass gave in the same year. The speech, "Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?" (What is the German's Fatherland), owes its title to the nationalist poem "Des Deutschen Vaterland" (1813) by Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769–1860)—whose stringent criticism of world literature is discussed in chapter 2—a poem that strategically lists German-speaking regions: Prussia, Bavaria, Westphalia, Saxony, but also Austria and Switzerland as fragments that constitute the totality of an imagined "fatherland."[4] Starting with a recitation of the entire poem in his speech, Grass rearranges the memory of German cities and states in East and West Germany to highlight the artificiality of German geographical and ideological division. He admits to having learned the poem during his school years but quickly distances himself from its nationalist import, stating: "I certainly hope the memory banks of our newest voters are not being clogged with such multistanzaic nonsense." Instead, he mobilizes the last line of the poem—"Das ganze Deutschland soll es sein" (Let the whole Germany belong to thee!)—to imagine the possibilities of a functional peace, a mode of coexistence between the peoples of East and West Germany in a time of accelerated ideological bifurcation between the two nation-states.[5] There are two moments in the speech when Grass's conceptualization of the German fatherland emanates from a transnational and transcontinental perspective—literally and figuratively. Toward the second half of the speech, he admits to having outlined it in New York City; and at the end, he returns to Arndt's question by referencing German immigrants in the United States: "In New York, getting a sense for that province of German emigrants I'd like to see included in the German fatherland, I wrote this 'Transatlantic Elegy.'"[6] The speech, the memory of Arndt's poem, and the creation of Grass's poem all originate in a faraway geographical location. New York City becomes the site of reimagining the entire Germany ("das ganze Deutschland").

Grass's speech invokes the gravity of the historical moment of the Berlin Wall's construction and its immediate political consequences. Through the incorporation of Arndt's poem, he spotlights the civic construction of nationalism through cultural artefacts. The national "memory banks," as history witnessed, often outweighed the so-called *Lastenausgleich* ("equalizing the burden") between the official formula of "two states, one nation" during the existence of the Berlin Wall. Through a brief—albeit by no means undue—reference to the preservation of literary legacies, Grass draws our attention to histories of books that became sacrificial objects in the pogrom against free speech.

The process of coming to terms with Germany's past in a post-Wall world is still open for debate, as exemplified in Grass's autobiographical work *Beim Häuten der Zwiebel* (2006; *Peeling the Onion*). The acceptance of him being drafted into the SS during the National Socialist period calls upon us to question the nature of a "memory bank" of books that a "thousandfold librarian" wishes to preserve for the twenty-first century.

If Grass refers to *one* librarian that shall assure the existence of books in the future, the Turkish-German author Kemal Kurt, in his novel *Ja, sagt Molly*, narrates the story of the twentieth century through many librarians and books. Born in 1947 in Çorlu, Turkey, Kurt moved to Germany in

1972 and worked as an essayist, photographer, author of children's books, translator, and television writer. Kurt's novel bears the distinct marks of large-scale human migration and bibliomigrancy in the late twentieth century.

Kurt's novel begins on a rainy evening in a city with many names: "London, maybe, Paris or Berlin. Or also New York, Tokyo, Dublin, Istanbul, Toronto, Calcutta, Kinshasa, Ulan Bator, Samarkand, Astrakhan."[7] Having established his global locations, the narrator moves to look for a book of all books—"das totale Buch"—which would simultaneously serve as an "epitome and extract of all other books."[8] The "regressive method" suggested by the "blind librarian" whereby one has to look for book B in order to locate book A—the narrator writes referring to Borges's *The Library of Babel*—will not suffice. The opening scene brings the reader to the apartment of Leopold and Molly Bloom from Joyce's *Ulysses*. Molly, who is about to go to bed, finds Gregor Samsa (Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*) on the foot of her bed. At first astonished by Gregor's presence in her bedroom, Molly ends up inviting him to bed, and as she lies down, Gregor starts his erotic foreplay, slowly discovering her body as he discovers his own sexuality, symbolically denied to him in scene 2 of *The Metamorphosis*, when his mother and sister remove the framed picture of the lady in a fur boa (a reference to Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's *Venus in Fur*) from his room. Molly relents to his sexual advances with "*Ja, ich will Ja*,"[9] and thus the last sentence of Joyce's classic: "yes I said yes I will Yes"[10] becomes the opening line of the story of the twentieth century. And so the narrator begins the writing of that all-encompassing book, which narrates the twentieth century through conversations among characters from over 150 literary works written in about twenty languages. Kurt thus creates an archive of a multidirectional and multilingual modernism through a world literary inventory.

Grass and Kurt offer apt points of departure to think about world literature through the lived political realities of the late twentieth century. Throughout this book, I have discussed bibliomigrancy through mechanisms of translational and transnational exchanges—initiated and facilitated by colonialism, nurtured by well-organized oriental outfits, criticized by nationalists, banned through fascism, reshaped through political ideologies in a divided nation. In this chapter, I locate these translational exchanges through filters of migration. The story of world literature this chapter tries to tell is framed within two meanings of migration: (willing or forced) "physical" migration of human beings that becomes definitive to the social text of the late twentieth century, and the "digital" migration of books and libraries into a virtual space, one that has drastically changed modes of literary circulation beyond physical spaces.

The first half of this chapter seeks to demonstrate how in a post-Wall, reunified Germany, digital libraries themselves acquire the role of a memory bank, transform the media of future public and state memory, and, in turn, are transformed by the public sphere through the course of their existence. In the second half, I turn to the late twentieth century to examine the precarious position of German migration literature, written either by German-language authors with or without a migrant background, or non-German literature that centralizes migration into Germany. The borderlessness, transnationality, and cosmopolitanism embodied in this literature through registers of multilingualism is often celebrated within discussions of world literature, but—as I want to demonstrate—rather inadequately and sometimes even inaccurately.

No discussion of books or communities beyond borders in the German context can be complete without the iconography of the Berlin Wall, which becomes a signifying marker in the proposed two-pronged investigation. In fact, the Berlin Wall's compelling topography, the alluring mythography of its fall, and the fascinating cosmography of pre- and post-Wall European cultural politics create new contexts and grant new meanings to a "virtual" bibliograph of a very special kind of library and add new layers of meaning to world literature. The Fall of the Berlin Wall also challenges us to rethink the German polity—including migrants and East Germans—in the last decade of the twentieth century.

How do we imagine the relationship among world literature, migration, and digital media? Are the ever-expanding offerings of the worldwide web enough to assume the expansion of the world literary space? If yes, what are the essential features of this "virtual" world literary space? Who inhabits it? How do the inhabitants transform this space? What are some of the ways of measuring the transformation?

To approach these questions and to understand digital libraries as the figural reincarnation of a "thousandfold librarian," I will turn to a few recent positions on the transformation of libraries from a physical to a digital space. This will be useful to comprehend the construction of the European Library project (hereafter TEL) and its Internet portal, the European Digital Library (hereafter EDL), which provides access to the holdings of forty-eight "national libraries" across the continent of Europe.[11] However, instead of naively trying to establish a direct genealogy between the Fall of the Berlin Wall and a library without walls, the following discussion of TEL seeks to unravel the transnational construction, the cosmopolitan ambition, and the purportedly universal mission of digital libraries. The analysis proceeds in three steps. First, I situate TEL and the EDL in the recent history of the transformation of print cultures and libraries. Second, by elucidating several constitutive elements of TEL and the EDL, I evaluate TEL's politics of construction and self-representation. I use these elements to jump into a discussion of the contemporary understanding of world literature in Germany through filters of migration, in order to ask if and how current discussions actually take into account changing trajectories and modes of literary circulation. This chapter ends with a suturing of these two discussions through literature. I return to questions of accessibility, spatiality, and temporality in private and public libraries through a discussion of literary representations of nonvirtual libraries.

Virtual Bibliomigrancy: Transformation of Access

The virtual migration of books through technology demands an understanding of print culture's materiality as well as associated issues such as reading habits, reading strategies, and reader accessibility. Virtual bibliomigrancy is transforming access to the bibliograph—the catalogue of world literature—through a transformation of the physical space of the Bibliothek. As Robert Darnton reminisced in his essay "The Library in the New Age":

> To students in the 1950s, libraries looked like citadels of learning. Knowledge came packaged between hard covers, and a great library seemed to contain all of it. To climb the steps of the New York Public Library, past the stone lions guarding its entrance and into the monumental reading room on the third floor, was to enter a world that included everything known. In colleges everywhere the library stood at the center of the campus. It was the most important building, a temple set off by classical columns, where one read in silence: no noise, no food, no disturbances beyond a furtive glance at a potential date bent over a book in quiet contemplation.[12]

As knowledge now comes to us in the form of PDF files and other digital formats, the library comes to the laptop, and the image of the physical library building—as the citadel, a building with steps guarded by stone lions, a temple set off by classical columns, where the rituals of silent and solemn reading have taken place for centuries—is turning sepia. The part of the library most affected by this change is, of course, the rare book collection. In the same essay, Darnton asks the question, "Aren't rare book collections doomed to obsolescence now that everything will be available on the Internet?"[13]

James Cheng, one of Darnton's colleagues at the Harvard Libraries, provides one possible answer. Commenting on an agreement between Harvard College and the National Library of China to digitize one of the largest collections of rare Chinese books outside of China, Cheng stated: "We need to change the mind-set that rare materials must be kept behind closed doors," adding, "A library is not a museum."[14] While Darnton's architectural references allude to the iconic—even though diminishing—status of the library on the cultural-intellectual landscape of a university or a city, Cheng's pithy declaration is even more aggressively iconoclastic.

Cheng's brief statement immediately prompts a reevaluation of Michel Foucault's comparison of libraries with museums in his essay "Of Other Spaces." As discussed in the introduction to the book, among the heterotopias that Foucault mentions, the library and the museum categorically connect space with time. The accumulative instinct that Foucault ascribes to the nineteenth century allows for seeing libraries and museums as having intersecting, if not identical, functions. Libraries have long served as the sources of dissemination of knowledge, resources for learning and research, and physical depositories for the collection and accession of books and other "readable" objects. In addition, they have played the role of representative institutions for local, regional, and national cultural heritages: repositories, curio cabinets, and showcases of "national memory" in all its contested and contestable significations. Along with museums, they have also served as treasure chests of dubiously acquired objects: memorabilia and souvenirs of a nation's imperialist and colonialist past. Access to these objects for the general public has been through thematically organized exhibitions; alternatively, serious researchers have been able to gain access to them in rare books and special collections rooms. The transformation of print culture is changing that "look-but-not-touch policy," at least in the virtual space. Yet Cheng explicitly states that the digitization of library collections detaches the library from its function as a museum. The process of detachment, it can be argued, starts with the transformation of the meaning of "virtual space" that books and libraries now inhabit. Virtual space is no more a "conceptual" space—the opposite of physical and material space as Foucault imagined. Through advancement in electronic technology, digital space has created its own set of rules and regulations as well as terms and conditions about accessibility and inaccessibility.

Extant scholarship in the field of library and information studies engages with the infrastructural, technological, and organizational aspects of digital libraries. Gary Marchionini describes digital libraries as "logical extensions and augmentations of physical libraries," distinguished by a focus on the integration of services through "a holistic treatment of interface, location, time language, and system."[15] Donald Waters defines them as "organizations that provide the resources, including the specialized staff, to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of, and ensure the persistence over time of collections of digital works so that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities."[16]

This definition echoes ideas central to those of the Association of Research Libraries, which understands a digital library as "a group of entities—not a single entity—that uses technology to forge and maintain transparent links to the resources and services of multiple entities."[17] Christinger Tomer succinctly states that digital libraries are "little more than a loosely organized collection of digitized images and text."[18] In *Understanding Digital Libraries*, Michael Lesk compares digital libraries with H. G. Wells's dream of a "complete planetary memory for all mankind."[19]

While scholars in the humanities and cultural studies have recently tried to fathom the role and function of digital libraries, their understanding has largely been focused on changes in the habits of scholarship at US universities. In a 2009 issue of *Daedalus*, historian Anthony Grafton comments on the radical change in "the styles of great libraries," identifying "a strange kind of war . . . between styles of repository, reading, and research."[20] He starts his evaluation by outlining distinctions between established libraries such as those at Columbia, Harvard, and Yale "with their allegiance to old cultural traditions" and newer libraries such as those in Seattle and Salt Lake city that "scream their modernity" with "[g]leaming banks of computers";[21] he ends with the conclusion that "(physical) browsing remains a vital, irreplaceable form of research."[22] To be sure, Grafton does ask questions about—and provides a number of suggestions for—collaboration between university departments and libraries to "enable America to remain the land of the great democratic library for generations to come." However, his initial restraint concerning the entry of multinational capital into digitizing library resources infuses his evaluation with a profound sense of loss. Google and Starbucks therefore become part of the same equation, wooing students and scholars away from the library. In the same issue of *Daedalus*, classicist James J. O'Donnel comments on the "digital humanities," declaring at the very outset that "we speak seldom of the electrical, the automative, or the aeronautical humanities" and that the term someday will fall out of use.[23] While O'Donnel conveys more optimism in his evaluation of digital libraries, he aligns himself with Grafton in the dissociation of multinational capital and research libraries, asserting that:

> Access to resources, technical and human, that support scholarly ambition is a battle to be fought at the local level, but one to be supported by wise public funding nationally and internationally. . . . In the end, the work is ours. Do we have the right questions to ask? Do we have the right disciplinary alignments? Are we making the new (including the very products of cyberspace) a part of our own sphere of study and interpretation as responsibly and carefully as we maintain the old (and link the study of the old and the new)?[24]

If Grafton's and O'Donnell's insights are to be engaged with seriously, questions asked of digital libraries must go beyond just a pessimistic evaluation of multinational commerce's entry into the business of digital libraries. To this end, a romantic celebration of the past of older libraries, pitting them against new and modern libraries, will not suffice. Equally inadequate will be a reductive reading of digital libraries as mere "augmentations" of physical libraries or as tools and resources whose impact is mostly on academic research. The challenge lies in considering digital libraries as institutions with their own emerging set of rules of collection, classification, and cognition, and in extending the investigation of such questions to publicly funded mega-digital library projects. It would be productive, for example, to formulate questions of patrons—today also labeled end users—vis-à-vis political representation and self-representation, especially in the case of the so-called national libraries, which so far remain largely unarticulated. As books, audio, video, and other materials are digitized, Internet-based libraries become sites of virtual migration, not just of materials but also of users, the readers. Who has ownership claims over these materials? Furthermore, what are the implications of decoupling the library from the museum through the digitization of objects? If publics are at the center of these digitization projects, what discernible political purposes do they serve? Do they always promote or can they also impede access to materials? These questions inform the following discussion of virtual libraries such as TEL and the EDL.

TEL and the EDL: National Representation, Cosmopolitan Consumption

TEL is a *transnational* cultural institution, conceived, designed, and executed as an *international* conglomerate of multiple *national* institutions in the post-1989 era of pan-Europeanization through policies of the European

Union. If the Fall of the Berlin Wall serves as an important historical and political marker for TEL's origins, the progress made in the last twenty-five years in information technology facilitates its execution.

In 1987, representatives of eleven European "national" libraries—I will return to this term shortly—met for the first time in Lisbon to form the Foundation Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) with the following countries represented: Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the Vatican City. As the CENL website reports:

> Topics on the agenda were the interconnection of computerized systems of the national libraries, acquisition policies, preservation and conservation, and financial issues of national libraries. The national librarians continued to meet annually *and the group grew steadily*. In 1991 CENL organized the first East-West conference with national libraries of Eastern Europe in Vienna in order to establish closer links and a defined partnership. It was a very successful meeting with concrete results leading to an ongoing dialogue. In 1998 CENL adopted its statutes and was transferred into a foundation under Dutch law.[25]

In 2001, the CENL and nine national member libraries became founding partners of the European Library, Gateway to Europe's Knowledge. The national libraries involved in the project were those of France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Finland, Slovenia, and Switzerland. Funded under the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Commission, TEL was conceived as a consortium to facilitate electronic access to the collections at participating libraries by users all over the world as a public service measure. In 2005, the European Commission released its "i2010" communiqué on the European Information Society, which was strongly endorsed by Jacques Chirac and five other heads of state in a letter to EC President José Manuel Barroso.[26] Vivienne Reding, the EC member responsible for Information Society and Media, used this letter to accelerate the European Library Project, stating that: "There is an emerging political will to make this happen. . . . He [Mr. Barroso] called for the Heads of State to support him in the European Commission's approach to safeguarding and adding value to Europe's cultural heritage, the mirror of our cultural diversity. But it is not going to happen automatically. It will require a real commitment of all involved, not least from the national libraries."[27] In response to Reding's speech and popular interest in the initiative, the EDL was launched in 2005. It had a budget of over two million euros, of which one million was contributed by the

European Commission's eContentplus program. The project started in September 2006 and was completed in February 2008; the specific steps taken included:

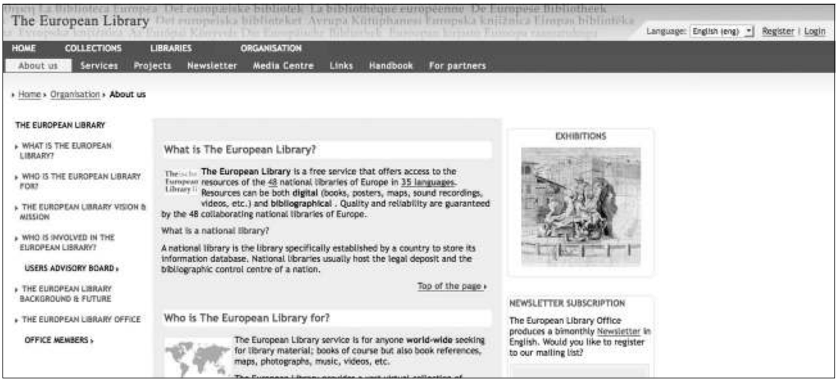
1. TEL-ME-MOR (2004–2006) brought in the national libraries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Slovakia.
2. The EDL project (2006–2008) worked toward integrating into TEL the bibliographic catalogues and digital collections of the national libraries of Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, and Sweden.
3. TEL-plus (2007–2009) brought in the national libraries of Bulgaria and Romania by 2008.
4. FUMAGABA (2008–2009) enlarged TEL by adding the national libraries of Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan as well as of the former Yugoslav Republic—Macedonia, Albania, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.[28]

The European Digital Library 2.0, launched in 2008, was conceived as "a free service that gives users access to the resources of the 48 national libraries of Europe in 20 languages." A later version, EDL 2.2.0, was launched on October 19, 2009, at the Frankfurt Book Fair. It expands the language offerings by fifteen, with collections available in thirty-five languages. The European Library currently provides bibliographic access to 150 million entries across Europe.[29] New participating libraries include the National Library of Turkey in Ankara and the Russian collections in Moscow and St. Petersburg, among others. The grandiose future of the European Library Project is Europeana, a digital portal launched in 2008 that aims to double the number of accessible entries in the most technologically advanced, compact formats. Europeana includes "museums, archives, and other holders of cultural materials."[30]

To understand the nuances of self-constitution and self-representation through the European Library Project, it helps to juxtapose it with two other entities similar in scale but different in scope. Across the Atlantic Ocean, the US-based Universal Digital Library (also known as Ulib) went online in 2005.[31] With Carnegie Mellon University's Million Book Project serving as the prototype, Ulib is a collaborative of about fifty research libraries in Canada and the United States, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt, and about thirty participating libraries in India and China. Its website incorporates the Gutenberg Project, the oldest digital library that was conceived by Michael Hart in 1971.[32] Financial and infrastructural support for the project comes from Carnegie Mellon, some participating libraries, UNESCO, the Library of Congress, and the governments of the United States, Canada, China, and India. The second example is the World Digital Library (WDL), supported by UNESCO and the James Madison Library at the Library of Congress.[33] Publically launched in April 2009, it provides bibliographic access to partner libraries from over forty UNESCO member countries; its financial sponsors include Google, Microsoft, and the Library of Congress, among others. The latest in this chain of institutions is the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), launched in 2013,[34] which the historian Robert Darnton has recently discussed as a way out of commercialization and into democratization of knowledge.[35]

All these projects identify themselves as noncommercial service portals aimed at the digital preservation and collection of materials in literature, science, and many other fields. Their resources are digital or bibliographical (including books, posters, maps, sound recordings, and videos) and provide open access to the worldwide community of Internet users.

However, there are significant differences between these projects. Ulib necessitates, at least for now, literacy in English for access to its materials, which cover most European and some Asian languages; WDL is developing prototypes for multilingual usage; TEL requires literacy in English or the respective language of the participating European library for access to its materials, which range from Arabic to Sanskrit. Ulib identifies digital technology as the medium to conserve “all the significant literary, artistic, and scientific works of mankind” and aims at creating a library “which will foster creativity and free access to all human knowledge . . . without regard to nationality or socioeconomic background.” WDL’s principle objectives include promotion of “international and intercultural understanding” and “build[ing] capacity in partner institutions to narrow the digital divide within and between countries.”[36] TEL, by contrast, “provides a vast virtual collection of material from all disciplines and offers visitors with interest a simple access to European cultural resources.”[37]At Ulib, clusters of national, regional, and international libraries form the collaborative; the website categorically states that the Library of Congress is *not* the national library of the United States. DPLA, however, positions itself both as the “National Digital Public Library of America” and as a “World Digital Library.” In its foundational phases, TEL operated with a clear definition of a national library: “A national library is the library specifically established by a country to store its information database. National libraries usually host the legal deposit and the bibliographic control centre of a nation” (figure 5-1).[38] This definition is not a convenient fiction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WHO IS THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY FOR?
THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY VISION & MISSION
WHO IS INVOLVED IN THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY?
USERS ADVISORY BOARD ›
THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY BACKGROUND & FUTURE
THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY OFFICE
OFFICE MEMBERS ›
EXHIBITIONS
Top of the page ›
NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

What is The European Library?

The European Library is a free service that offers access to the resources of the 48 national libraries of Europe in 35 languages. Resources can be both digital (books, posters, maps, sound recordings, videos, etc.) and bibliographical . Quality and reliability are guaranteed by the 48 collaborating national libraries of Europe.

What is a national library?

A national library is the library specifically established by a country to store its information database. National libraries usually host the legal deposit and the bibliographic control centre of a nation.

Who is The European Library for?

The European Library service is for anyone world-wide seeking for library material; books of course but also book references, maps, photographs, music, videos, etc.

The European Library Office produces a bimonthly Newsletter in English. Would you like to register to our mailing list?

Figure 5-1. The European Library website, 2010.

adapted by TEL. As mentioned in its documents, it is an adaptation of the constitutional definition of a national library in most European countries, wherever it exists. While the network was expanded to include European research libraries in 2013,[39] the definition of a national library cannot be brushed off so easily. First, because it is at the core of TEL's construction and self-representation; second, because it draws attention—especially in the contracts—to internal discrepancies and uneven power structures between various European member nations; and third, because the very definition of "national" holdings of a European nation are immediately questionable due to Europe's colonial and imperial histories intertwined with other parts of the world. A few examples illustrate these three points.

The four contracts between member nations for various stages of TEL-ME-MOR, the EDL, TEL-plus, and FUMABAGA replicate the definition of "national libraries" in many ways. The revised 2006 EDL contract (the original was written in 2001) explains the value of Europe's national libraries as "world-class institutions with a vital role as holders of the national memory of the member states." Extending this definition, the document continues: "EDL creates a pan-European platform and is a strategic investment in European content enrichment." Among the functions it mentions are that EDL will "help European citizens, students, researchers, business users, and other users . . . to find and use digital content, irrespective of language and location." The project ascribes adjectives such as multicultural and multilingual to its "essential nature"; it lists as its service "aggregation of digital cultural objects and collections across borders"; and it explains the use of TEL as "a single access point" so "informed citizens in any country can utilize the resources . . . of his or her national library

. . . and other partner national libraries."[40] Two pages later, this fictitious end user, the European citizen, transforms briefly into a "worldwide end user" only to return to his or her original form as a "European citizen."[41] A search for the eternal recurrence of the European subject might be attributed to the following statement: "National Libraries are aware of the European identity of their collections alongside their national identity."[42] The section on "Community added value and contributions to EC policies" begins with "Building the European Library is an inherently European undertaking" and states "the EDL Project is also inherently European and not national."[43]

These inaugural formulations in the EDL's foundational document reveal three tendencies. First, in the post-Wall Europe of territorial expansion, regional integration, and financial collaboration, national-cultural particularities become the ultimate frontiers of collective difference. Second, such collective cultural difference manifests itself ideologically: in, through, and despite the new set of European cultural policies endorsed by member nation-states. And finally, the EU's attempts at regional cultural governance collide with member nations' historical conceptualization of cultural self-definition and self-representation. From TEL-ME-MOR and the EDL to FUMAGABA, the inherent differences in cultural and linguistic histories, political structures, and everyday operative realities between Western and the new Eastern European libraries subject to integration become painfully clear. The EDL as a model platform for "coordination of national initiatives" seems to need more groundwork in the context of post-1989 nation rebuilding. The subtlety of the section "Assessment of risks and potentials" is worthy of mention: "Risk in this project is increased by the following factors: 1) TEL Office has no track record of collaborating with the 8 target libraries on operational levels; 2) working personal relationships on operational levels between TEL Office and each target library still need to be set up; 3) some partners of the project might lack experience in international projects; 4) the potentially poor level of English spoken and written in the target libraries."[44] The solution provided in the section that follows is "good communication"—not specifying the language in which this good communication will take place, certainly not one of the many languages of the EU's new Eastern European members.

The geographical vicinity and cultural intersections of these Eastern European nation-states with Asia, or even their intertwined histories with Asian countries, is a fact that is subject to amnesia in all the TEL contracts but particularly noticeable in FUMAGABA. A resolution of this neglect cannot be expected in a working contract on libraries; however, it must be pointed out, owing to the primacy of the national paradigm used to define libraries. Insinuations of national memory, national heritage, European memory, European heritage, European cultural content, European citizens, and the European nature of these projects—all these factors seem to defy the grounds of cooperation and accessibility that TEL and other projects aim to achieve. To further underline the significance of this tension between "national" and "European" in the contracts, a brief comparison with a related theoretical discussion is in order.

In a coauthored 2007 study on *Cosmopolitan Europe*, Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande evaluate the conditions of cosmopolitanism throughout the European Union. In the introductory chapter, they propose cosmopolitanism as a solution that overcomes the "European Malaise," which they attribute to the primacy of nationalism in European political history and to the neglect—if not entire eradication—of differences in European cultural politics. Highlighting the "dissolution of difference" as the mark of practiced universalism in Europe and declaring "nationalism" as an essential element of "first modernity," Beck and Grande propose the necessity of cosmopolitanism for Europe's contemporary and future existence. The recognition and mobilization of internal and external differences bereft of hierarchical orders or divisions—that is, in the service of egalitarianism among citizens and other residents—emerge as significant advantages of the cosmopolitanism that they identify for Europe. The promise of this premise is worked out in their evaluations of European history, national histories, and EU policies. In the last chapter, "Cosmopolitan Visions for Europe," they propose: "European Cosmopolitanism can no longer take its orientation from the principle of national self-determination and of nation building . . . but rather from the principle of regional cosmopolitanization."[45]

Thinking with Beck and Grande while investigating cultural manifestations of EU policies in pan-European cultural institutions, it is evident how principles of national self-determination and nation-building from the nineteenth century dominate the execution of regional cosmopolitanization. The politics of selective multiple affiliations remains a function of cultural and political representation of institutions. TEL, the EDL, and Europeana are not just products of innocent and enthusiastic conversations among cultural bureaucrats and technocrats. They are attestations of the EU's cultural policies in action, funded by public money to facilitate the transformation of EU publics in an information society. Yet while the digital divide and linguistic barriers still place the idea of equitable access to knowledge through virtual libraries in a distant future, universal ambition, a democratic mission, and worldwide reception are at the heart of these projects. In the case of TEL, the chase after these lofty principles comes to a screeching halt rather quickly. The definition of a national library draws our attention to basic principles of the organization, acquisition, collation, classification, location, and dissemination of resources.

A critique of national libraries also demands an internally differentiated understanding of any national library. The German context serves as an excellent example. At the 1987 CENL conference in Lisbon, two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, "Germany" was represented by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek in Frankfurt am Main. The Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig, one of the most important centers for the documentation of German cultural history, especially print-cultural history, was not represented—not because it somehow did not contain documents befitting German national memory, but because it was located in the erstwhile GDR. Founded in 1913, the Deustche Bücherei's primary responsibility has been the collection, cataloging, and bibliographic indexing of all printed publications issued in Germany. Currently the collections exceed nineteen million units. In 1931, the Bücherei published the first *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie* in two series: (1) with lists of books published by members of the Deutsche Buchhandelsverein, and (2) books published by nonmembers. In 1942, the Nazis expanded the Bücherei's function for the first time by law. It was charged with collecting translations of German works into world languages and works on Germany published around the world. The Deutsche Bücherei remained the center for German print-cultural history until 1944, when it was shut down due to air raids. It reopened in 1945 when the second and last version of a united *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie* was published in Leipzig. However, with the division of Germany into two states on the horizon, it was clear that the Deutsche Bücherei would be the library of East Germany. As mentioned in the last chapter, in 1948, with American money and the collaboration of Frankfurt's Stadtbibliothek and Universitätsbibliothek, a new library was proposed as the future (West) German National Library, and the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek was born. Since then, two different national bibliographies were produced every other year until 1990. With Germany's reunification, the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig and the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt—which since 1970 has included the Deutsches Musikarchiv (Berlin)—were unified under the name Deutsche Nationalbibliothek.[46]

As this discussion demonstrates, history has more than once rendered questionable the notion of a single bibliographic control center—a single national library or a national memory bank in the German context. On the EDL website, this complex history is reduced to a set of factoids that indicate a teleological progression from 1913 to 1945 to 1990 to 2005, when the EDL was launched. The reduction, however, does not help to circumvent the historical circumstances that inform the selection of objects to be integrated into the European Library Project. Moreover, as members of the worldwide community—historically connected with Europe through imperialism and colonialism—become the target users of projects such as TEL, one cannot avoid questioning the clear geographical and geopolitical demarcation of cultural resources in insular terms—the very identification of cultural resources as European or belonging only to a specific European nation.

The competition between the state libraries of Berlin and Munich to acquire Sanskrit manuscripts in the early nineteenth century (discussed in chapter 1) as well as the large-scale acquisition of Arabic, Persian, and Urdu manuscripts and printed volumes by the Staatsbibliothek Berlin in the form of Bibliotheca Sprengeriana in the second half of the nineteenth century (discussed in chapter 2) suffice to illustrate these points. As Hartmut-Ortwin Feistel explains, important libraries were acquired, such as those of Sir Robert Chambers, judge of the British East India Company in Calcutta; Baron Heinrich Friedrich von Dietz, Prussian ambassador to the Ottoman Empire; Johan Gottfried Wettzstein, Prussian consul in Damascus; and many others.[47] Orientalist philologists encouraged these acquisitions and were strongly influenced by them. The role of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (German Oriental Society; see chapter 2) was indispensable for identifying these collections. Founded in 1845 with the goal of "supporting from all directions knowledge about Asia and countries in its close proximity as well as expanding participation in this endeavor to wider circles," it first collaborated with the Royal Library in Berlin and then started acquiring its own holdings.[48] The Staatsbibliothek's bibliographic control center is Germany, but that it is part of Germany's legal deposit is a claim best left open to interpretation.

The multiple contexts of print-cultural transformations, new media developments, public interactions with readable objects, and the blurry distinctions between the sacrosanct and the secularized must be understood in conjunction with the political formation of publics that are the end users of such products. A legal deposit, a bibliographic control center, an institution purloined through cultural history only to reemerge as a cultural icon, a historical building with national significance for a national or regional polity—these are the many meanings of a library that have been central to my critique of the European Library Project in this chapter. TEL and the EDL show the persistence of confining and limiting systems of nomination, categorization, and classification, even when the walls are metaphorically brought down. As a new definition of "virtual" spaces is rapidly transforming the collective cultural construction of libraries in the twenty-first century, the library's old functions still hold precedence over suspicion, neutralization, and inversion. The European Library Project and the European Digital Library may have the bold ambition of decoupling the museum from the library, but they are replicating to an extent the nineteenth-century obsession with ever-accumulating pasts, albeit now in virtual space. This inadequacy is not a consequence of myopic planning; libraries themselves cannot be disembedded from their convoluted histories of collection, acquisition, and accession. Yet the ideological implications of the library should not blind us to their spatial and temporal constitutions on the one hand, and ownership and accessibility on the other.

Ownership and accessibility indeed are the two key words that make digital libraries important circulatory portals for world literary artefacts, especially literary works from antiquity to the nineteenth century. PDF versions of translated classics of world literature in major European languages: *Kalila-wa-Dimna*, *Shahnameh*, and even Chinese texts read by Goethe—to name just a few—are available through Google Books or HathiTrust, which are part of a collaborative enterprise of many libraries around the world. However, through TEL and Europeana, sections of ancient manuscripts—if not entire manuscripts—are now being recirculated into the public realm, increasing accessibility and sometimes bringing hidden manuscripts for the first time to the public light.[49] Marked with a PD (public domain) sign, these manuscripts are being digitized by major national (and now research) libraries in Europe. It is true that in order to access these works or get a glimpse of these manuscripts, one needs access to the Internet. But when compared with the cost of travel from a non-European country to a European library—not to mention the financial requirements stipulated on Asian and African scholars for getting a visa to travel to Europe to gain access to printed volumes or manuscripts—Internet access is far more affordable. This is not to support the claim that digitization is the only or the most optimal solution. While digital access to manuscripts might inform the reader of the material history of a text, it does not help the reader in experiencing that material history; it is a mediated experience. So to a great extent, the "look-but-not touch" aspect that Cheng referred to is still in full force.

As for ownership, digital accessibility offers no simple solution other than diffusing the question. Despite the curious set of circumstances through which Sprenger accumulated his collection, it now belongs to the

Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. The kingdom of Awadh is long gone, and it would be precarious for the Indian, Egyptian, or Syrian governments to reclaim materials acquired by Sprenger. However, a future digitized access to *Bibliotheca Sprengeriana*—for it has not been done yet—would actually provide hundreds of scholars, but also singers and performers of verses of the fourteenth century Sufi Amir Khusro, access to his songs in manuscript form.

These are just a few examples. But in the very large collections of texts that were deemed world literary texts starting with the nineteenth century, these few examples serve well to demonstrate how digital libraries such as TEL are just beginning to provide new venues of world literary circulation. A world digital library can never be complete. However, through virtual bibliomigrancy, libraries could enhance borrowing privileges to a worldwide readership.

In his essay "World Literature and the Internet," Thomas O. Beebee refers to the Internet as the "'third revolution' in the fixation of linguistic and mental concepts, the first two being the invention of writing and development of movable type."[50] Beebee compares the development of the World Wide Web to the "ever-increasing rhythm of trade and commerce between European nations" during Goethe's time to prophesize the "profound impact" of the Internet on world literature, which he measures through the genre of "Internet Literature."[51] While the focus of my discussion has been digital libraries, as my analysis has shown, the "profound impact" of the digitization of libraries is yet to be seen.

Digitization, we should not forget, is a recent technological agent of access to world literature. Historical processes of decolonization around World War II and large-scale human migration in the second half of the twentieth century have recodified world literature. A new kind of migration of literature and books has impacted the conceptualization of world literature in Germany. This new world literature is even more self-consciously positioned in vectors of transnationalism, registers of cosmopolitanism, and vocabularies of multilingualism. As the digital migration of texts into the virtual sphere simultaneously exacerbates and mediates the tensions between nationally owned and transnationally shared materials, literary documentation of human migration challenges traditional notions of national literature based solely on the ethnicity of authors, as well as canonical notions of world literatures based on the best and the most representative works from the national literature. To understand the tensions between literatures of migration and world literature in the German context, it might be best to remind us of one of the first uses of the phrase "new world literature." A publishing firm first established by William Henry Heinemann

(1863–1920), a British publisher of German heritage, had something to do with it.

Beyond the Digital: Migration and Postcolonial World Literatures

"Thirty Years of a New World Literature" was the title of a short article in *The Bookseller* (1993) outlining the achievements of the Heinemann Educational Books' African Writers Series.[52] The author of the piece was Alan Hill, who served as the managing director of Heinemann at the time of the African Writers Series' inception in 1962. The article was published two weeks after the African Writers Series received the World Development Award for Business sponsored by the British Worldaware Organization. Queen Elizabeth II was the patron of this organization; Lord Grenfell, the chief of external relations of the World Bank, served as chair of the six-member jury. In his article, Hill mentions the profit-oriented mind-set of A. S. Frere, then chairman of Heinemann. Along with other publishing outfits, Frere was eager to tap into the African book market in the 1960s, "the frenetic era of nation-building" in postindependence African countries with a large demand for educational books—mostly textbooks and primarily in English. "For most of these companies," Hill writes, "African authors did not exist." Against this commercial backdrop Hill describes receiving, in 1957, a manuscript of a novel "from a student from Ibadan University."[53] This manuscript was *Things Fall Apart* (1958) by Chinua Achebe, who later became the first editor of the African Writers Series.

Hill's article can easily be read as a classic tale of the triumph of literature and art over commerce. Closer scrutiny reveals why it should be read differently. The sudden emergence of an African "masterpiece" as late as the 1950s—and in English, the language of the colonizer—today seems dubious. The purported nonexistence of African authors on a continent that is home to at least a few hundred languages and literary traditions would today be called a manifestation of sanctioned ignorance. Moreover, the characters involved in the recognition of the triumph—a Britain-based publisher, the Queen of England, a charity organization, the chair of the World Bank—all become part of a complex history of colonial mission, educational ambition, and corporate commission. The history of the African Writers Series and its cryptic role in the development of African literatures has been a topic of several scholarly discussions and debates.[54] The African Writers Series' geographical focus on West Africa, at least in the first decade of its existence, as well as its emphasis on English-language works written mostly by male authors has earned stringent criticism. After all, Heinemann "reminded" one of Africa through a particular "packaging" of the continent evident not merely in the editorial selection criteria but also on the dust jackets: invocations of "ethnicized" art reminiscent of Gauguin's Tahiti-period against a bright orange background.

William Heinemann was born in England of a German father, a naturalized British citizen, and a British mother.[55] He started his publishing career in 1879 as an apprentice of Nicholas Trübner, also a German native. Prior to his move to London to work for Longman, Trübner had extensive experience selling scholarly books in Götttingen, Hamburg, and Frankfurt and was considered to be the "literary intermediary between Europe and the East."[56] Heinemann's own list between 1890 and 1893 consisted of translations of German authors such as Heinrich Heine and Karl Emil Franzos,[57] but he soon moved to publishing authors from British colonies, most notably the novelist Rudyard Kipling[58] and the poet Sarojini Naidu.[59] Already in the early twentieth century, Heinemann was introducing the world to a "newer" world literature. The transformation of his company into a publisher of authors from former British colonies is not surprising, yet one cannot simply dismiss Heinemann's role in facilitating access to postindependence African writers. Between 1962 and 2003, Heinemann published some 350 titles by over 100 African authors.[60] For students at colleges and universities enrolled in courses in African literature, and to discerning readers who frequented bookstores and public libraries, Heinemann became synonymous with African writing both in the English originals and in translation. To think of Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Mweja Mwangi, Tayyeb al-Salih, and others was to think of Heinemann. Hill's claim for the production of a "new" world literature does not seem that far-fetched after all.

Contemporary German discussions of a new world literature might not bear any direct connection to the publisher Heinemann, but they are signposted between the new postcolonial literatures on the one hand, and literature of German authors of migrant background on the other.[61]

In her multiple contributions to translation studies and world literature, Doris Bachman-Medick centralizes the question of cultural difference and literature as a cultural text to highlight migration as one of the main sources for understanding difference.[62] The question of difference finds extension in Dieter Lamping's *Die Idee der Weltliteratur* (2010), especially in views on world literature and globalization.[63] For Lamping, bi- and multilingualism become central features of the contemporary world and therefore contemporary world literature. Along with authors such as Salman Rushdie, Assia Djebbar, Gloria Anzaldúa, Lamping appoints postcolonial literary critics such as Edward Said and Homi Bhabha as the spokespersons ("Fürsprecher") of world literature.[64] In *The Idea of World Literature* (2006), John Pizer examines canonicity with multiculturalism, arguing that cultural difference serves as a "dialectical filter" to imagine contemporary world literature.[65] The Syrian-German author Rafik Schami serves as a model for such a dialectical filter of difference. Pizer frames his thoughts through an engagement with Harald Weinrich: the renowned German critic and founder of the Chamisso Prize given to German-language authors of non-German heritages. Weinrich's recent ideas on globalization, technological commercialization, and world literature deserve a brief discussion, since his pioneering work on German migrant authors and the establishment of the Chamisso Prize play an important role in institutionalizing new world literatures in Germany.

In his essay "Chamisso, Chamisso Authors and Globalization," Weinrich touches upon major statements on world literature from the German-speaking world—Goethe, Marx and Engels, Auerbach—to propose that in the twenty-first century "it is no longer easy to distinguish sharply between world literature and Western literature."[66] Weinrich's proposal is thus not very dissimilar from that of Auerbach. However, while Auerbach prospectively anticipated the homogenization of literatures in the new world after World War II, Weinrich's retrospective analysis of new world literatures, fifty years after Auerbach, leads him to believe that such homogenization is already in place. Auerbach fears the arrival of Islamic, Chinese, or Russian Bolshevik literatures; Weinrich laments the establishment of world literature in English. Blaming the world literary market for the increasing domination of English, Weinrich claims that authors who choose to write in a language other than English are faced with impediments in entering the world literary space:

> All writers who lack the good fortune of growing up in a genuinely anglophone [*sic*] or a postcolonially anglophone [*sic*] land know it. It is a given that they will have a hard time with world literature. If, for instance, they have been driven from central or eastern Europe to Germany, they must come to terms with German as a "subglobal" language, which of course drastically curtails their prospects for entry into world literature. And yet, they are precisely the ones we particularly welcome as Chamisso authors, since their books spread "world" more than those of many indigenous authors. Or they have simply chosen wrong in settling on German for their literary language, far removed from English—the language of world literature—and its prevailing

> discourses? If I am not mistaken, all non-anglophone [*sic*] authors pay this price, in the hard currency of lived time, for the label *world literature*, and so do all Chamisso authors.[67]

Weinrich's lament is located in the world of globalizing commerce, in which English gains supremacy. His concern for the challenges faced by non-Anglophone authors is genuine. Yet there are a number of problematic assumptions in Weinrich's rather romanticized version of Anglophone world literature. First, the very definition of a "genuinely Anglophone" land assumes the absence of any other languages in that country. English may be the dominant language of the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, but the assumption that English is the only language of literary production in these countries denies the very multilingual fabric of these nations, which survives along with, and sometimes in spite of, the dominance of English. Oral and printed literary production in many Native-American languages of the United States and Canada, not to mention literature produced in other immigrant languages such as French, German, Spanish, Italian, even Hindi, exists alongside literature in English. Not all literary production in these languages is necessarily translated; however, not all English literature produced in the US or Canada circulates in translation either. The same problem is true by extension of the so-called "postcolonially Anglophone" nations. With writers such as V. S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie dominating his argument, Weinrich completely dismisses the fact that not every writer from India (or Anglophone Caribbean) writing in English is automatically part of the world literary space. In multilingual nations such as India, English is one of but not the only language of works in translation. There is a multilingual and multidirectional translational network spanning twenty-five officially recognized languages through which readers gain access to literary works. A different world of literature exists away from Germany, much larger than Eastern Europe and bigger than the German literary landscape. Weinrich's Auerbachian anxiety makes him believe that the promise of the Chamisso authors—not just in Germany but perhaps also elsewhere—has been largely diminished. He fails to note the important role that post–World War II migration into the so-called "genuinely Anglophone" countries has played in the transformation of literary languages—English, French, Spanish, and through the Chamisso authors, German—as also of the world literary space.

My criticism of Weinrich's ideas notwithstanding, the newness and the supremacy that is alluded to when considering English to be a world literary language is worthy of attention, especially when one looks at the latest publications in the German language that are aimed at a wider, nonuniversity-based, discerning readership.

The Berlin-based literary critic Sigrid Löffler's *Die neue Weltliteratur und ihre großen Erzähler* (2014), is the best example of the superiority accorded to Anglophone works within the contemporary German conceptualization of world literature. "A completely new non-Western literature has been created, which is mostly written by migrants and language-changers from former colonies and war zones," claims the dust-jacket of Löffler's book.[68] This new world literature, all of it, is for Löffler migration literature ("Migrationsliteratur"), where the "enigma of arrival"—Löffler states, drawing on V. S. Naipaul's famous work—and not necessarily the dilemma of departure, one should add, is its central feature.[69] This new world literature, representing the condition of nonnative speakers,[70] is "dynamic, rapidly growing, postethnic and transnational."[71] Mohsin Hamid, Teju Cole, Michael Ondatjee, Salman Rushdie, and J. M. Cotzee become representatives of this dynamic literature. They are the great narrators of the new world literature, but they are language changers: "Whatever their first language might have been: Urdu or Marathi, Bangla, Arabic, Amharic, Gikuyu, Swahili, Yoruba, or another one of the two thousand indigenous languages that are [spoken] in Africa, or the almost 800 languages that are spoken on the Indian subcontinent: for in the great narrative of their world-wandering almost all exchange their respective local language for the language of their former colonial masters."[72] There is no doubt that authors writing in languages other than their first have greatly enriched the world literary space. But to assume that great writing and great world-wandering requires changing languages is a huge fallacy. In a move slightly different from, but curiously close to Weinrich, Löffler acknowledges homogeneity but, unlike Weinrich, celebrates it. Consequently, authors writing in German, who might not have had clearly defined (former or current) colonial masters—such as Terézia Mora, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Olga Matynova, or Sherko Fatah—are condescendingly mentioned as those that "meanwhile enrich German literature" but stay marginal to the new world literature.[73] They are not granted any more print space in the book than a mere mention.

This absence of German-language authors of non-German heritages in contemporary German discussions on world literature is palpable in physical book series such as *Die Zeit-Bibliothek der 100 Sachbücher* (1984) or electronic book series such as *100 Werke der Weltliteratur* (CD ROM, 2007). World literature in these book series is very much akin to Scherr's 1848 anthology *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur*: a collection of representative canonical masterpieces from various national literatures. More recent attempts to make world literature accessible to the general reading public through online seminars echo the very same idea. In the newspaper *Die Zeit*'s "*Weltliteratur*"—offered as part of the Zeit Akademie online learning site and available on DVD for 129 euros—world literature is primarily framed as literature "from Europe to America: from Camus to Hemingway," even if "Africa, Asia, North- and South America, and naturally . . . the European literary metropolis" are promised as part of the reader's discovery of world literature.[74] Led by Sandra Richter, professor at the University of Stuttgart, the seminar describes authors and novels selected for the program as "those who occupy a prominent position in their homelands and home cultures."[75]

In twenty-first-century Germany, where the idea of homeland and home culture has been radically challenged by authors of migrant backgrounds, the location of world literature in singular homelands and home cultures seems precariously outdated. Acknowledging the contributions of contemporary German-language authors of non-German heritages in the larger world literary space is not just a matter of inclusion or exclusion. As Azade Seyhan discusses in *Writing Outside the Nation* (2001), literatures of migration open doors to understand the "paranational alliances" of authors, which are formed at a critical distance from "both the home and the host culture."[76] As Leslie Adelson proposes in *The Turkish Turn in Contemporary German Literature* (2005), literatures of migration convolute our understanding of national literatures, not just through the differences but also through a "broad range of common ground, which can be thicker or thinner at some junctures."[77] As Yasemin Yildiz argues in *Beyond the Mother Tongue* (2012), authors with migrant backgrounds create a possibility of postmonolingualism "in which language and ethnicity may be fully delinked."[78]

While these scholars discuss literatures of migration with reference to national literatures, their arguments can pave the way to develop a new vocabulary for bibliomigrancy and contexts of minority literatures. At a distance from the current celebration or even denunciation of German migrant literature within world literary discussions in Germany, let me make three suggestions. First, a conceptualization of world literature that necessitates a unidirectional movement—*from* the point of origin *to* a point of arrival, or *from* the language of creation *to* a target language in which the work is translated—hardly suffices to think through the position and ambition of works that are marked by multiple spatial and linguistic origins. Second, declarations of the rise of a "completely new non-Western literature" that once again focuses on the old "empire writes back" paradigm is in today's world at best the harshest weapon for epistemic violence that neatly reestablishes the center-periphery paradigm while pretending to celebrate the subaltern south. And third, a negligence of transformations within national literary production—British, French, German, or US American—through various processes of forced or voluntary migrations will only compromise the capacity of what I have elsewhere discussed as the *Cosmopolitical Claims* (2007) of migrant authors. In other words, if the "elliptical relationship" between national and world literatures—as David Damrosch aptly formulates—is to be examined with some degree of sincerity, it must be understood that "national" and "world" literatures are dynamic categories: they are politically charged because they are historically determined and culturally conditioned.

As a counter example of Weinrich's comments on the compromised state of non-Anglophone authors I will end this chapter with a discussion of Kemal Kurt's *Ja, Sagt Molly*. Following Weinrich's definition he can be called a "Chamisso" author, although he never received the Chamisso prize. Leslie Adelson discusses this novel as the depiction of a "bloodthirsty and anxious affair" of fictional characters for survival in the twenty-first century, as "shelf space is at a premium and new rules of storage will soon prevail."[79] Tom Cheesman underlines the "sceptical cosmopolitanism of the republic of letters."[80] In the following discussion, however, I want to show that in the struggle for survival on the shelf-space of a library, Kurt invokes the empire of books (*Bücherreich*) as he challenges the world republic of letters. Kurt is thus able to show how the Borgesian "catalogue of catalogues" is anything but neutral.

A Library of World Literature

In search of the "total book," Kemal Kurt's novel *Ja, Sagt Molly* becomes the book of all books. As discussed earlier, the novel begins with the mention of multiple geographical locations, and, in the opening scene, Gregor Samsa tries to be intimate with Molly. As the reader tries to fathom whether the sexual intimacy between the human Molly and the vermin Gregor is the start of the rehumanization process for Gregor or a magical realist intercourse between species, the novel turns to Jimmy Herf and Congo Jake (Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*). This transfer from Dublin to New York is punctuated in Kurt's novel by italicized insertions of important global events, telegraphically communicated as headlines of newspapers: the Boxer Uprising is crushed by interventionist forces,[81] Guglielmo Marconi succeeds in transatlantic wireless transmission of radio waves (*JSM*, 20), the financial crisis of 1929 hits the United States (*JSM*, 21), Einstein introduces the theory of relativity (*JSM*, 22), the plague spreads in India, and San Francisco experiences devastation through earthquake and fire (*JSM*, 23). In the midst of these moments of scientific discoveries and financial and natural disasters, Congo reads in the *New York Times* that the "Library of Babel" is full, and there is no room for any more books. Under the directorship of a blind librarian—the novel keeps it ambiguous whether the reference is to the blind librarian in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* or to Borges, the author of "The Library of Babel"—a commission of select librarians is making a decision about selecting that one book that will represent all forms of modernism (*JSM*, 24).

From this point on, Kurt's novel recreates the twentieth century through an engagement with its literary history. Disparate and unexpected conversations inhabit the novel: Hans Castorp (Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*) experiences the violence of World War I with O-Lan (Pearl S. Buck, *The House of Earth*), who finds a copy of Flaubert's Madame Bovary in his pocket (*JSM*, 39); Clelia Oitana (Cesare Pavese, *The Beach*) tells Meuersault (Camus, *The Stranger*) that as a woman she finds herself alone in a library (*JSM*, 44); Zneno Cosini (Italo Svevo, *Zneno Cosini*) criticizes the Nobel Prize as "one named after the founder of the first weapon of mass destruction in the world" to Harry Haller (Hesse, *Steppenwolf*) as Hitler comes to power (*JSM*, 51); Martin Marco (Camilo José Cela, *The Hive*) discusses the expansion of libraries and the significance of books with William of Baskerville (Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose*) in the aftermath of World War II (*JSM*, 57); and between the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War and the assassination of Che Guevara, Saleem Sinai (Salman Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*), David Carvaggio (Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient*), and Lord Jim (Joseph Conrad, *Lord Jim*) meet—where else?—in the House of Mr. Biswas (V. S. Naipaul, *A House for Mr. Biswas*), as Stevens (Kazuo Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day*), immaculately dressed, serves them tea (*JSM*, 70–71).

This is by no means an exhaustive reading of this complex and fascinating novel. Suffice it to say that throughout the rest of the narrative, a variety of actors converge and diverge to reflect on the state of literature and literary criticism as they present books and libraries as historically conditioned and politically charged. Punctuating these conversations is the slow foreplay between Molly and Gregor, which becomes more intense as the twentieth century ends. Toward the end of the novel, after the Fall of the Berlin Wall as violence against foreigners rises in Germany, Gregor fantasizes yet another transformation. He wants to be an oil beetle so he can turn Molly crazy by releasing Cantharidin (*JSM*, 127). Meanwhile a host of intoxicated characters: Rosario (Alejandro Carpentier, *The Kingdom of this World*), Lambert Strether (Henry James, *The Ambassadors*), Gora (Rabindranath Tagore, *Gora*), Babbitt (Sinclair Lewis, *Babbitt*), Sagoe (Wole Soyinka, *The Interpreters*), Piggy (William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*), Malte Laurids Brigge (Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*), Querelle (Jean Genet, *Querelle*), and others join a procession (*JSM*, 125), shouting the slogan, "To the Library! To the Library!" (*JSM*, 129; Zur Bibliothek! Zur Bibliothek!). As former Czechoslovakia splits into Czech and Slovak Republics, and the World Trade Center bombing takes place in New York City, Gregor thinks of ancient Indian erotic texts, *Ananga Ranga* and *Kamasutra*, and discovers Molly's "Yoni" (*JSM*, 132–133). The entire history of the twentieth century and the sexual foreplay between Molly and Gregor reach their climax as the crowd of authors reaches Taksim Square, Istanbul, where the library burns.

What the European Digital Library Project aspires to do is accomplished by Kurt in his novel. The library depicted in Kurt's novel offers for consideration another dimension of difference through transformation, namely, the difference manifest in the spaces that hold and contain these novels, these "books." The bibliographic inventory of this *Bibliothek* at the millennial turn bears marks of human migration and signals the necessity to recognize the meanings of bibliomigrancy: the bearing across of books. The inventory of the *Bibliothek*, once outsourced, becomes a new resource. The conceptualization of a library—with or without walls—becomes space-based and space-bound: spatial and directional, locative and ablative.

The story of world literature, as mentioned at the beginning of this book, is not a single story. It consists of multiple stories of creation and innovation, interrogation through reformulation, and local disposition and worldly orientation. Much like libraries—and it does not have to be the perfect library of all libraries as in Borges—the order and system is coincidently interrupted with contesting narratives of disorder and purposeful disarrangement. As Benjamin makes us realize, dissemination becomes part of dispersion, and as Kurt reveals through his differential calculus of world literature, historical chronology is productively interrupted by the power of literary works. The thousandfold librarian is a virtual reality today, recoding the world literary catalog for the twenty-first century.