Global Souths: Toward a Materialist Poetics of Alignment

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"Catch thief," every time the dressed-up rime,
Awaits in its finery the neat Alexandrine.
To know love, I know the Némench(t)as
The telephone and the bath-tub.
. . . . . .
Remember this
When I dragged my corpse in exile
When my eyes looked at you without meeting your eyes
And if I open my newspaper well before I read my mail
If I no longer appreciate how tender the roses
If I distantly respond to the refrain that they hear
And if my heart is not there when yours hums for me,
LISTEN AND I AM CALLING YOU

Au voleur chaque fois que la rime en toilette
Attend l'alexandrin tiré à quatre épingles

Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own.

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Pour savoir un amour je sais les Némenchtas
Le telephone et la baignoire.
. . . . . .
Rappelle-toi ceci
Quand le trainais l'exil où trainait mon cadaver
Quand mes yeux te voyaient sans recontrer tes yeux
Si j'ouvre mon journal bien avant mon courier
Si je n'apprécie plus la tendresse des roses
Si je reprends de loin le refrain qu'ils entendent
Si mon coeur n'est pas là quand le tien me fredonne
ECOUTE ET JE T'APPELLE
—Malek Haddad, Écoute et je t'appelle

In his 1961 poem "Écoute et je t'appelle," Malek Haddad calls for a new materialist poetics amid the Algerian War. Haddad rejects a poetic form marked by French cultural imperial epistemologies. He insists instead that his is a love that *knows*, not through the universalizing form of the world Alexandrine but through the Némenchas Mountains and tribes who lived there, ringing through the static hum of the telephone and hard echo of the bathtub (Haddad 1961: 55–56).[1] Ten years later, his call spans the pages of an Afro-Asian anthology of poetry published by the Cairo-based and partly Soviet-funded Permanent Bureau of Afro-Asian Writers. The English translation by the Egyptian writer Edwar al-Kharrat draws Haddad's call into a new orbit that traverses decolonial (non)alignment. One of the most important erasures in the translation is al-Kharrat's omission of the Némenchas Mountains, at once stripping Haddad's verse of a geographic and linguistic specificity that underscores his voice as a French colonial Amazigh subject (Haddad, "Listen and I am Calling You," in Sebai 1971: 20–22). While al-Kharrat's translation's erasure of place emphasizes instead a critique of the technologies of imperial control, Haddad urges his reader to explore new ways of listening in the physical vibrations of his heart-resounding "quand le tien me fredonne [when yours hums for me]." Haddad's call for a materialist poetics, then, despite its framing within the structures of the internationalist communist institution of the Afro-Asian Association, was far from a turn to an orthodox communist ideology. Rather, he highlighted

1. Némenchas refers to a mountain region in Algeria and the Amazigh tribes who live there. It is unclear if the *t* is a typographical error or alternative spelling (Reclus 1889: 72). I am grateful to David Fieni for this reference.

strategies for building alignment that often traversed official channels and institutions by exposing language's material affects.

Haddad's verse invokes a materialist poetic vision that emphasizes poiesis as central to sociopolitical praxis, as a force that draws his readers into and out of alignment, the pulsations of his heart tugging at the poem's addressee. While materialist aesthetics has a long tradition in Marxist-Leninist anti-imperial thought through the development of socialist realism, a materialist poetics of (non)alignment developed in the work of thinkers from Frantz Fanon to M. N. Roy instead works through the affective structures of desire and longing. Expanding on the vision that literature singularly reflects consciousness, this emphasis on desire instead operates through refraction, dwelling in the space between (non)alignment.

The Global South is thus more than a place; it is a set of relations that structure a political consciousness through a longing or desire for (non)alignment. In particular, I take up two love stories by the Kyrgyz author and diplomat Chingiz Aitmatov, writing in 1958 on the periphery of the Soviet Union before the emergence of a Kyrgyz nationalism, and Algerian poet and political leader Malek Haddad, writing a year later amid the Algerian War of Independence. While the two writers never met, their novels intersect in the French communist press. The material structures of this Global Souths literature, in turn, hover closely above, seemingly without touching the fundamental question of Soviet (post)coloniality.

The relationships among Global Souths, which included institutional and personal networks that persisted despite an often tense ideological divide between the Soviet-aligned and nonaligned nations, produced two genealogies of anti-imperial thinking born from the nonaligned Bandung and its lesser known Soviet-affiliate cousin launched only a few years later, the Afro-Asian Writers' Association.[2] Inspired by Bandung, the Afro-Asian

2. In his inaugural essay "Is the Post- in Postcolonial the Post- in Post-Soviet," David Chioni Moore (2001) introduced a set of linkages between the aligned and nonaligned souths, ushering in a nearly two-decade debate over the relevance of postcolonial theory to the archive of the former Soviet Union. In *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*, Robert Young (2001) again took up these geopolitical intersections through the term *tricontinental*, itself a reference to nonaligned and aligned institutional connections at the center of postcolonial debates. While these institutional histories launch a necessary corrective to an anglophone canon of postcolonial thought, they fall short of articulating the role of literature in the rethinking of neo-imperialism as the product of the interplay between Soviet and Western forms of colonialism. The recent conference at Princeton on (post)coloniality in the former Soviet Union also took up this question ("Imperial

Writers' Association outlined an explicitly Marxist approach to decolonization, albeit one that often relied on the geopolitics of Soviet alignment. The term *Global South* has a troubled history. Shaped by the Cold War, it also has roots in both the subaltern international solidarity of Antonio Gramsci's "Southern Question" and post-Soviet US military strategy. For example, the American geostrategist Thomas Barnett distinguished a "Functional Globalized Core" from a "Non-Integrated Gap" as "dangerously disconnected from the globalizing world, from its rule sets, its norms, and all the ties that bind countries together in mutually assured dependence" (Barnett 2003).[3] Hovering in the gap between the logic of capitalist development and a narrow vision of decolonization, *Global South* often evades the supranational trajectories of decolonization that cross a socialist periphery striated by uneven development.

We must label these aesthetic and political networks in such a way as to deterritorialize and reterritorialize the sweeping historical, cultural, political, economic, and geographical comparisons they promote. The confluence of opposing systems of power expressed by the aligned and nonaligned formation—Global Souths—works to disaggregate the neo-imperial conglomeration and commodification of postcolonial structural epistemologies, focusing instead on close readings of the encounters, entanglements, and exchanges that produced new visions of political commitment on and across transnational borders. At the same time, it resists the erasure of race posed by transnational alliances by returning to the material imprint of the affective experience of literary engagement that produced (non)alignment across Global Souths.

This framing of Global Souths recalls the question of alignment, which at the disciplinary level encompasses a project to engage decolonial literature beyond area studies and global studies models, as well as a global anglophone network. In the context of the neoliberal university, this

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Reverb: Exploring the Postcolonies of Communism," Princeton University, May 13–15, 2016, accessed July 20, 2017, https://imperialreverb.princeton.edu/program/).

3. Major figures included military strategist Thomas Barnett and the geopolitical forecaster George Friedman of Stratfor. Barnett calls the Global South countries, or the regions, which fall outside of the purview of globalization "the Non-Integrating Gap" or "Gap," compared to the successfully globalized "Functioning Core" or "Core." Writing in a post-9/11 moment, Barnett argues that the Gap must be integrated into the Core to preserve the security of the Core. The Gap includes "the Caribbean Rim, virtually all of Africa, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and Southwest Asia, and much of Southeast Asia" (Barnett 2003).

vision of the global world literature project threatens to absorb an area-studies "multiculturalism" into conglomerate English or modern language departments, eliminating minority language study and philological training. In turn, the historical consequences of such disciplinary actions include the reproduction of a singular decolonial narrative locked around a 1968 post-Marxist deconstructive theoretical trajectory.

These historical networks of decolonization that stretch across alignment reveal that 1955–56 provides an alternative historical node for conceptualizing a system of Global Souths. This system emerges as a comparative mode of reading decoloniality through structures of feeling that crossed the Cold War divide, which crucially exposes nodes of difference in forms of decolonial literature and attendant conceptions of race and ethnicity that they produced. A burgeoning body of scholarship has begun to tackle the historical networks established around 1955–1956, which intersect with spheres of Soviet influence but often highlight an internal disjuncture between the structure of the Soviet empire and its anti-imperial politics. These include critical approaches to alignment produced through the nonaligned networks generated at the Bandung Conference of 1955, the Soviet-affiliate Afro-Asian Writers' Association and its journal *Lotus*, as well as the related CIA organization, Congress of Cultural Freedom.[4]

How can one pose the problem of alignment beyond institutional politics? That is, how can alignment reimagine forms of sociopolitical affiliation beyond the institutional structures of empire and nation-states through a solidarity that echoes from Tashkent to Algiers? Following his attendance at the planning session for the first Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Cairo in 1957, Haddad traveled to the Soviet Union in 1962 with playwright and novelist Kateb Yacine and other members of the Algerian writers' delegation. In Moscow, he complained that the Afro-Asian Writers' Association was far more concerned with political discussions than with developing

4. A series of conferences organized around the topic of Bandung humanism have taken up the historical context of the 1955 Bandung Conference as a means of examining "forms of progressive imagination and internationalism that emerged in the Global South during the Cold War and their fate in more recent times." The Bandung Humanist Project was organized by Lydia Liu, Stathis Gourgouris, and Aamir Mufti. See "Bandung Humanisms," Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, Columbia University, accessed July 20, 2017, http://icls.columbia.edu/initiatives/bandung-humanisms/. A related group of scholars working on the Afro-Asian Writers' Association, its journal *Lotus*, and the Congress of Cultural Freedom include Duncan Yoon, Rossen Djagalev, Monica Popescu, Hala Halim, Masha Kirasirova, and Elizabeth Holt.

literature by connecting writers around the production of creative works (RGALI 1962). Haddad's charge illuminates the shared creative concerns of alignment through the problem of materialist poetics, however, one that operates through affective rather than reflective principles. Building at its foundations on Lenin's reflection theory, which outlined literature's capacity to reflect consciousness, Soviet bureaucrats and literary organizations enlisted the representational order of socialist realism in Soviet colonial development.[5] A materialist poetics of (non)alignment instead highlights literature's animation of affective currents that produce the charged space between alignment and nonalignment.

Such an understanding of an international literary production outside or rather between (non)alignments furthermore requires examining how these writers generated a new language of materialist poetics that defied the confines of institutional politics and orthodox aesthetic conventions. Indeed, studies of socialist aesthetics have taken up this problem through an interest in affect or desire as central to the animation of materialism, ranging from the performance of authoritative discourse in everyday life to the formulation of filmic aesthetics.[6] The conditions of (non)alignment

5. On socialist realism as a colonial project, see Schild 2010. In *Socialist Realism without Shores*, Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko (1997) take up socialist realist literary entanglements across the Soviet empire and globally to China and the US. While the collection crucially foregrounds geopolitics as central to the formation of socialist realism, it does not directly address the role of race and ethnicity as a central feature of the territorialization of the Soviet empire.

6. Emma Widdis thus historicizes the rise of a conception of the affects of bodily sensation and reflex on the construction of consciousness in revolutionary Marxist psychology culminating in what she designates as a decentering of the body in the 1930s. This shift, she argues, gave way to a model of control in which the education and direction of consciousness became an essential tool for the state's organization of the material world. Widdis writes, "In broad terms, then, the focus of psychological science through much of the 1920s was on understanding the relationship between the human subject and the (physical) world. This accorded sensation (oshchushchenie) a key role: things act upon subjects, and subjects are formed from sensations of things. . . . The shift away from mechanistic understandings of the relationship between body and mind shifted focus from sensation (oshchushchenie) to emotion (emotsii). . . . If early Soviet psychology was marked by a revolutionary idea of mutual interdependence between the human self and the material world (a reanimated sensory relationship), this gave way in the early to mid-1930s to a model of control: the human mind (consciousness) *processes* and ultimately organizes the material world" (Widdis 2017: 12–15). Turning to late socialism, Alexei Yurchak describes the ways in which the embodied practices of the repetition and performance of authoritative discourse played a central role in generating new meaning leading up to the collapse of the Soviet Union. For Yurchak, following Deleuze and Guattari,

reveal the ways in which desire or longing are not merely individual but rather are assembled through the socioeconomic formation of (non)alignment. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari clarify in *Anti-Oedipus*, "desire produces reality, or stated another way, desiring-production is one and the same thing as social production. It is not possible to attribute a special form of existence to desire, a mental or psychic reality that is presumably different from the material reality of social production" (1983: 30). Indeed, much in the same ways in which Deleuze and Guattari refuse to separate desire from the socioeconomic infrastructure, 1920s Soviet Marxist psychoanalysis emphasized the intertwining of political and libidinal economies, which produced the conditions of de-individualized subjectivity.[7] Following this line of thought, the poetics of (non)alignment thus functions as an assemblage to expose the "semiotic flows, material flows, and social flows simultaneously," which erode the division between "a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author)" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 22–23). In Deleuze and Guattari's framework, affective currents operate through intersubjective or subsubjective drives or desires. Assembled through social formations, affective currents produce the subject, shifting the positionality of the object of desire to the desiring subject. Haddad's and Aitmatov's visions of longing, read in this way, articulate social formations that assemble desire without an object and, in so doing, produce a subject suspended between (non)alignment.

Realigning Traveling Theory

Edward Said's "Traveling Theory Reconsidered" starts an effort to recuperate aligned and nonaligned connections across Global Souths in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Said takes up the question of alignment in his discussion of affiliation: "To speak here only of borrowing and adaptation is not adequate. There is in particular an intellectual and per-

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the performance of authoritative discourse is not about mimicry and imitation but rather presents a rhizomatic process of deterritorialization and reterritorialization through which the system shifts (Yurchak 2005: 24–25, 114–16).

7. To this end, Deleuze and Guattari write, "the only means of bypassing the sterile parallelism where we flounder between Freud and Marx: by discovering how social production and relations of production are an institution of desire, and how affects or drives form part of the infrastructure itself. For *they are part of it, they are present there in every way* while creating within the economic forms their own repression, as well as the means for breaking this repression" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 63).

haps moral community of a remarkable kind, *affiliation* in the deepest and most interesting sense of the word" (Said 2000: 452). His vision of affiliation outlines a community of transnational literary texts, ideas traveling in exile, and the history of global solidarities between aligned and nonaligned political networks.[8] He turns to Georg Lukács's reification, in the context of revolutionary Budapest, as "an inducement to insurrectionary action" and a crucial expansion of the Hegelian and Marxian dialectic, encompassing an "extraordinary widespread infection of all human life" (438).[9] What is at stake here is not only Lukács's reification but the materialization of the links that bind it to the history of Soviet anti-imperialism through the particular moment of its inscription and, more importantly, the very idea of alignment laid bare in Fanon's reading of Lukács. For Said, Fanon's reception of the Lukácsian subject-object antimony as a European cultural import resituates the Hegelian dialectic within the history and geography of colonial Algeria and the revolutionary violence of the independence struggle.

In 1958, Fanon wrote when the Soviet Union realigned itself with Afro-Asian anti-imperial solidarity. Nikita Khrushchev's renewed orientation toward international anti-imperialist networks responded to both the show of Bandung solidarity in 1955 and the global outcry against Soviet imperialism after the Hungarian rebellion in 1956. Returning to the outward-looking policies of the Soviet Eastern International of the 1920s, Khrushchev began to renew international institutional links across the decolonizing Afro-Asian world, hailing a "zone of peace" across the socialist world and the "uncommitted states"—that is, the nonaligned third world.[10]

Lukács's *Realism in Our Time* (1958) reflects his shifting understanding of alignment following two major events: his exile in Tashkent during the

8. Said writes, "[W]hat I have been trying to show is that, as it has developed through the art and critical theories produced in complex ways by modernism, filiation gives birth to affiliation. Affiliation becomes a form of representing the filiative processes to be found in nature, although affiliation takes validated non-biological social and cultural forms" (Said 1983: 24). Taking up the political dimensions of intimacy, Ann Stoler writes, "to study the intimate is not to turn away from structures of dominance but to relocate their conditions of possibility and relations and forces of production" (Stoler 2006: 13).

9. Said writes, "Lukács's particular elaboration (some would say improvement) on the Hegelian and Marxian dialectic was to stress both the extraordinary widespread infection of all human life by reification—from the family to professional pursuits, psychology, and moral concerns—as well as the almost aesthetic character of reconciliation or healing process by which what was split asunder could be rejoined" (Said 2000: 438).

10. For a discussion of Khrushchev's speeches at the Twentieth Party Congress, see Kirasirova 2014: 326.

war and his support of the 1956 uprising. The latter resulted in his expulsion from the party. In contrast to his exploration of reification through the synthesis of the class-consciousness of the proletariat as an *insider* in 1923, as an *outsider* in 1958 he instead emphasizes the ways in which socialist realism formulates the boundaries of alignment through an insistence on both the place of transcription and transcendence of space.

Lukács argues that socialist realism is distinguished (from critical realism) "not only in being based in a concrete socialist perspective but also in using this perspective to describe the forces working toward socialism *from the inside*" (1962: 93). "This 'inside' method," he continues, "seeks to discover an Archimedean point in the midst of social contradictions and then bases its typology on an analysis of these contradictions" (94). "The perspective of socialism," Lukács concludes, "enables the writer to see society and history for what they are" (96). For Lukács, perspective serves as a system for organizing the space of socialist realism and, through it, rendering visible the problem of alignment.

While for Lukács this spatiality articulates the problem of subjectivity in socialist realism, Said's discussion of exile importantly distinguishes this mode of thought and literary praxis from a fixed ontology. He is indeed careful to distinguish intellectual exile from the misery of the displaced person, emphasizing a critique of exile as a fixed identity position (Said 1994: 331–32). In so doing, Said clarifies his engagement with Deleuze and Guattari, who articulate a similar distinction between nomadology as a form of thought from either a premodern ethnographic subject or a stateless person. Such a distinction is also crucial to understanding (non)alignment outside of the singularity of institutional politics.[11]

11. The notion of longing as pivot around which the Global South turns has been captured by several thinkers. To this end, Mulk Raj Anand writes, "[T]here is a search for the other in all writing. The young man seeks the beloved and writes about her when he cannot find her. The same is the longing of the writers who speak about the need for solidarity with other human beings from empathy" (Anand 1993: 184). Aamir Mufti discusses the formation of the materialist *ghazal* through a similar logic of longing, taking up the love ballads of Urdu poet, Afro-Asian Writer, and Lotus Prize winner Faiz Ahmed Faiz writing in the context of the partition of India. Mufti argues that Faiz's poetry marks a departure from "the personal love of the old *ghazal*," a devotion to the longing for a spiritual beloved, the embodiment of hidden truth and beauty that cannot be captured, into "the love of a people," articulating a major shift in the conception of poetry as not only part of spiritual tradition but as a material historical production, a "staging of selfhood that takes division seriously, refusing to treat it as merely epiphenomenal, as in the unity-in-diversity formula of Indian nationalism. It suggests, in fact, that division, the indefinitely extended

Toward a History of (Non)Alignment

Realigning an idea of Global Souths requires building on the relationships among interpersonal and intertextual exchanges generated through aligned and nonaligned networks. The history of these organizations in many ways begins with the Bandung Conference and renewed Soviet support the following year for the foundation of the Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Tashkent.[12] The Soviet Union returned to its foreign diplomacy of

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separation from the beloved, constitutes the very ground from which union can be contemplated" (Mufti 2007: 218). Tracing a similarly affiliative model of Cold War international solidarities, Leela Gandhi frames the events in France in May of 1968 as a turning point in the revival of a European utopian Left, which she argues had a significant impact, not only on poststructuralism but on postcolonial theory. Gandhi, however, importantly eschews the nihilism of the poststructural postmodern hybrid subject's privileged position, by emphasizing instead the subject's condition of insufficiency and sociality within a community that is not self-identical. Gandhi and Said share a common concern with the ethical implications of the post-Marxian subject, formulated for Gandhi through a Derridian "anti-communitarian communitarianism" and for Said through a reclaiming of the primacy of geography and history in traveling theory (Gandhi 2006). Most recently, in a 2008 address to the Arab Writers' League Conference in Cairo, entitled "Confessions of a Xenophile," novelist Amitav Ghosh introduced international solidarity as xenophilia, love for the stranger, as an affective bond generated across the institutional networks of the nonaligned movement. While Ghosh cites Gandhi as inspiration for xenophilia, his model also shares with Said the restorative gesture of reconstructing exchanges that were interrupted by European imperialism. The universalist structure of this form of solidarity, which served as the necessary counterpart to "the nationalist idiom of anti-colonial resistance," Ghosh describes an experience recalled from childhood. He remembers, "Those of us who grew up in that period will recall how powerfully we were animated by an emotion that is rarely named: this is xenophilia, the love of the other, the affinity for strangers—a feeling that lives very deep in the human heart, but whose very existence is rarely acknowledged." Xenophilia presents as a structure of feeling, "not a universalism merely of principles and philosophy, but one of face-to-face encounters, of everyday experience." Central to xenophilia is also a vision of culture as fragmented and incomplete. Ghosh reminds, "Only when our work begins to embody the conflicts, the pain, the laughter, and the yearning that comes from this incompleteness will our work be a true mirror of the world we live in." His emphasis on the experiential quality and affective registers of international solidarity as well as its incompleteness and insufficiency foregrounds the importance of the intersubjective dimension of literary ethics, a love for the Other as a form of political solidarity (Ghosh 2012).

12. Indeed, in his short memoir, Mulk Raj Anand connects the organizational efforts of the Bandung and Afro-Asian conferences directly. He writes, "[T]he conference (at the Non-Aligned Movement in Bandung) was a success. The participants were so impressed that they organized a conference of Afro-Asian writers in Tashkant [*sic*] the next year" (Anand 1993: 184).

the 1920s. Organizations such as the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS), the League Against Imperialism, and the International Organization of Proletarian Writers (MORP) positioned the Soviet domestic East (the Caucasus and Central Asia) as leaders in a united "non-capitalist road to development" across the foreign East (Asia and Africa).[13] While these networks brought a return to a politics of alignment between the "eastern proletariats," the terms of negotiation had shifted from an emphasis on anti-imperialism in the 1920s to one of "development" in the 1950s (Kirasirova 2014: 313–46).

The institutional formations that cross-aligned include the Afro-Asian Writers' Association and Afro-Asian and Latin-American conferences held across the former Soviet periphery and Middle East roughly from 1958 through 1989, the Gorki Institute of World Literature, Patrice Lumumba People's University, and the Gerasimov Institute for film (VGIK). Publications include translations printed in the Afro-Asian sponsored *Lotus* magazine, Afro-Asian sponsored anthologies in English, French, and Arabic, as well as Soviet collections of Afro-Asian writers published in Russian in Moscow and Tashkent.[14] While the spirit of these conferences built on the

13. The intra- and international work was realized through organizations such as the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with Asia and Africa (SKSSAA), a member of the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), later renamed the Organization of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OPAAL), which held conferences across the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America promoting exemplary Afro-Asian writers and filmmakers. The "non-capitalist road to development" was the Soviet development plan initiated by the CPS in 1961 (Kirasirova 2014: 326).

14. Despite being partially headquartered in Moscow, neither *Lotus* nor any official anthologies carrying the association's name were published in Russian. However, many writers affiliated with the organization were published in translation in the Soviet Union. For example, a few Algerian works published during this period include: Mohammed Dib, *Afrikanskoe Leto* (Moscow: Government Press for Artistic Literature, 1962), which was originally published in French in 1959; Moloud Mammeri, *Zabitiy Kholm* (1966); *Tsveti Noiabria* (1972), a collection of twenty-six stories from Dib and Mammeri with an introduction by V. Bashalov; Malek Haddad, *Perevernutaia stranitsa*, trans. K. Naumov (Moscow: Gospitizdat, 1963), which was first published as *Poslednyii otpechatok*, trans. K. Naumov, *Inostrannaia literatura* 5 (1962): 51–107, originally from the French *La Dernière impression* (1958); and a compilation which included *Je t'offrirai une gazelle* and *Le Quai aux Fleurs ne répond plus* (1961), entitled *Naberezhnaia tsvetov ne otvechaet: romany*, ed. S. Prozhoginoi (Moscow: Khudozhnaia Literature, 1988). Many collections were also published in which the work of other Algerian writers, such as Kateb Yacine, were featured, for example: *Sad v ogne: Rasskazy Alzhirskii pisatelei, 1954–1962*, ed. and trans. V. Mikhailov (Moscow: Nauka, 1967); *Vetv' olivy: Arabskaia poeziia XX veka*, trans. Mikhail Kurgantseva (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo literatury i iskusstva imeni Gafura Guliama, 1970).

decolonial imperatives of the watershed Bandung Conference, these meetings were partially funded and organized by both Moscow and local delegations in Central Asia, alongside representatives from nonaligned nations, particularly from India, Egypt, and Lebanon, where the early conferences were held.[15]

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o remembered the 1967 and 1973 conferences in Beirut and Alma Ata, as well as *Lotus*'s debut in 1968, as turning points that influenced his conception of literature and motivated his renaming of the English Department at the University of Nairobi to the Literature Department in 1969, expanding the curriculum to include writers from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic where he accepted the Lotus Prize, he remembers becoming aware of "the extent to which the Soviet Union encompassed Asia" and was "fascinated by the language question, the relationship between Russian and local national languages," as well as "the visible differences between Kazakhs and Russians."[16]

In his award acceptance speech, Ngũgĩ reflects on "the links that bind" Afro-Asian solidarity, citing *Dusk of Dawn* by W. E. B. Du Bois, who had been present at the first conference in Tashkent in 1958. While conceding that "[t]he ties of geography are easier to see," Ngũgĩ insists that "[a] shared experience of the past; a shared hope for the future: these then are the most enduring links that bind the African peoples on the continent and in diaspora with those of Asia" (La Guma 1978: 38–40). The speech

15. Despite Soviet efforts to control the transnational cultural sphere, many of these early efforts were limited or unsuccessful. For example, VOKS was not able to publish independently, and it often could not control the content of journals it sponsored abroad, such as the French journal *Clarité*. The first meeting of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) was held in November of 1956 and presided over by Tajik poet Mirzo Turson-Zade. It was not officially connected to the CPS but rather to a member of the Cairo-based nongovernmental organization who worked with the CP since its inception (Kirasirova 2014: 336). The Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Tashkent 1958 was attended by Nâzım Hikmet, Sembene Ousmane, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, and W. E. B. Du Bois, and many others. *Lotus*'s editors included Youssef Sebai and Edwar al-Kharrat of Egypt, Mouloud Mammeri of Algeria, Mulk Raj Anand of India, Faiz Ahmed Faiz of Pakistan, Alex La Guma of South Africa, and Anatoly Sofronov of the Soviet Union.

16. These quotations are from a videoconference with Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o at "The Afro-Asian Writers' Association: An Inventory Workshop," May 19, 2017, New York University. In his description of the conference, he also remembered a horse-meat plov that he was served. Fellow Lotus Prize winners that year included Kateb Yacine, Ousmane Sembene, and Alex La Guma. For a discussion of the impact of the Afro-Asian Writers' Conferences in China, see Liu 2014.

then concludes with a series of intertextual links, to "the links that bind us to the words" of the Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbayev, Vietnamese poet Thu Bon, and the verse of Sembene. For Ngũgĩ, it is not the geopolitics of these institutional networks but rather the shared experience generated through intertextual links that bind the decolonial struggle, which make visible both a sense of history and a (speculative) futurity.

In *Dusk of Dawn*, Du Bois frames his personal autobiography within a larger vision of Pan-African history. This vision of Pan-Africanism, however, at moments seems to reject a biological conception of race, what he terms the "relatively unimportant" "badge of color" (Du Bois 2007: 59; see also Appiah 1992: 28–46). Instead, he argues that "the children of Africa," "yellow Asia and into the South Seas," are joined through the "kinship" of the "social heritage of slavery" (Du Bois 2007: 59). Revisiting these theoretical travels through the question of alignment allows for a reterritorialization of decolonial theory, which, as Fanon argues, grounds solidarity in the materiality of a history of race. Indeed, as Fanon writes, "It is at the heart of national consciousness that international consciousness establishes itself and thrives" (Fanon 2004: 180). The links that bind formulate a kinship through the social history of (non)aligned networks and expose an intersubjective vision of literarity in its intertextual remains. Ngũgĩ thus reinscribes Du Bois's social history of kinship through a (non)aligned assemblage of utterances bound into a dialogue across *Lotus*'s transnational pages.

Love Stories: Aitmatov and Haddad

In 1958, Aitmatov published his first novel, *Djamilia*, in Russian and Kyrgyz. A year later, the poet Louis Aragon translated it into French, putting the novel into international distribution.[17] *Djamilia* reflects a worldly socialist realist intention marked by Aitmatov's tenure at the Gorky Institute of World Literature, whose most notable writers in residence included Libyan author Ibrahim Al-Koni, Akhazian author Fazil Iskander, and theorist Mikhail Bakhtin.[18] Bakhtin's rediscovery in the 1950s among the students at Gorky coincided with a series of discussions about broadening the aes-

17. As early as 1925, Aragon began to occupy an important role in the French Communist Party through his involvement with the journal *Clarité*, which received funding from the Comintern (OSA 1925–26: f. 541, op. 1, d. 128, s 93).

18. On the Gorky Institute of World Literature and Bakhtin's involvement, see Emerson 1997: 42.

thetics of socialist realism as an "artistic form of thought [*khudozhestvennoe mshlenie*]" as a way of reclaiming socialist realist aesthetics from the politics of Soviet state building.[19]

Penned shortly after Aitmatov's graduation from Gorky, the novel recounts the controversial decision by a young woman, Djamilia, to elope with her lover, Daniiar, whom she meets working on a delivery line transporting grain while her husband is at war. The narrator Seit's own coming-of-age story, chronicling his passage into adulthood and the life of a painter, frames this love story. Various critics often describe the narrator's frame-story highlights as a "Stalinist master plot," an "ideological *Bildungsroman*," in which the physical completion of a task in the public sphere transforms the hero, who has gained a psychic awareness of her social-political consciousness.[20] In this case, a *Künstleroman*, one of the narrator's paintings, represents the love intrigue. In a turn that echoes Foucault's reading of Diego Velázquez's *Las Meninas*, the painting dramatizes the very idea of representation (Foucault 1970: 3–16). *Djamilia* begins with the narrator's contemplation of his competed canvas, which prompts him to retrace the love story from the edges of its frames.

> Once again I stand in front of the small painting in a simple frame. Tomorrow morning I have to leave for the village, and I gaze long and intently at the canvas, as if it could give me a kind parting word. I have still not exhibited this painting. Moreover, when relatives from the village come to visit, I hide it away. There is nothing too shameful in it, but it's far from being a work of art. It is plain, just like the plain earth depicted in it. . . . The footprints of two travelers stretch across a washed-out track. The further they go the fainter on the road they appear and it seems that if the travelers themselves take another step—they will exit the frame. One of them . . . However, I'm rushing a bit ahead. (Aitmatov 1982: 80)

Aitmatov distinguishes the private, sentimental function of the painting-as-object from the formal artistic criteria required of an *obra-*

19. For a discussion of this movement in the 1950s, see Thomas Lahusen, "Socialist Realism in Search of Its Shores: Some Historical Remarks on the 'Historically Open Aesthetic System of the Truthful Representation of Life,'" in Lahusen and Dobrenko 1997: 9–10. The Gorky Institute Congress proceedings were published in 1959 in *Voprosy literatury*.
20. On the Stalinist master plot, see Clark 2000. For a discussion of the Soviet novel as ideological *Bildungsroman*, see Clark, "The Russian Epic Novels of the Soviet Period," in Dobrenko and Balina 2011: 135–53, esp. 138.

zets iskusstva, a model or specimen of art—that is, a public-sanctioned example of the official style of socialist realism. However, the painting's failure to qualify as "art" also lends it material value as a catalyst for the narrator's path to adulthood and the love story of *Djamilia*. The painting's reflection of the natural landscape both formally and conceptually emphasizes this tension between its function as object and subject: "It is plain, just like the plain earth depicted in it [*Ona prosta, kak prosta zemlia, izobrazhennaia na nei*]." The narrator's gaze falls upon the footprints of two travelers, whose steps seem to come to life. Aitmatov's punctuation blurs the distance between representation and reality; an em-dash both links and separates the traveler's path from the painting's frame. Indeed, the movement of the travelers is also echoed in the narrator's account, as he notes, "I'm rushing a bit ahead [*ia begaiu nemnogo vpered*]" of the events in the story. The narrative itself thus further replicates the painting's artistic and nonartistic qualities, its representational function as well as its materiality. The setting of the novel, as well as its structure—a story of a painting within a story—emphasizes competing perspectives that confuse the relationships between the world, the story, the painting, and the author. The painted figure's transcendence of the frame brings the representation into contact with the archetypes of socialist realism that structure the story, as well as the material realities of wartime Soviet Central Asia. In this sense, the passage performs an overcoming of the conditions of alienation through the destruction of the limitations of high art, as well as the fluid transition from the narrator's frame story to the central love plot of the novel.

In selecting a painting as the frame for his narrative, Aitmatov recalls an aesthetic debate that began in the 1920s, identifying the role of figurative painting in engendering "comradely relations [*tovarishcheskie sviazi*]" (see Lucento 2014: 152). The theorist and Commissar of the Enlightenment Anatoly Lunacharsky argued that the materiality of the figurative realist painting has a "poetic" quality, which resonates with the viewer's perception of the world.[21] Lunacharsky here draws on Bakhtin's early conception of an ethics of empathy, developed in his 1919 essay "Art and Answerability."[22] Bakhtin argues that art generates one's ethical responsibility, one's answerability to life. The literary word's responsibility draws upon the tension between an ethical accountability and the form of dialogue. Bakhtin writes, "I have to answer with my own life for what I have experienced [*perezhil*] and under-

21. Indeed, Lunacharsky was an avid reader of Bakhtin's work.

22. For a discussion of Bakhtin's ethics of empathy, see chap. 2 in Feldman 2018.

stood [*ponial*] in art, so that everything I have experienced [*perezhitoe*] and understood would not remain ineffectual in my life. . . . Art and life are not one, but they must become united in myself—in the unity of my answerability [*Iskusstvo i zhizn' ne odno, no dolzhny stat' v mne edinym v edinstve moei otvetstvennosti*]" (Bakhtin 2003: 5–6; 1990: 2–3). For Bakhtin, literature serves as a meaningful organization of experience (*perezhivanie*), as that which makes experience legible. The empathetic response of the viewer, facilitated by this poetic materiality, thus also produces her relationship to the world and others, or, in Lunacharsky's phrase, comradely social relations. What is deceptively a theory of intertextuality instead reveals the text's material engagement with the world. Aitmatov sees this literary ethics filtered through the Bakhtian renaissance at Gorky. It traces the formation of an alternative vision of socialist realism as an "artistic form of thought," as a desire that produces the material conditions of Seit's brushwork and Daniiar's love songs to Djamilia as they labor together in the fields.

Djamilia and Daniiar fall in love while fulfilling their comradely duties hauling grain to the shipyards. However, Daniiar's songs on their walks home bring the two together. On the one hand, the power of these "native songs" exposes the colonial relationship between the national republics and the Soviet imperial metropole. This dynamic echoes in the linguistic composition of the text. Written in Russian with some Kyrgyz words and phrases, *Djamilia* integrates the two languages, though Russian remains dominant. Daniiar's songs, by contrast, challenge the centrality of Russian to the text. An orphan raised in a Kazakh village, Daniiar returns to the Kyrgyz village of his birth after he is disabled in combat. His songs, which inspire Djamilia's love and the narrator's artistic talents, are themselves the product of the landscape. Aitmatov writes, "Daniiar's music had absorbed the best melodies from the two native peoples and interwove them in its own way into a unique and unrepeatable song. This was a song of the mountains and steppe, at once soaring clearly like the Kyrgyz Mountains, and then spreading freely like the Kazakh steppes" (Aitmatov 1982: 105–6). The folk song reflects its natural landscape, *steliuschaiasia*, evoking a botanical lexicon. However, the emphasis is not on the artist's role in crafting the hybrid work but rather on the music itself, which absorbed (*vobrala*) the two melodies and wove them together (*splela*). Notably, the music's incorporation of two distinct traditions produces not a single homogeneous Soviet whole but rather an expression of "a great love, of life and the land [*ogromnaia liubov—k zhizni, k zemle*]" (106). In Deleuzean and Guattarian form, Aitmatov does not focus on Djamilia as the singular object of Daniiar's

desire but rather emphasizes the affective currents that become visible in the song. The song instead produces the social, economic, and topographical landscape of his homeland, which transcends the Soviet-defined borders of the Kyrgyz and Kazakh republics.

The artist's account of his creative awakening makes visible and conscious the acts of falling in love and storytelling. Aitmatov thus exposes the interactions between characters through their relationship to artistic creation: "All of his great love for his native land, which gave birth to this inspired music inside of him, Daniiar gave entirely to her, he sang for her, he sang of her. Once again I was overcome by that very strange excitement, which always came with Daniiar's songs. And suddenly it became clear to me, what I wanted. I wanted to draw them" (112).

In witnessing Daniiar's love, which is crucially born in his native land and passes through Djamilia, the narrator Seit becomes conscious of his own calling. This master plot of Seit's artistic awakening thus highlights the interdependence of author, novel, painting, and world. Not only does the author write, but his writings are also *born*, like Daniiar's songs, in the dialogic interplay between the landscape and characters. Seit's painting, in turn, captures their *image in literature*. Again, the Bakhtinian parallel becomes legible. Bakhtin frames these points of connection between conscious subjects as moments of crisis that reveal *chronotopes*, or the "image [*ibraz*] of the human in literature" (1997–2012: 3:342). Bakhtin's dynamic relational ontology reveals the crisis in individual subjectivity that produces social connections, which rupture into the diverse registers of speech of this multilingual and multivocal novel.

Linking Aitmatov to Haddad was the French publisher and surrealist turned socialist realist Louis Aragon. Aragon's political and aesthetic conversion is often dated to his attendance at the Soviet Writers' Congress of 1934, where Andrei Zhdanov famously outlined socialist realism as the official style of a Soviet literature, an event which itself played a notable role in the formation of Soviet cultural imperialism.[23] Building on Zhdanov in his 1937 tract *Realisme Socialiste*, Aragon described the process of translation as the revelation of authorial consciousness.[24] He proposes the translation

23. On the institutionalization of Soviet national literatures, see Schild 2010.

24. Aragon takes up Zhdanov's notion of the artist as *engineer of the soul*. However, here Aragon argues that this does not necessitate a new kind of writer but rather that "[w]riters have always been the engineers of souls without the knowledge of being so" and in "becoming conscious of this knowledge [they] can become complete engineers of the mind" (Aragon 1937: 11).

of a set of French Romantic writers into Russian socialist realists: envisioning Arthur Rimbaud as a potential Vladimir Mayakovsky and Victor Hugo a Maxim Gorky.[25] He argues that the project of the committed artist is one that reawakens the inner conflict of history through which individuals can transform themselves beyond the dictates of their given social conditions. To this end, Aragon founded the press *Les Editeurs Francais Réunis*, which had exclusive rights to the official translation and publication of Soviet literature in France and regulated French and African literature published in the USSR (see Djagalov 2011: 70).[26] He introduced *Djamilia* through an allusion to Kipling—as "the most beautiful love story in the world." Indeed, Kipling's *The Finest Story in the World* (1891), as Aragon notes, recounts the apprenticeship of a young writer, whose telling of his love story between a Viking adventurer and Greek slave blurs the line between history and fiction. Returning to Djamilia, Aragon continues: "[I]n this Paris that has seen all, read all, experienced all . . . *Werther*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Sentimental Education* . . . they are nothing to me because I've read Djamilia, neither are Romeo and Juliette . . . because I met Daniiar and Djamilia in the summer of the third year of the war, in this night in August 1943, somewhere in the valley of Koukouréou, with their grain carts and the child Seit who recounts their story [*histoire*]" (Aïtmatov 1983: 11).

Aragon perhaps ventures a subtle critique of a classical canon of Western literature, which juxtaposes the greatest love stories against the French modernist cliché "It's all been said before." The strength of Aitmatov's novel, Aragon continues, "lies in the fact that as readers we learn of an unknown [country] . . . from within by beings for whom [all of] this is natural and requires no explication" (14). Indeed, the history of the war in Soviet Central Asia is here made present and immediate to the Paris of Aragon's present, as well as a vision of a European canonical cultural past. Aragon thus presents socialist realism through the translation of the "Kyrgyz novel" into French and the power of the love story's simultaneous timelessness and immediacy.

Aragon highlights the tension between literature's capacities to embody an immediate experience for the reader that exceeds description. His focus on consciousness as the determining feature of literature's political force echoes Lukács's vision of socialist realism as the revelation of his-

25. Svetlana Boym argues that Aragon's appropriation of Mayakovsky "marks his recuperation of a Cartesian conception of a rational self, a romantic notion of poetic genius, and the jargon of scientific materialism" (Boym 1991: 161–81).
26. See also RGANI 1955.

tory from *within*. Aitmatov's novel similarly reveals intertwining conscious subjectivities organizing the space of socialist realism, which render visible the problem of alignment. Officially, *Djamilia*'s master plot exposes Daniiar and Djamilia's love both in the moment of Seit's artistic awakening and through the materiality of his brushwork. However, its vision of the steppe also highlights another *inside*, Aitmatov's experience as a Soviet Russophone Kyrgyz writer. Aragon's translation attempts to situate an encounter with the characters of Aitmatov's novel *as if* they are real people who bring the wartime Kyrgyz steppe of 1943 to a contemporary Paris shaken by the return of Charles de Gaulle and the Algerian War of Independence.

In 1959, a year after the French publication of *Djamilia*, Malek Haddad published his novel, *Je t'offrirai une gazelle*, which I translate as *I Present You a Gazelle*, emphasizing the novel's intertwining play with tense and temporality, representation and gifts. The novel, another story within a story, recounts an unnamed Algerian author's failed attempt to publish a novel in Paris during the war. A Marxist poet and teacher, Haddad received his formal education in France, where he penned the novel before returning to Algeria after the war to serve in the ministry of culture. While studying in Paris, he became acquainted with Aragon and his orbit of French communist writers. Haddad had a complex relationship with the international Communist Party. During his trip to Moscow, while avowing himself a communist, he complained that the French CP lacked the spirit of the international in their failure to support the National Liberation Front, or FLN.[27] Indeed, in the critical Marxist mode, the novel also highlights 1956 as an alternative decolonial pivot when the author places the cries of liberation of Budapest alongside Algeria: "— . . . The struggle of the Algerian people / —And Budapest, an excited shout" (Haddad 2003: 28). As Amazigh, for Haddad, *nationalism* expressed a necessary mode of resistance to Arab and French imperialism, as well as its ties to contemporary forces of global capitalism. Haddad's self-annihilating nationalism, in the vein of Said's traveling theory, articulates his novel's worldly *intention* or *commitment* to supranational French-Arabic-Tamazight poetic and cultural traditions.

Like Aitmatov, Haddad structures his novel within a novel as a love story set in a home rendered strange in its French inscription. An Algerian writer tries to publish his novel about a young man, Moulay, as he attempts to capture a gazelle to win the affection of his beloved, Yaminata.

27. Haddad criticizes the Communist Party's lack of support of the FLN and also its indirect persecution of the Amazigh (see RGALI 1962).

The gazelle, a symbol from classical poetry, can be a personification of the beloved, beauty, spiritual knowledge and of the impossibility of its apprehension. Additionally, the figure of the gazelle appears in Islamic *hadith* professing the *tawhid*—or the primacy of God and the prophet Muhammad. The hunt for the gazelle and the impossibility of its living capture as a model for affiliative belonging or desire without an object frames the author's struggle to write in French during the Algerian War. Haddad's novel is set in this present moment amid the divided Marxist politics of 1958 Paris. However, in the novel, these ideological forces appear only as fragmented details that highlight the author's sense of alienation as a Marxist francophone Algerian writer, conscious of his being surrounded by imperialist supporters despite the large Algerian community in Paris.

Haddad describes his divided linguistic consciousness as a form of self-translation. He writes in "Les Zéros tournent en rond," "Even in expressing oneself in French, the Algerian writers of Berbo-Arab origin *translate* a *specifically Algerian idea*, an idea that would have found the fullness of its expression *if it had been transported* [*vehiculée*] *by an Arabic language and literature*" (Haddad 1961: 34). In Fanonian form, Haddad's divided linguistic consciousness leads not to the impossibility of communication but rather to its imperfect mobilization through the *mots de transport* of translation. For Haddad as for Fanon, language renders visible the material imprint of the colonial history on the psyche. In this sense, I distinguish a surrealist impulse to *destabilize* meaning from a conception of literature's capacity to *realize* the comradely relations between author, text, and world.[28]

I Present You a Gazelle also perhaps presents a homonymic play on the gazelle as beloved and the classical Arabo-Persianate poetic form of the *ghazal*, a tension that embodies the struggle of interlingual, intertextual, and intersubjective communication. This is a desire untethered to a linguistic object, but it produces a decolonial Algeria that has not yet become institutionalized as a state. In the author's story, Moulay dreams of killing the gazelle, but while awake she speaks to him, instructing him to abandon his hopes of trapping her and to believe in her existence. This encounter with the speaking gazelle alludes to an Islamic *hadith*, in which the prophet Muhammed releases a gazelle as it affirms the *shahadah*—that is, the act

28. However, any optimism for the potential for communication in translation invoked in this reading of socialist connections in traveling theory is tempered by framing this moment in the present post-Soviet collapse of the institutions of international solidarity, a moment that perhaps lends itself more fully to the destabilization of meaning that Leela Gandhi describes.

of witnessing God. The gazelle confirms the oneness and truth of God with her recitation of the *tawhid*: there is no god but God.[29] In Haddad's text, the author affirms the gazelle's existence by bearing witness to a truth in words.

> The gazelle approached Moulay.
>
> Say what you will: maybe it was a true gazelle [*vraie gazelle*], maybe it was a true gazelle [*vraie gazelle*] that was not real [*vrai*]. What it said was always true [*vrai*], the real words [*varies paroles*] of the gazelle:
>
> You'd have to be mad to want to capture me, Moulay. You have to believe in me, but not follow me. You'd have to be mad to want to capture me, Moulay. (Haddad 2003: 113)

The paradoxical statement that the gazelle is both real and unreal or a true and untrue belief interrogates the failures of representation. The gazelle is true or real in the author's tale but not in Haddad's. Haddad reminds us that the words of the gazelle are true, at least in the sense that they are real words. The syntax of the sentence and the doubled play on *vrai* as both true and real destabilize a certainty as to whether what is told is true or simply composed of real words. Truth is first located in the gazelle's form, then her story, and finally her words. She asks Moulay to believe in her through these true words much like the gazelle in the *hadith* affirms her belief in God in her utterance of the true words of the *tawhid*. Haddad seems to suggest that even if words are not always true, reality manifests *through* the materiality of the word. The *true gazelle* is made visible in the French text only through a desire to materialize a thought in French that exceeds the limits of the French language.

The gazelle travels in the story, not only through translation but also in the form of a gift, a gesture of love and a material object through which the story traces affiliative relations. Haddad offers the gift of the gazelle twice, in Moulay's promise to Yaminata and in the author's manuscript, which he presents to the French publisher, another double, Gisèle. Yaminata requests the gazelle as evidence, Moulay's *temoignage d'amour*. "The next time you return, Moulay, I would like you to bring me a gazelle, a living gazelle. Gazelles are not gazelles unless they are living" (24–25).

29. "So he released her and she ran away crying out: There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is his messenger!" The account of the *hadith* is on the authority of al-Tabarani, al-Baayhaqi, and Ibn Hajar, based on account of Umm Salama (one of the prophet's wives) (cited in Bürgel 1989: 7).

The gazelle, and in turn Haddad's novel, must not only be true but also *living*. The capture of the gazelle, like a desire fixed to an object, forecloses its capacity to generate connections within the story, whether Yaminata's love or the author's novel. The gazelle promises a love that transcends language. In the consummation of their love, Yaminata offers Moulay a child:

> —I will give you a child, and you, my lord, will present me a gazelle.
> Then she said at the moment of the miracle:
> —I love you.
> In Arabic, it's a verb that exceeds the idea [*dépasse l'idée*]. (97)

The exchange of gifts, the child and gazelle, invokes the poetic and physical as affective domains that exceed the French language of the novel's inscription, gesturing toward an Arabic that finds no translation. Indeed, Haddad speaks of an Arabic he does not write. Rather, the unuttered verb *je t'aime*, which the reader must imagine *en arabe*, is instead consecrated in the "miracle" of the physical act and the figurative poetic gift. Haddad similarly materializes the space of the desert in Yaminata's appeal to Moulay: "It was these words that left a trace in the mulled hollow of an eternity, like the footprints the little feet of Yaminata left on the sand" (25). Indeed, the gazelle *lives* in Yaminata's footsteps, Moulay's promise, the author's manuscript, and, in turn, in the novel itself. Hadadd draws a parallel between the words that evade the author and the gazelle's flight from her hunter. The author's need to grasp, or indeed to bear witness to, the story echoes Moulay's desire for the gazelle and the gazelle's witness to the prophet. Similarly, like Moulay, the author will present his gazelle in manuscript form to the French Gisèle as Haddad will to his readers.

The gazelle in this way traces the boundaries of the literary text through its intelligibility to multiple readerships, as those who understand the words of the gazelle. After the Moulay's successful hunt, the gazelle lies dying. Haddad writes, "Those who understand the gazelle's speech heard those words burst like a broken heart" (41). The gazelle connects this series of frames from the author's writing to the love story and the Algerian War. Moulay hears the gazelle's pain because he occupies a place within the story and its system of signs. However, this speaking gazelle also evokes the magic tradition of the djinn of the Imazighen, as beings that animate the Tamazgah desert landscape. Similarly, only those who can understand the French language and the passage of the cultural symbol from Arabo-Persian classical poetry to the Tamazgah landscape can hear Haddad's story. In presenting the gift of the gazelle, as its title announces, the novel

generates a tense and unrealized desire for alignment that renders legible the material imprint of Algeria's decolonial history and looks toward forms of belonging beyond both empire and the rigid boundaries of the nation-state.

Recalling the centrality of song to Aitmatov's novel, the gazelle triggers a set of forces that operate extralinguistically. Indeed, the author's relationship to his German lover Gerda, with whom he shares no common language, is embodied in her gift of a harmonica, which Haddad notes, "speaks all languages" (64). This episode recalls Aitmatov's emphasis on the powerful affect of Daniiar's song, which both earns Djamilia's love and realizes the narrator's own artistic consciousness. Aitmatov relies on Russian prose to imagine Daniiar's Kyrgyz-Kazakh song just as Haddad's gazelle relies on the French narrative to gift his gazelle.

Read together, the novels generate a desire for (non)alignment through their presentation of the very failures of representation. The novels' failure to reflect a singular reality, to recall Deleuze and Guattari again, instead exposes semiotic, material, and social currents that course between these divided colonial histories, collapsing the distance between reality, representation, and subjectivity. The novels, furthermore, highlight moments in which the French and Russian language of their inscription fail to translate elements of the Tamazight and Kyrgyz-Kazakh stories. Haddad asks us to "[i]magine above all the inadequacy of a verbal abundance [*generosité verbale*] and the sufficiency of words . . . these words like the sand in this arid sentence [*phrase désertique*] that nonetheless irrigates the illusion of saying something" (84). These linguistic limitations, in the space of the impossibility of paradox, expose affective currents from within the novels' poetic tissue that assemble desire, pulsating in the space between (non)alignment. Aitmatov offers a vision of the Soviet national republic dialectic that surpasses the international, what he calls the task of "thinking planetarily [*myslit planetarno*]," expressing the relationship between imperial and environmental destruction (Aitmatov n.d.: 113–33). Haddad's novel, on the other hand, sits among the communist international, decolonization, and an emergent Algerian nationalism. Haddad frames his rallying cry through the affective bonds the gazelle generates. He writes, "It's for the good of the gazelles and the harmonicas that we fight" (Haddad 2003: 123). Such (inter)nationalism exists always in relation, in this case, formulating both a structural resistance to imperialism and a continuity across Arabic-French-Tamazigh communities. The gazelle remains at once a contested territory as well as a deterritorialized belief, a cultural symbol and commitment to the possibility of comradely relations.

As the novels produce a desire for (non)alignment, they render both authorial consciousness and the second language of their inscription from the *inside*. Such authorial *orientations* form circuits that at once draw upon the tense colonial histories of their textual origins and the failure of philosophy to cope with the crumbling materiality of language, which, as M. N. Roy writes, demands a new humanism to reunite thinking matter and mind together in a "monistic materialism."[30] Despite their divergent novelistic portraits of Soviet Kyrgyzstan and French Algeria, the texts materialize the colonial experience in their imprint of the geopolitics of 1958 on their vision of the psychic experience of the author, rendering legible the distance across aligned and nonaligned Global Souths. In so doing, they conceive of a solidarity between a Marxist international and decolonial politics as politically engaged, not through the hegemonic forces of geopolitical and institutional alliances but through the affective possibilities their longing for alignment generates. In our post-Soviet post–Cold War moment, in which the material failures of communication have coincided with the collapse of these very forms of international solidarity and separation, Haddad's charge is more prescient than ever. In the longing for affiliation that lingers in the traces of harmonicas and gazelles, there is the thing worth fighting for.

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30. The twentieth-century physics revelation that "the substratum of the world was not composed of 'hard lumps of reality'" requires a rethinking of humanism. M. N. Roy envisions "New Humanism" on the horizon of what he terms "monistic materialism," a vision of the universe as cosmos that precedes the dualistic severing of matter and mind. New Humanism encompasses "a philosophy which will give an integrated picture of human existence and explain human existence, including desire, emotion, instincts, intuitions, will, reason, without going outside the physical world, which is at least theoretically accessible to human comprehension" (Roy 2004: 17).

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