Literature Compass 6/6 (2009): 1198–1210, 10.1111/j.1741-4113.2009.00662.x

The Travels of Naturalism and the Challenges of a World Literary History

Christopher L. Hill*
Yale University

Abstract

The history of the naturalist novel reveals shortcomings of recent proposals for the study of world literature, such as those of Franco Moretti and Pascale Casanova. After a naturalist esthetic coalesced in France in the 1860s naturalist schools appeared around the world. Contrary to what models of diffusion predict, naturalism flourished in distant parts of the world at the same time as its triumph in Europe, while writers nearer France rejected it. The examples of naturalism in Argentina, Brazil, Japan, China, and Korea, reveal multiple, overlapping histories that make up the heterogeneous planetary history of the form. Naturalism's movement was aided by its association with non-fictional genres such as criminology, and flourished where other forms of realistic fiction were not well established. Even when naturalism bore the standard for realism, however, it formed unexpected alliances with other esthetics and shifted its associations with non-fictional genres. Rather than focusing on the origination and reception of forms such as the naturalist novel, studies of world literature should focus on the conditions of travel through which such unexpected transformations occur.

When we think about the global circulation of literary forms, it typically is in terms of departures and arrivals. A particular manner of writing appears in one place, achieves some renown, and is 'received' someplace else. Thinking about departures and arrivals encourages imagining the planet through an international logic, as if it were composed of points where forms take off and land. What happens in between is usually called 'diffusion', an outward radiation from the point of origin. In their own ways the most important models we have for literary history on a planetary scale, those of Franco Moretti and Pascale Casanova, reason in such terms. More than any of the other recent efforts to imagine how we might write the literary history of the world, the work of Moretti and Casanova boldly addresses the impact of global systems on local literary practice. Yet each sketches a world of national (or at most regional) literatures interacting globally. Moretti, in explaining the diffusion of the European novel, emphasizes its interaction with 'local' narrative forms upon arrival, while Casanova sketches an international literary field, centered on France, in which writers in peripheral nations adopt European forms to gain prestige. While the international logic of Moretti and Casanova may reflect their frequent stress on Europe as a point of departure, it bears observing that the typical response, to focus on 'appropriation' at the point of arrival, as peripheral writers turn European forms to their own purposes, relies on the same logic of departures and arrivals. At a time when transnational movements of capital and people have exposed the historicity of national culture, we should ask whether an international logic can grasp the history of literary forms on a planetary scale.

The history of naturalist fiction, a variety of European realism that moved quickly around the world in the late 19th century and the early 20th, is an exemplary case for examining the shortcomings of current models of world literary history. In European

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

literature, 'naturalism' typically describes a tendency in fiction that appeared beginning in the 1860s, focusing on documentary depiction of a milieu often chosen for the way it revealed social pathologies. Writers practicing naturalism in this sense sought to expel sentimentality and moral judgment from representation, going out of their way to examine aspects of society and psychology previously considered out of bounds for fiction. They defended their approach through frequent programmatic statements, in the form of prefaces and critical manifestos. The dysphoric plots they created, often propelled by hereditary and environmental determinism, reflected the explicit connections they drew between their work and non-literary genres for the representation of psychology and social behavior, such as emerging disciplines in the social sciences.[1] In the 1870s Emile Zola, the principal figure of the French school, promoted the terms *naturalisme* and *naturaliste* to refer to the tendency and its adherents (Hemmings 109–10). The labels stuck, traveling the world alongside the narrative practices to which they referred and entering the critical vocabulary of distant parts of the planet as they were translated into multiple languages.

The programmatic side of naturalism and the wide recognition of the name made it easy for writers to identify themselves as part of the tendency by embracing the label and alluding to key works, particularly those of Zola. (For the same reason it is relatively easy to trace such self-identifications, the approach I will take in this essay.) As they traveled the world, however, the techniques associated with 'naturalism' changed significantly and the label attached to them thereby gained many meanings, not all compatible with each other. The history of naturalist fiction thus offers a concrete case for examining the transformations of form that result from movement, a critical challenge in current efforts to study literary history on a planetary scale. The example of naturalism also reveals the pitfalls of the current tendency to imagine such a history in purely literary terms, because the travels of naturalism were aided by (and aided in turn) the travels of the other genres of social knowledge with which it aligned itself. The history of naturalism on a planetary scale moreover upsets the evolutionary commonplaces that have crept from national literary histories, with their emphasis on internal development, into new histories of world literature. The histories of naturalism in Latin America and East Asia, the major examples in this essay, show that naturalism frequently was the means by which techniques of European realism were introduced to narrative form in other parts of the world. Yet as it moved, naturalism often formed seemingly unusual combinations with other literary practices, including earlier tendencies in European literature and techniques that emerged historically in other parts of the world, upsetting linear teleologies of form. Understanding why it did so requires us to account for multiple periods in the movement of European literary forms, which reached different parts of the world at different times and with varying effect. Indeed, the naturalist novel reveals multiple, overlapping histories, together forming a heterogeneous history on the scale of the planet, whose patterns of circulation are considerably more complex than models of diffusion anticipate. I will ultimately suggest that neither departure nor arrival but travel itself, the condition in which unexpected combinations and non-sequential juxtapositions take shape, is the key to understanding the properly transnational history of naturalist fiction. This episode in world literary history, then, offers us possibilities to open orderly models of the circulation of forms to the chaotic space of the planet.

The history of the naturalist novel is usually told as an internal European story. The narrative given by Yves Chevrel, whose important work set the agenda for much scholarship, is a representative example. Chevrel describes the history of naturalism as a process of 'diffusion' that proceeded through successive 'waves' (Chevrel 33, 37). The emergence

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

of the naturalist novel proper was preceded by a preliminary wave of realistic depictions of everyday life that appeared independently in several countries. Examples are: Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857), Gustav Freytag's *Debit and Credit* (*Soll and Haben*, 1855), and Tolstoy's *Tales of Sevastopol* (*Sevastopol'skie rasskazy*, 1856). Out of such realist currents came the first wave of naturalist novels, among them the Goncourt brothers' *Germinie Lacerteux* (1864), Zola's *Thérèse Raquin* (1867), and Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, 1866). Although other developments in Europe could be considered to contribute to the first wave, the main force (in Chevrel's view) was French. It was supported by a series of reflections on technique such as the Goncourts' preface to *Germinie Lacerteux*. In the naturalist 'groundswell' in the years around 1880, separate national developments became an international phenomenon, with the French school of *naturalisme* gaining a dominant position through a flood of new novels, translations, and programmatic statements such as Zola's *The Experimental Novel* (*Le Roman expérimental*) published in the same year as his sensational *Nana* (1880). (From this time on naturalism increasingly was identified with Zola; 'Zolaism' became a pejorative synonym.) Chevrel identifies naturalist novels (and several plays) in this period in Germany, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Russia, and England. A third wave followed in the late 1880s, in which naturalism achieved near domination of the novel across Europe, with major writers who previously kept their distance showing signs of accommodation. At the same time, the movement began to split from inside, as young writers in France denounced Zola and Ibsen declared his differences with him. In Chevrel's final wave, in the early 1890s, naturalism was moribund in France (Zola alone carrying on) yet still a vital force elsewhere, particularly in Germany but also in the United States, where Stephen Crane made his debut with *Maggie* (1893). By the turn of the century, naturalism had ceased to exert a direct influence on the development of literary form (Chevrel 37–48).

Chevrel's account annexes a great number of works to a movement that he defines mainly through the work of Zola and his followers. Whether *verismo* in Italy or the work of Russian realists such as Dostoevsky was identical to French naturalism is subject to debate. Several of Chevrel's waves, moreover, are too close to each other to be meaningfully distinct, and by his own admission some key works such as Zola's *L'Assommoir* (1877) lie in what would be troughs (Chevrel 48). Momentarily setting aside such empirical objections to Chevrel's impressive synthesis, we can draw out several basic assumptions. Chevrel relies on an organic scheme in which literary forms emerge through internal evolution. The realist novel is a determinate stage in such evolution, the naturalist novel an extension of its inherent tendencies, inevitably succeeded by further phases. The chronology of forms unfolds in an area bounded by Asian Russia and the Atlantic, the Arctic and the Mediterranean; the transactions that transform scattered national tendencies into an international movement likewise observe these boundaries in a closed circuit. Chevrel's argument that the tendencies of the realist novel achieved their naturalist germination in France, from which the new school radiated to distant areas, shows that the 'waves' of his history of naturalism are not only temporally serial but also spatially concentric, in the ripples-in-a-pond manner of diffusionist models. In Chevrel's scheme, writers outside Europe do not contribute to naturalism's development, although they can, like Crane, be enlisted to extend the life of the school when it is in decline; they appear at the end of its history as buyers of week-old bread. One may observe in passing that Chevrel's view of French writers as the propagators of new literary forms, which pass to Europe and the rest of the world, persists in Casanova's view that France, and Europe broadly, sets the 'mean time' of formal development in the world literary republic (Casanova 87–8). Chevrel's suggestion that the naturalist novel does not leave Europe until it has achieved maturity (or

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

even old age) is something we find again in Moretti's assumption that 'the modern novel' departs Europe in a unitary, relatively fixed form which extra-European writers struggle to accommodate to social conditions at the point of arrival, leading to formal 'cracks' between story and discourse in the novel outside Europe.[2]

A brief look at the life of naturalism another part of the world, Latin America, yields signs of a different story. It is not one in which the central position of Europe in Chevrel's, Moretti's, or Casanova's models is countered by agency on the cultural periphery. Rather it suggests an entirely different view of chronologies and spaces in the history of naturalist fiction. In the 19th century, the geographical position of Argentina and Brazil gave their writers relatively close contact with cultural developments in Spain and Portugal (respectively), and France, favored above even the two former metropoles by educated elites. Through such contact naturalist fiction emerged with force in each country in the early 1880s and dominated fiction for 10–15 years. Eugenio Cambaceres' *Pot pourri* (1882) was the first essay in naturalism (sp. *naturalismo*) in Argentina, followed by *Without Direction* (*Sin rumbo*, 1885), *In the Blood* (*En la sangre*, 1887), and other novels. Other Argentine writers joined him in following Zola's example, including Juan Antonio Argerich and Manuel Podestá (Benítez-Rojo 471–2). Aluísio Azevedo's *The Mulatto* (*O Mulato*, 1881) is typically considered the first example of naturalism (p. *naturalismo*) in Brazilian fiction, followed by other novels such as Júlio Ribeiro's *The Flesh* (*A Carne*, 1888), Azevedo's *The Tenement* (*O Cortiço*, 1890), and Adolfo Caminha's *The Black Man and the Cabin Boy* (*Bom-Crioulo*, 1895) (Haberly 147–51). Argentine and Brazilian writers self-consciously invoked Zola to mark out their positions against other tendencies in the novel. The title of Cambaceres' *Pot pourri* echoed that of Zola's *Pot-Bouille* (*Pot Luck*), serialized in the same year (Benítez-Rojo 471–2). In *The Tenement*, Azevedo duplicated the lesbian love scenes in *Nana*; Ribeiro prefaced *The Flesh* with a two-page dedication to Zola in French (Mendes 1–2; Lebron 133–5).

At first glance the history of naturalism in Argentine and Brazilian fiction might seem a ripple that traveled far from Europe. The efforts of writers in the two countries to associate themselves with a movement of European repute moreover support Casanova's observations on the international game of literary prestige. The history of naturalism in Argentina and Brazil is *contemporaneous*, however, with the second and third of Chevrel's waves of naturalism in Europe. *In the Blood* and *The Tenement*, often cited as the best examples of Argentine and Brazilian naturalism, appeared at the moment of naturalism's European triumph. We should not simply conclude that the world of the naturalist novel was bigger than the one described by the European story or that a few Western Hemisphere writers had managed to catch up to literary Mean Time. Naturalism in Argentina and Brazil appeared through a pattern of circulation that was distinct (but not entirely separate) from the pattern found in Europe. The two countries' naturalist schools emerged through contact with multiple currents in European naturalism, including the work of Zola and other French writers, the work of Spanish writers such as Benito Pérez Galdós and Emilia Pardo Bazán, in the case of Argentina, and Portuguese writers such as José Maria de Eça de Queirós in the case of Brazil. Writers from Germany or other European countries where naturalism was flourishing were not involved.

Beginning in the 1880s, then, we can identify two circuits – one involving France, Spain, and Argentina; the other, France, Portugal, and Brazil – that partially overlapped the more densely traveled circuits of naturalism in Europe. To be sure, it is unlikely that Zola, Pérez Galdós, and Eça de Queirós were much concerned with literary events in South America. The long-distance travels of naturalism were generally one-way. But the fact that the space in which the history of the naturalist novel in Latin America unfolded

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

overlaps that of the naturalist novel in Europe tells us too that its chronology, too, shares certain events with the history of European naturalism while remaining distinct from it. That is, a portion of the history of naturalism in Latin America is concerned with its history in certain European countries, France, Spain, and Portugal, but not all; to the extent that naturalism in countries such as Germany affected Latin America it was through the mediation of these three. In contrast to the single story that Chevrel tells, in which naturalism coalesces in France and radiates to Europe and the rest of the world, the examples of Argentina and Brazil suggest multiple chronologies (rather than a single linear evolution) and multiple spaces (rather than expanding concentric circuits) that together constitute the heterogeneous history of a transnational cultural phenomenon.

The multiple chronologies and scales to be found in the history of the naturalist novel reflect the condition of unevenness and simultaneity in what by the late 19th century was a planet-scale intellectual culture. Benedict Anderson has illustrated this condition through the career of the Filipino writer José Rizal, who drew on – and contributed to – transnational circulations of decadent literature, anarchist political thought, and anti-colonialism in his novels *Noli me tangere* (1887) and *El Filibusterismo* (1891). Anderson shows that the ideas Rizal mobilized in his dark novels of resistance to Spanish rule were on the move through the uncoordinated work of writers and activists spread across the world. Even intellectuals in economically and politically subaltern areas had access to the increasingly swift currents of intellectual exchange (B. Anderson chas. 2, 3). Many of the material and institutional developments that Chevrel cites as factors in the spread of naturalism in Europe contributed to the development of the transnational intellectual culture of which naturalism was a part. These included the rotary press, improvements in communications and transportation, the Universal Postal Union (established in 1874), the Bern Convention on copyright (1886), and the increasing acceptance of translations as means for consuming literature, all of which sped the production, movement, and consumption of printed works (Chevrel 34–6, 43). To these factors we should add the immense prestige of European cultural products, supported by the political and economic control that several European countries exerted over large parts of the globe. Such prestige garnered great attention in subordinate regions for the latest cultural developments in Paris, London, and Berlin, whose aspirations to 'modernity' frequently defined the aspirations of others. Naturalism was both a manifestation and an observation of such aspirations.

These factors alone, however, might imply a homogeneous spread of naturalist fiction across the globe. Instead it appeared quickly in some places distant from Paris, encountered resistance in some places nearby, and found no traction at all in others. Two other factors stand out in influencing whether the naturalist novel flourished in a particular part of the world, and the form that it took when it did: the association of the naturalist novel with other genres of what I will call 'social knowledge', which themselves were moving around the world at the time, and the travels of earlier forms of European fiction.

Naturalism had a number of fellow travelers on its circuits around the world. These included neurology and psychiatry, slum reportage, the emerging discipline of criminology, hygienic and legal discourse on prostitution, and debates over the New Woman. The naturalist novel's connections with such genres of knowledge appeared well before *The Experimental Novel*, Zola's most famous programmatic tract, which presented naturalism as a literary version of the observation-oriented medicine promoted by Claude Bernard. The Goncourt brothers styled *Germinie Lacerteux* a clinical study of hysterical degeneration, while Zola employed the science of nerves in fiction as early as *Thérèse Raquin*. This is not the place to document such connections, which are well known because writers so often announced them. (The admiration was mutual: while Zola cited

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Bernard, Cesare Lombroso, a critical figure in criminology, was fond of citing Zola; Gibson 29.) Rather I would point out, first, that like naturalist fiction, these fellow travelers combined normative assertions concerning society and individual behavior with an elaborate empirical apparatus, that is, arguments about how the world should be, supported by 'objective' observations of how it was. Because of the similarity in epistemology, the travel of each genre assisted the travel of the others. Second, although they were moving around the world at the same time, the chronologies and paths of their travel were non-synchronous and non-parallel with respect to each other and naturalist fiction. Around the world, the naturalist novel consistently appeared in connection with other genres of social knowledge, but the composition of the constellations varied.

Naturalism was connected to discourse on prostitution from an early point in France, as seen in the ways that Zola and his associates reproduced and reinforced images of the prostitute derived from Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet's pioneering survey *On Prostitution in the City of Paris* (*De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris*, 1836; Corbin 7, 212). As hygienic and legal discourse on prostitution moved around the world it had a fairly consistent connection with naturalist fiction, in a relation of positive feedback with naturalism's many fallen female characters (Hill, '*Nana* in the World'). Often, however, the relationships naturalist fiction formed with other genres of knowledge in one region was not the same in another. In Latin America the documentary techniques of naturalism were supported by Comtean Positivism, a relationship not present in the French school although it contributed to some other European schools such as the Italian (Prendes 17; Bueno 371–3; Finocchiaro 179). In Japan, the quasi-medical theories of degeneration propounded by Max Nordau played an important role in naturalist works such as Tayama Katai's 'The End of Jûemon' ('Jûemon no saigo', 1902) and Shimazaki Tôson's *Spring* (*Haru*, 1908), which helped popularize the theories in turn.[3] The affinity was ironic considering that European naturalism was one of Nordau's *bêtes noirs* (Hill, 'Exhausted by their Battles' 242–3). In the United States, the intersection of the naturalist novel with urban reportage was especially productive, as seen in the contributions of Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) to his friend Crane's *Maggie* (Gandal 8–10). We can attribute the differing affiliations that naturalist fiction formed with other genres of social knowledge to differences in the social imaginaries (Taylor 23–4) that were dominant in each region, the result of their respective intellectual histories, but also to the varying histories of its fellow travelers, which arrived in different regions at different times.

The association of the naturalist novel with non-literary genres of social knowledge gave it a cachet of scientific advancement that assisted the rise of naturalist schools. That naturalism had such companions should complicate our understanding of how it or any genre moves. The ability of the naturalist novel to travel and the prestige it achieved in certain regions were not simply results of its position in an international literary field, as Casanova asserts (Casanova 101–3). On the contrary, the rise of naturalist schools around the world was the result of the circulation of multiple genres, literary, and otherwise, through distinct paths whose intersections were enormously varied but mutually reinforcing in the aggregate. Naturalist fiction would have been unlikely to travel so widely without these other genres, or they without it or each other. The history of the naturalist novel thus offers particularly strong evidence that the travel of a literary form is never a purely literary affair and for the same reason has repercussions beyond the literary field, as the naturalist novel, for example, contributed to a planet-scale transformation of social imaginaries in the 19th and 20th centuries. In studies of prose fiction this conclusion would apply not only to the naturalist novel, but to the European novel in general, which was entwined with non-literary genres from its beginning (McKeon 118).

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Like the movement of naturalism's fellow travelers, the earlier travels of the European novel were a significant factor in whether naturalism thrived and how it was transformed in a given region. Here again we encounter distinct, varied histories that show the importance of accounting for successive periods in the circulation of European literary forms whose effects in one region could be quite different from those in another, and accounting for changes in the forms themselves that were unfolding while they moved around the world. The shift in the European novel from romanticism through realism and naturalism to modernist experimentation, which spanned nearly the entire 19th century, had considerable impact on the history of naturalism outside European cultural centers. The French school of naturalism encountered the greatest resistance in countries that already had a history of fiction concerned with precise description of daily life – provisionally, 'realism' – such as England and Russia (Kulczycka-Saloni 34; Baguley, *Naturalist Fiction* 29). In such countries naturalism competed with other forms of realism that hostile critics and writers could promote as alternatives. In countries where realistic fiction did not exist or existed only weakly in the late 19th century, naturalism arrived at the same time as other forms of European realism and frequently was identified with realism *per se*. Embracing the one, with its programmatic positions against romantic and sentimental fiction, was a way to work for the establishment of the other.

Such was the case in Argentina and Brazil, where Cambaceres and Azevedo embraced naturalism to overturn the romantic representations of national life found in novels like José Marmol's *Amalia* (1855) and José de Alencar's *The Guarani* (*O Guarani*, 1857). Indeed, the capacity of naturalism to do so, due in part to its association with non-literary genres of social knowledge, was one source of its appeal around the world. We should be more specific, however, about the battles that naturalist writers waged in Argentina and Brazil. In these countries writers took up naturalism against an entrenched practice of romantic fiction, centered on the idealization of natural being and the dramatization of social conflicts through love plots, that *itself* originated in an appropriation earlier in the century of French and English romanticism, particularly the work of Chateaubriand, Hugo, and Scott. Such romanticism was the first dominant esthetic in the relatively short history of prose fiction by settlers in Latin America, and became deeply entrenched in notions of national identity held by the small educated classes. It reigned unchallenged until the arrival of naturalism, which took the fore in the absence of other established varieties of realism. The victory was not complete: naturalistic and romantic techniques of representation coexisted uneasily, sometimes in the same work, and when the naturalist novel appeared later in other Latin American countries it sometimes also integrated the emerging techniques of *modernismo* (Benítez-Rojo 429–30, 469; Brushwood 16–20; Bueno 364–67; Haberly 147–9).

We should not conclude from such clashes of naturalism with romanticism that the arrival of the naturalist novel triggered a delayed literary modernization necessary in all societies – straight from romanticism to hard-core mimesis without a passage through Dickens or Balzac. On the contrary, these are cases of certain writers taking up naturalism against others brandishing an earlier arrival from Europe, over techniques for the representation of subject and society that all involved considered to have far-reaching implications. That they could do so was not a temporal anomaly (Casanova 100–1) but in fact a common consequence of the travel of forms, which facilitated 'non-sequential' juxtapositions such as that of naturalism with romanticism. We are dealing then not with separate instances of linear literary evolution; nor with a synchronization of the world's literary clocks, as Casanova would have it; nor with a collision of European and indigenous narrative forms, as described by Moretti. The rise of naturalist fiction in Latin America

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

reveals instead that this seemingly regional history includes in its boundaries a portion of the history of European fiction and features writers of esthetic tendencies separated by several decades in Europe struggling in what we must recognize as a planetary present – not a Paris Mean Time – in which the stakes were the legitimate representation of the foundations of social order.

The conflict of naturalism with literary practices derived from an earlier romanticism is typical of settler colonies such as Argentina and Brazil that had relatively long, consistent contact with cultural developments in Europe, but this was not the case for all countries where naturalist schools emerged. In East Asia, naturalism too appealed to writers trying to upset established conventions for representing psychology and social relationships. Writers in the region became familiar with European romanticism, realism, and naturalism at essentially the same time, however, against the background of long histories of prose fiction in Chinese and Japanese. In this context, European romanticism was not the enemy but in curious ways an ally of naturalism in writers' efforts to renovate literary practice and challenge the dominant techniques of representation.

Japanese writers turned their attention to the European novel beginning in the 1870s, at a time when progressive intellectuals promoted cultural reform as a means to withstand European imperialism. The major target of the new literature was the 'praise and blame' Confucian moralism that pervaded much of the fiction of the 19th century. Writers in the 1880s and 1890s drew on a range of resources that included Russian psychological realism, German and French romanticism, French naturalism, and 18th-century Japanese fiction of urban life. (In most cases they read Russian, German, and French works in English translation; Ryan 7–15). By the turn of the century, a variety of realistic mimesis with significant inspiration from French naturalism was emerging as the standard bearer for the new fiction, in works such as Kosugi Tengai's *New Year's Finery* (*Hatsu sugata*, 1900), modeled after Zola's *Nana*. Katai's novella 'The Quilt' ('Futon', 1907) moved Japanese naturalism (j. *shizen shugi*) into its lastingly influential mode, a psychological anatomy that often mined the author's life for material, making an emphasis on self-exposure and self-awakening descended from European romanticism a prominent aspect of the school. A group of critics, among them Shimamura Hôgetsu and Hasegawa Tenkei, emerged around the school. Although naturalism competed with other forms of realism, during the first decade of the 20th century it achieved a dominant position that lasted into the 1920s (Wada 15–22; Sibley 160–5).

The naturalist fiction that emerged in Japan played complex roles in China and Korea, where writers and critics also sought new forms of fiction to aid the fight against imperialist and colonialist incursions (now including those of Japan). In China in the 1920s, members of the Creation Society introduced a form of autobiographical fiction inspired by Japanese naturalism that pursued social critique by identifying the struggles of the writer-protagonist with those of the nation. The motif of self-revelation in Japanese naturalism became a figure for national awakening. Yu Dafu's story 'Sinking' ('Chenlun', 1921) is the most celebrated example of the genre (Keaveney 18–27). During the same years, critics associated with the Association for Literary Studies, particularly Mao Dun, promoted naturalism (ch. *ziran zhuyi*) as a means to establish realism in general. Mao Dun's views of naturalism and realism drew on Japanese critics, particularly Hôgetsu's work on naturalism, among other sources (McDougall 158–59, 250–51). The Association for Literary Studies and its rival the Creation Society came into curious conflict. Mao Dun, who was distrustful of Zola's belief in purely objective observation, nonetheless criticized the Creation Society for its stress on the subjective experience of the writer. After the Creation Society embraced a Marxist program of literary engagement in 1924,

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

its members in turn criticized Mao Dun for promoting the 'bourgeois realism' of naturalism. The conflict over politics, realism, and authorial expression in the novel that began in the clash between the two, each inspired by the naturalism that emerged in Japan, dominated literary life in China for several decades (M. Anderson 42–43, 46–48; Keaveney 63).

In Korea, a Japanese colony after 1910, Japanese naturalism and the criticism associated with it had an even greater impact because almost all knowledge of European literature passed through Japan and Japanese. In the 1920s naturalism (k. *jayeon juui*) came to be identified with realism as writers worked to create a literature in Korean that they believed would encourage resistance to Japanese rule by strengthening national consciousness. As in many colonial situations, the literature and criticism that emerged were marked by trends in the metropole. The early work of writers such as Kim Tong-in ('A Man with a Weak Heart' ['Maŭm i yŏt'ŭn cha yŏ', 1920]) and Yŏm Sang-sŏp ('The Frog in the Specimen Room' ['P'yobonsil ŭi ch'ŏnggaegari', 1921]) stressed personal experience and self-exposure, in the manner of naturalism in Japan. It turned the Japanese practice of naturalism, however, to craft metaphors of national awakening as the Creation Society was doing around the same time in China. Essays by these writers and critics such as Hyon Chol on naturalism and realism similarly reveal close attention to the work of Hôgetsu, Tenkei, and other Japanese critics. As in China, writers gave up this variety of naturalism, with its emphasis on individuality and subjective experience, as a form of resistance for more conventional third-person narrative (Kangwoo 240–4; Park 175–7). The emergence of naturalism in Korea in the 1920s nonetheless was critical for the formation of realism in fiction.

The history of naturalist fiction in East Asia exhibits a different pattern of circulation than in Latin America, arriving in Japan both directly from France and with a detour through English, and then moving from Japan after significant transformations to China (where writers also encountered the French school in English translation) and to Korea (where they read it in Japanese). The chronology of this history differs too, in several ways. Naturalism became dominant later, but perhaps more significantly it arrived in the region alongside rather than in the wake of other forms of European fiction. The history of naturalism in East Asia thus reveals still another space and chronology in the broader history of the movement, which as in the case of Latin American partially overlap those of the naturalist novel in Europe. As in Argentina and Brazil, writers turned to naturalism to overthrow dominant techniques for the representation of society and the subject. Here too the struggle over method was part of broader conflicts, concerning national identity and the proper response to the imperialism of European powers, the United States, and ultimately Japan. Because European romanticism was not a part of the dominant practices of representation, however, the naturalism that flourished in Japan was able to incorporate motifs from it into the campaign. The combination passed from Japan to China and Korea, a testament on the one hand to the utility of the ideas of self-awakening associated with European romanticism in creating national identities, and on the other to the ways that critique of the nation and national subject could become a significant activity of naturalist schools.

In part the differences between the histories of the naturalist novel in Latin American and East Asia are geohistorical, following from the earlier beginnings of European colonialism in the Americas, the relative distance of East Asia from Europe, the entry of Japan into inter-imperial competition, and so forth, which made for different histories of the flow of cultural products. Other differences derive from the intellectual conditions that were dominant in these areas when naturalism arrived, such as the Francophilia of the educated classes in Argentina and Brazil and the relatively short history of prose fiction in

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

the two countries, compared with the continuing importance of Confucian moral education in East Asia and the centuries of prose fiction in Japanese and Chinese against which the new arrivals of European romanticism, realism, and naturalism stood out. These differences, too, are historical in nature – the result of what we could call the regions' specific histories, not of 'culture'. Given that the larger geohistorical frame is composed of such specific histories, it should be clear that the heterogeneous and sometimes surprising history of naturalist fiction is an essentially transnational phenomenon whose causes and conditions of possibility, including its initial appearance in Europe, must be sought on the scale of the planet and in human activities that extend far beyond the writing of fiction.

The example of the naturalist novel suggests that when examining the circulation of literary forms we should assume that the results will be heterogeneous, indeed that the circulation of forms in itself produces heterogeneity, rather than assuming, as still is common, that it homogenizes through 'Europeanization', 'Americanization', or even more problematically, 'Westernization'. Such an assumption would be supported by the well-accepted argument in studies of the cultural impact of late 20th-century economic integration, that so-called globalization produces difference, not uniformity (Dirlik 20). This point of view should prompt us to reconsider the place of Europe, particularly France, in the multiple, overlapping iterations of naturalism that together form the transnational history of naturalist fiction. If we approach the history of the naturalist novel not as a matter of the origination and reception of a form but rather as a transformative process with numerous determinants in economic, political, intellectual, and literary history – on both a geohistorical scale and the scale of specific histories of countries and regions – then we can recognize the French school as only an early, if consequential, iteration among many others. Considered in these terms, we should regard the French school as the originator of the naturalist novel only to the extent that it drew developments in European fiction and social thought together into the configuration that traveled the world, not as an original against which other naturalisms must be measured.[4] This would not be to deny that the French school enjoyed a prestige that others did not, again for reasons greater than the structure of the literary field. Yet considering that the seemingly unusual introduction of elements of romanticism or modernism into naturalism was characteristic of many iterations outside France, the French school appears to be the exception rather than the norm. An exception with undeniable importance, but an exception nonetheless.[5]

If so, the varieties of the naturalist novel that appeared around the world would not be derivatives of the French school, nor efforts to attract the recognition of Paris, nor 'compromises' because of their divergence from the original template. On the contrary, we should ask whether some iterations of the naturalist novel that appeared outside France explored unrealized possibilities internal to the form – such as the denied romanticism of Zola's treatment of social heights and depths – that became evident when writers encountered naturalism in different economic and political circumstances, at later moments in the history of its fellow travelers, juxtaposed with earlier forms of European fiction, and in the context of other historical trajectories in narrative practice (Hill, '*Nana* in the World'). Recognizing the possibility, we should consider whether travel itself, the movement that puts the naturalist novel in chaotic, productive contact with other forms, that forces it into new combinations with genres of social knowledge similarly abroad in the world, that opens it to new manners of critique, is not one of the most significant factors in its history. Here perhaps is the principal lesson for the study of the circulation of literary forms that we might draw from the history of the naturalist novel: the most important encounters happen on the road.

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Acknowledgement

The author thanks the anonymous reviewers of *Literature Compass* for their comments.

Short Biography

Christopher Hill's work focuses on the transnational histories of literature and social thought in the 19th century. His book *National History and the World of Nations: Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France, and the United States* (Duke 2008) is an interdisciplinary study of the writing of history in the late 19th century. He is currently working on the transnational movements of the naturalist novel at the turn of the century and their relationship to other genres of social thought. He has recently published 'Exhausted by their Battles with the World: Neurasthenia and Civilization Critique in Early Twentieth-Century Japan' in *Perversion and Modern Japan: Experiments in Psychoanalysis*, ed. Nina Cornyetz and Keith Vincent (Routledge 2009). He presently teaches Japanese literature at Yale University and holds a BA in English from Stanford and a PhD in Comparative Literature from Columbia.

Notes

* Correspondence: Yale University, Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, 320 York St., New Haven CT 06511, USA. Email: chris.hill@yale.edu

[1] For a longer discussion of the characteristics of naturalism in Europe, see Baguley, 'Nature of Naturalism' 18–22.

[2] Moretti, 'Conjectures' 65. It bears pointing out that in this essay Moretti slips between references to 'the European novel' and simply 'the novel', suggesting that in a quasi-Weberian manner he treats the former as an ideal type for a putatively universal form. Having transposed a geohistorically specific form into a category, his conclusion that all variants of the novel outside Europe are compromises is nearly inevitable (Moretti, 'Conjectures' 60–1). Recently, Moretti has turned from a diffusion model toward study of the comparative 'rises' of the novel in Europe and China. Here, perhaps to avoid the earlier problem of categories, he broadens the definition of the novel to effectively include any long fictional narrative. In comparing the European and Chinese 'novel', however, he turns up differences so great as to suggest that the generic label loses sense when applied in this way (Moretti, 'The Novel' 117–18).

[3] Japanese, Chinese, and Korean names are in the customary order of family name preceding personal name. (The Korean author Kim Tongin's family name is Kim.) Japanese authors using pen names in place of their personal names are referred to by the pen name on second usage (e.g., Tayama Katai as Katai).

[4] Put another way, the frequency with which naturalist writers legitimated themselves by reference to Zola shows that he had the status of an 'initiator of discourse' in Foucault's sense (the reference to which becomes a defining aspect of the discourse in question), but we should recognize that far from being the 'authors' of naturalism, Zola and the French school themselves emerged from a complex intersection of literary and non-literary genres (Foucault 388–9).

[5] Recent collaborative work on the Modern Girl, which examines 'multidirectional citations' of this 20th-century icon through a method of 'connective comparison', offers a promising model for avoiding the pitfalls of questions of originality in the study of transnational cultural phenomena (Modern Girl Around the World Research Group 3–5).

Works Cited

Alencar, José de. *O Guarani (The Guarani)*. Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1958 (1857).

Anderson, Marston. *The Limits of Realism: Chinese Fiction in the Revolutionary Period*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Anderson, Benedict. *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*. London: Verso, 2007.

Azevedo, Aluísio. *A Brazilian Tenement (O Cortiço)*. Trans. Harry W. Brown. New York: H. Fertig, 1976 (1890).

——. *Mulatto (O Mulato)*. Trans. Murray Graeme MacNicoll. Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990 (1881).

Baguley, David. *Naturalist Fiction: The Entropic Vision*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

——. 'The Nature of Naturalism.' *Naturalism in the European Novel: New Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Brian Nelson. New York: Berg, 1992. 13–26.
Benítez-Rojo, Antonio. 'The Nineteenth-Century Spanish American Novel.' *Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*. Vol. 1. Eds. Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 417–89.
Brushwood, John Stubbs. *Genteel Barbarism: Experiments in Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Spanish-American Novels*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981.
Bueno, Eva Paulino. 'Brazilian Naturalism and the Politics of Origin.' *MLN* 107.2 (1992): 363–95.
Cambaceres, Eugenio. *En la sangre (In the Blood)*. Buenos Aires: Colihue/Hachette, 1980 (1887).
——. *Pot pourri*. Trans. Lisa Dillman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003 (1882).
——. *Sin rumbo (Without Direction)*. Buenos Aires: Stockcero, 2005 (1885).
Caminha, Adolfo. *Bom-Crioulo: The Black Man and the Cabin Boy*. Trans. E. A. Lacey. San Francisco: Gay Sunshine Press, 1982 (1895).
Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Trans. M. B. DeBevoise. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.
Chevrel, Yves. *Le Naturalisme: étude d'un mouvement littéraire international*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1982.
Corbin, Alain. *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.
Crane, Stephen. 'Maggie, a Girl of the Streets.' *Maggie, a Girl of the Streets and Other New York Writings*. New York: Random House, 2001 (1893). 1–69.
Dirlik, Arif. *Global Modernity: Modernity in the Age of Global Capitalism*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2007.
Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment (Prestuplenie i nakazanie)*. Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Everyman's Library, 1992 (1866).
Finocchiaro, Marzia. 'De la Sicile à Milan: Itinéraire italien des réceptions du Naturalisme français.' *Excavatio* 12 (1999): 177–86.
Flaubert, Gustave. *Madame Bovary*. Trans. Margaret Mauldon. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004 (1857).
Foucault, Michel. 'What is an Author?' *The Essential Foucault*. Trans. Josué V. Harari. Eds. Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose. New York: New Press, 2003. 377–91.
Freytag, Gustav. *Debit and Credit (Soll und Haben)*. Trans. L. C. C. New York: Howard Fertig, 1990 (1855).
Gandal, Keith. *The Virtues of the Vicious: Jacob Riis, Stephen Crane, and the Spectacle of the Slum*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
Gibson, Mary. *Born to Crime: Cesare Lombroso and the Origins of Biological Criminology*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002.
Goncourt, Edmond de and Jules de Goncourt. *Germinie Lacerteux*. Trans. Ernest Boyd. New York: Knopf, 1922 (1864).
Haberly, David T. 'The Brazilian Novel from 1850 to 1900.' *Cambridge History of Latin American Literature*. Vol. 3. Eds. Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 137–56.
Hemmings, F. W. J. 'The Origins of the Terms Naturalisme, Naturaliste.' *French Studies* 8 (1954): 109–21.
Hill, Christopher L. 'Exhausted by their Battles with the World: Neurasthenia and Civilization Critique in Early Twentieth-Century Japan.' *Perversion and Modern Japan: Experiments in Psychoanalysis*. Eds. Nina Cornyetz and Keith Vincent. London: Routledge, 2009. 242–58.
——. '*Nana* in the World: Novel, Gender, and Transnational Form.' Forthcoming.
Kangwoo Won Young. 'Nihon to Chôsen hantô ni okeru shizen shugi bungaku.' *Hôsei daigaku daigakuin daigakuin kiyô* 52 (2004): 236–48.
Katai Tayama. 'The End of Jûemon' ('Jûemon no saigo'). *The Quilt and Other Stories*. Trans. Kenneth G. Henshall. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1981 (1902). 97–147.
——. 'The Quilt' ('Futon'). *The Quilt and Other Stories*. Trans. Kenneth G. Henshall. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1981 (1902). 35–96.
Keaveney, Christopher T. *The Subversive Self in Modern Chinese Literature: The Creation Society's Reinvention of the Japanese Shishôsetsu*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.
Kim Tong-in. 'Maŭm i yŏt'ŭn cha yŏ' ('A Man with a Weak Heart'). *Kim Tong-in chŏnjip*. Sin Han'guk munhak chŏnjip 2. Seoul: Omungak, 1970 (1920). 355–441.
Kosugi Tengai. *Hatsu sugata (New Year's Finery)*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000 (1900).
Kulczycka-Saloni, Janina. 'La réception du naturalisme dans la littérature russe et la littérature polonaise.' *Le Naturalisme en question: Actes du colloque tenu à Varsovie (20–22 Septembre 1984)*. Ed. Yves Chevrel. Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1986. 29–40.
Lebron, Monica. 'Naturalism in New Climes: Argentina and Brazil.' *Excavatio* 4–5 (1994): 131–8.
Marmol, José. *Amalia*. Trans. Helen Lane. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (1855).
McDougall, Bonnie S. *The Introduction of Western Literary Theories into Modern China, 1919–1925*. Tokyo: Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1971.

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600–1740*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
Mendes, Leonardo. 'Sordid Literature: Naturalism and Sexuality in Brazil.' *Excavatio* 21.1–2 (2006): 48–62.
Modern Girl Around the World Research Group (Alys Eve Weinbaum, Lynn M. Thomas, Priti Ramamurthy, Uta G. Poiger, Madeleine Yue Dong, and Tani E. Barlow). 'The Modern Girl as Heuristic Device: Collaboration, Connective Comparison, Multidirectional Citation.' *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*. Ed. Modern Girl Around the World Research Group. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. 1–24.
Moretti, Franco. 'Conjectures on World Literature.' *New Left Review 2nd Ser.* 1 (Jan. 2000–28 Feb. 2000): 54–68.
——. 'The Novel: History and Theory.' *New Left Review* 52 (July–Aug. 2008): 111–24.
Parent-Duchâtelet, Alexandre. *Prostitution in Paris (De la prostitution dans la ville de Paris)*. Boston: C. H. Brainard, 1845 (1836).
Park, Sunyoung. 'The Colonial Origin of Korean Realism and its Contemporary Manifestation.' *Positions* 14.1 (Spring 2006): 165–92.
Prendes, Manuel. *La novela naturalista hispanoamericana: evolución y direcciones de un processo narrativo*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2003.
Ribeiro, Júlio. *A Carne (The Flesh)*. Rio de Janeiro: Ediouro, 1996 (1888).
Riis, Jacob A. *How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the Tenements of New York*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996 (1890).
Rizal, José. *El Filibusterismo*. Trans. Ma. Soledad Lacson-Locsin. Makati City, Philippines: Bookmark, 1996 (1891).
——. *Noli me tangere*. Trans. Harold Augenbraum. New York: Penguin, 2006 (1887).
Ryan, Marleigh. *The Development of Realism in the Fiction of Tsubouchi Shôyô*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975.
Shimazaki Tôson. *Haru (Spring)*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000 (1908).
Sibley, William F. 'Naturalism in Japanese Literature.' *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 28 (1968): 157–69.
Taylor, Charles. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.
Tolstoy, Leo. *Tales of Sevastopol (Sevastopol'skie rasskazy)*. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1950 (1856).
Wada Kingo. *Byôsha no jidai – hitotsu no shizen shugi bungaku ron*. Sapporo: Hokkaidô Daigaku Tosho Kankôkai, 1975.
Yŏm Sang-sŏp. 'P'yobonsil' ŭi ch'ŏnggaegari' ('The Frog in the Specimen Room'). *Yŏm Sangsŏp sŏnjip*. Sin Han'guk munhak ch'ŏnjip 3. Seoul: Ŏmungak. 1972 (1921). 345–72.
Yu Dafu. '"Sinking" (Chenlun).' *Modern Chinese Stories and Novellas, 1919–1949*. Ed. Joseph S. M. Lau, C. T. Hsia and Leo Ou-Fan Lee. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981 (1921). 125–41.
Zola, Emile. *L'Assommoir* Trans. Margaret Mauldon. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995 (1877).
——. 'The Experimental Novel' ('Le Roman experimental'). *Documents of Modern Literary Realism*. Ed. George J. Becker. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963 (1880). 162–96.
——. *Nana*. Trans. Douglas Parmee. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 (1882).
——. *Pot Luck (Pot-Bouille)*. Trans. Brian Nelson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999 (1882).
——. *Thérèse Raquin*. Trans Andrew Rothwell. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 (1867).

© 2009 The Author
Journal Compilation © 2009 Blackwell Publishing Ltd