

TRANSNATIONAL LITERATURE

A Cautionary Note Ronald Klein

NB I am not making any of this up. This is based on a manuscript I was asked to read.

Dear Young Colleague,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to read your manuscript, prior to its publication. Without doubt, it was a result of great effort and scholarship. Your teachers would be proud. I have marked the pages with some comments you may consider.

Regarding language, some people savour big words (also referred to as sesquipedalianism) and complex sentences; some people choke on them. I found myself thumbing through my dictionary to find words I probably should know, but didn't. To list a few jargon words and phrases:

allochrony
aporetic
asservations
instantiates
interpretant
proleptic
propadeutic
prelapsarian
rebarbative

Then there were the jargon phrases that felt very in-groupy (also referred to as arcane exclusivity):

aetiology shorn of received categories
appropriative agendas
assigned metaphysical alterity
auratic object
culturalist sequestration
contestatory telos
dissident telos
endo-psychic conflict
exilitic valences
hermeneutics of memory
hyperstating strategy
metafictional injunction
neoliberal hegemony
oneiric logic

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parabolic optic
perdurable nature
self-Orientalism
reificatory dimensions
revisionary-ethnography valences

semi-epipantic engagement
toponymic references

Then, *eureka!* the foreign *bon mots*:

tout court
cui bono
idée fixe
modus vivendi
folie de grandeur
mise-en-abyme
terminus ad quem

Then words used less conventionally – nouns becoming verbs, adjectives becoming nouns, verbs becoming nouns.

by that problematic (adjective as noun)
novel's regenerative thematic (adjective as noun)
parabolic optic (adjective as noun)
never writs large (noun as verb)
neo-liberal construal (adjective as noun)
the novel's troping of ... (noun as verb)

Then there were the long complex compound sentences, with all the above, plus two or more quotations often refuting each other.

So as you can see, when you string a bunch of these together you are getting into a syntactical esoteric, to coin a phrase.

As you continue your no doubt long and fruitful journey into academia, I hope you will occasionally pause over an urgent phrase to ask if this will be intelligible to more than a half dozen other similarly trained academics.

With best wishes,

Ron Klein
Professor
Hiroshima Jogakuin University

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